

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE – Opportunities for Sustainability in Western Australia

This Club congratulates the Government for taking bold steps toward sustainability.

“Focus on the Future” is the beginning of a path that the Club believes must be followed if we are to provide a reasonable life for our children, grandchildren and subsequent generations. The benefit of following the path of sustainability is survival. The alternative, that of ignoring sustainability, will lead to a severely reduced quality of life for all Western Australians.

The Club would like to make the following points in support of sustainability and the future:

- The path of sustainability can only be followed through government taking the lead.
- The incorporation of sustainability across society needs broad support and involvement throughout the community. Example must come from government, business and community leaders.
- Schools and community groups must be involved.
- The support of all sizes of businesses and of trade unions must be sought.
- As business is profit driven negotiations and incentives must occur to get satisfactory results.
- Government must listen to its advisers. In the past we have seen notable scientists ignored because their reports were truthful and alarming (an example of this is Graham Chittleborough).
- Disregarding the predictions of scientists is dangerous.

This Club appreciates that a considerable amount of outstanding work has already been done in WA.

- Universities together with research and development organisations have contributed a great deal towards providing information on what is needed to make progress on sustainability.
- The Department of Conservation and Land Management has contributed greatly to the conservation of plants and animals.
- CALM’s education programs and publications such as Landscape are excellent.
- The Western Shield program and the resulting return of many native animals to the bushland is a wonderful effort.

- The extensive tree planting in farming areas is a positive step.
- Recycling has been improved and encouraged.
- Efforts have been made to improve public transport and reduce vehicles on the roads. Cycling and walking are being encouraged.
- The movement towards renewable energy is commended. The Albany and Denham wind farms are demonstrations of this.

Further steps have to be taken to achieve reconciliation with indigenous groups. Indigenous groups can help in teaching others how to live in harmony with the land. CALM's Indigenous Heritage Unit is helping in this regard.

The current Government and just as importantly, future Governments must be committed to sustainability.

To some extent we have the solutions already. These solutions in many cases need to be improved. In other cases research is needed to find the solutions.

The whole community must be persuaded to implement these solutions. Society can be convinced to do this if it becomes fully aware of how beneficial the outcomes will be for current and future generations.

This Club wholeheartedly supports the concepts of sustainability and the directions for care of the environment.