

Professor Peter Newman
Director, Sustainability Policy Unit
Policy Office
Department of the Premier at Cabinet
15th Floor, 197 St Georges Terrace, PERTH WA 6000

Dear Professor Newman,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute my thoughts on sustainability. I am Lisa Clarke, 33, a wife, a mother of 3, a student at Murdoch Tafe (studying Land Management) and I consider myself a great lover of life. All life. I believe that life is what you make it & I want to make it better. Healing on a major level is so needed NOW, especially since we (as humans) are the ones' with such a large ecological footprint that our country cannot sustain us. We need to take the initiative as leaders & fix what has become one of my greatest priorities SUSTAINABILITY. I say this as a homemaker, who considers all of Australia as my home.

Sustainability is essential because we rely on natural resources for our survival. We must learn to consume on a sustainable level so that we can maintain our lifestyles while conserving & enhancing the community's resources so that ecological resources on which life depends are there for future generations.

We take it for granted that the trees, forests a bushland that we continue to destroy are the same resources that give us precious oxygen. We must learn to value our bushland and find other ways of utilising this unique asset. Tourism (especially passive recreation) will play a major roll in the battle for sustainability. Perhaps people will come to Australia to learn how to become more sustainable. Not only does the bush bring us much needed visual relief & a sense of freedom - it also contains a multitude of biodiversity which depends on this bushland for its' habitat. My government would be wise to realize the value of our regionally significant & locally significant bushland now, before it's too late. Protect our land from further degradation.

We can see that all life depends on energy (light/heat) from the Sun. I'm inclined to agree with nature & hope to see solar power utilized to its potential. The sun is literally "on tap" & probably our most powerful asset. We as a nation could lead the way to a sustainable future by finding out (through research & technology) how to tap into our most attainable, powerful asset - the Sun.

We all need oxygen. Only through our government can we even begin to clean up & end atmospheric pollution. Stricter penalties, more laws to protect our atmosphere - and back them up -enforce them.

My greatest love has always been the beach. The wonderful feeling of being 'at one with nature' can never be described, only felt. I feel we would be depriving our kids of their most basic right if our beaches weren't here for them (in the same, if not better condition than they're in now). Not only because of the anaesthetic qualities that we humans can draw upon, but the wildlife that inhabits these beaches is simply stunning. So many once-wonderful beaches have been turned into industrial sites (unsightly at best), which have destroyed existing reef life & turned white sand into grey-black muck. Surely most of these big businesses that used this land for such purposes could have found somewhere a little less needed, inspiring or alive as our beaches or bushland. Then I wonder, why didn't our Government notice that these beaches were being polluted & dying? Why aren't there severe penalties for causing such irreparable damage? My Government would not allow this - would they?

Please make laws & enforce them - to protect our beautiful beaches & bushland.

Water is definitely a valuable natural resource, which we depend on infinitely. We need to educate at all levels - in simple terms -the importance of reducing our consumption of water. My Government needs to continue to make laws to protect the waterways from pollution. Since Australia has such a great need for water, wouldn't we be wise to consider desalination plants. I believe this would be expensive initially, but if we wait until the water runs out, what would be more important the money or the water?

Salinisation is a huge problem for Australia. If the Mallee is the answer & planting them will cure salinisation, then great, but first test it & make sure it's not just another band-aid. We want solutions - not myths.

Our precious Aboriginal Culture. Please visit the WA Museum, check out the Aboriginal display, witness their plight & be moved. They took care of this wonderful land for thousands of years. They were respectful caretakers of Australia - leaving a very healthy ecological footprint, that we could all learn from. How have we honoured them? My Government has a duty of care to the Aboriginal people & it can't be fixed by giving them money or privileges. They require understanding, recognition & acceptance in their own country.

I believe the best way to educate is by example. The Government should be leading us in the area of sustainability. Public awareness is the key. Utilise the media as an educational tool - in order for sustainability to work we must all understand how important it is. Sustainability should be taught at all levels of education to emphasise the importance of maintaining our resources while achieving a brighter future for everybody. All government departments should implement strategies to reduce, reuse & recycle. I'm afraid the word disposable doesn't have a place here, unless it truly is disposable in an environmentally sustainable way.

I wrote a poem when I was 21 called Mother Nature - dying. I have enclosed it for your perusal.

Thank you again for the opportunity to voice my opinion & I really hope that one person can make a difference.

Yours truly,

Lisa Clarke

MOTHER NATURE - DYING

This precious land we live on.
The atmosphere & beyond.
Will we ever stop abusing her?
Mother Nature with her throng.
Is it true that she is dying?
By the thrust of our own hands?
Will we unite to protect her?
We all must make a stand.
This world that we call home,
So needed & so nice
We must all surrender something,
Now's the time to pay the price.
Work with your governments.
Please, don't be delayed.
It's the future we look forward to,
Not the past, where powers played.
The games they play are costly,
We are dealing now with life!
If we continue to rot our resources,
Our kids will be in strife.
The choice we have is simple,
While the price for life is high.
Change your ways right now,
Before you see a smog-filled sky.
Your efforts will be rewarded,
Look to the children - you'll see hope.
Must they beg for their future?
Where they can barely cope.
You may think that dramatic -
& You just might be right.
What do you think would happen?
If we gave up this fight?
Stand up while you can,
& Please, give it all you've got.
Don't listen, when they talk money.
Compared to life that's not a lot.
Learn new ways - you're capable.
Turn that many-sided teat.
Give our kids some kind of future

Some kind of hope & relief.