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There is little information in the WA State Sustainability Strategy Consultation Draft on the most important issue that drives all the others, unsustainable Population growth, that has an adverse impact on our social, economical, health and environmental well being. In fact, the Director of the Sustainability Policy Unit, Professor Peter Newman, would disagree with those advocates that endorse Zero Population growth because Western Australian Society is unsustainable because we are already beyond the ability of our natural systems to sustain us. In the most recent 1998 State of the Environmental Report it clearly states that our ecological Footprint is such that it cannot be sustained at our present high rate of water use, housing, food, land use and mode of transport and has to be reduced, not increased, with Premier Geoff Gallop warning in a Media Statement released 23 July 2001 of a need for better planning to cope with a predicted population of more than two million over the next three decades which flies in the face of the warnings by eminent Scientists and Ecologists that WA's population is already ecologically unsustainable.

Professor Peter Newman boasted at some of the Seminars on Sustainability that he spoke at 122 public meetings in WA, obviously to make this planned population rise as palatable as possible to Western Australians as the Governments mouthpiece, so I feel it is just a cynical public relations exercise for us to have to cope with this push for more people, no matter what we write and say, and the financial costs to taxpayers who had to fork out the money for these "Sustainability Seminars", let alone the future costs to the environment and ecological debt we leave for future generations, cannot be measured in Dollars and cents. A perfect example is the Brookdale toxic site disaster where present generations and our dwindling Flora and Fauna already suffer.

It is criminally irresponsible for the State Government to try to cramm more people into WA and the Howard Government should be lobbied to end immigration, as our natural birth rate is already unsustainable.

We have huge species loss because of habitat destruction for more housing and infrastructure, with one recent example of 10ha of Pristine Fairfield Bushland in Canning Vale having been given the go ahead by Environment Minister Judy Edwards to be cleared, even though there are rare plant and animal species in danger of extinction. Environment reporter Mike Bramford states that for every hectare of bush cleared 500 reptiles will be killed and birds and mammals that have nowhere else to go will also die, many because of lack of shelter and food sources. So it is high time that our biggest problem, that drives all the others, unsustainable population growth, is addressed by our leaders and urgently acted upon.

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