

Ellen Brook Integrated Catchment Group



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Professor Peter Newman
Director, Sustainability Policy Unit
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Dear Professor Newman,

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

On behalf of the Ellen Brook Integrated Catchment Group, please accept our thanks for taking the time to brief the group on the State Sustainability Strategy and for the invitation to participate in its development. Following your presentation, the catchment group have identified and developed some 'Future Visions for the Catchment' these include:

- Restoration of a healthy and functioning catchment where there are no nutrient export activities and land degradation is prevented.
- Creation of a 'green corridor' that links the headwaters of the Ellen Brook to the Swan River providing opportunities for education and recreation.
- An environmental duty of care has become part of every school's educational curriculum, and as Ellen Brook is easily accessible to the city it could help fulfill the demonstration of that role.
- Ellen Brook becomes a 'jewel in the crown' for rural lifestyles in the outer northern metropolitan area of Perth.
- Strengthened powers are applied to conditions for soil and land conservation on new and existing developments.
- State Government agencies are committed to and accelerate the development of MOUs and partnership agreements for integrated catchment management.
- Greater legislative backing for catchment management plans to prevent or discourage degrading land use activities.
- A catchment community with a well developed sense of place who value their area enough to want to make sustainable decisions through:
 - Empowerment in decision-making processes
 - More knowledge of the catchment
 - Availability of infrastructure

In response to the consultation paper *Focus on the Future: Opportunities For Sustainability In Western Australia* please accept the following comments as a submission from the Ellen Brook Integrated catchment Group.

Sustainability, Governance and Society

- All parties must support environmental reform on a non-partisan basis
- Government bureaucracies, farming and industrial practices must change to better reflect environmental constraints
- Good corporate citizenship can be promoted through tax incentives
- Legal frameworks for law reform should include regulations and heavy fines
- Government purchasing power should promote sustainable crops such as:
 - Tree oils (Essential oils)
 - Timber plantations
 - Hemp products

Natural Resource Management & Biological Diversity

- More control of fisheries with stronger laws and regulations to protect stocks, and greater use of marine parks as reserves for biodiversity conservation
- Farmers and pastoralists must be encouraged to adopt more sustainable methods through the development of secure long-term markets.
- Improvements in land management could be promoted through technological advances in information systems to encourage the adoption of precision farming practices.
- The reversal of salinity and the development of economic opportunities and community revival may be assisted by the regional dispersal of industry (as opposed to localized concentrations such as Kwinana).
- Protection of our natural heritage and biodiversity must be achieved through expert care and adherence to the precautionary principle.
- Rural communities in the south-west will be assisted by an effort to improve the status of the Regional Forest Agreement and the removal of all uncertainties that are associated with it.

Economic Strategies for Sustainability

Greenhouse Targets

- Reduce industrial, domestic and vehicle emissions
- Ensure independent regulation of emissions as apposed to self-regulation
- Increase natural energy development and research into renewable fuels
- Education and awareness

Eco-efficient industry

- Promote cleaner production technologies
- Improve waste management and recycling technology and facilities
- Transition to sustainability for each region in Western Australia will require improved education and awareness

Renewable Energy

- The renewable energy sector must become established and better represented within Western Power.
- New technologies must be attractive and affordable

- The downstream benefits generated by catchment management should result in the transfer of funds back to those catchments
- The inevitable change in the mining sector must be planned and managed.
- The research, development and management of change in Perth and regional towns must be accommodated within existing institutional structures without creating more pseudo-bureaucracies.

Social Strategies for Sustainability

Social cohesion will require:

- Sustainable urban development
- Education and awareness

Jobs growth will require:

- Research and development into new systems
- Renewable technologies

Reduction of lifestyle impacts will require:

- Emission controls
- Easily accessible recycling
- Attractive waste management strategies
- Affordable technologies
- Renewable fuels
- Education and awareness

Aboriginal Communities

- Indigenous communities must be engaged and consulted to encourage:
 - Participation in the State Sustainability Strategy
 - Custodianship
 - Empowerment

Thank you for providing the Ellen Brook Integrated Catchment Group the opportunity to comment on the State Sustainability Strategy. We hope this submission can be considered, and its comments incorporated.

Yours sincerely,

Damian Crilly
 Catchment Coordinator
 6 March 2002