

**HON PREMIER**

Please find attached for your consideration a final response to *Focus on the Future: The Draft Sustainability Strategy: Consultation Draft*, together with costings and a time schedule for implementation of actions as requested.

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MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS

## Final Response of the Department of Culture and the Arts to the September 2002 Consultation Draft of *Focus on the Future: The Western Australian Sustainability Strategy: Consultation Draft*

The Department of Culture and the Arts congratulates the Government on *Focus on the Future: The Western Australian Sustainability Strategy: Consultation Draft*. It welcomes the opportunity to work with a range of government agencies on its implementation and makes the following observations and comments.

- The vision statement in the section on *Sustainability Through Culture and the Arts* could be better expressed in the final document as

*Culture and the arts are a source and a catalyst for developing the Western Australian community's sense of identity, place and vision for a sustainable future.*

- The arts should be used as a tool by government in advocating its sustainability agenda to the community and industry.
- Arts and cultural organizations can play a significant role in assisting communities to define and enhance their sense of place and identity and are a rich source of stories for both regional and metropolitan communities.
- Indigenous Cultural Centres in Western Australia have the potential to contribute significantly to community and regional identity and tourism but are currently suffering from a significant reduction in support as a result of the recent Federal Government review of ATSIC. This has left many such centres without vital base funding. Sustainability of these centres requires a whole of government response.
- Cultural planning should be embedded in town planning to achieve a balanced approach to the development of new and revitalised communities.
- Application of the government's Percent for Art Scheme should be considered as part of the proposed *Statement of Planning Policy on Public and Community Housing*.
- Biodiversity should be addressed under both the chapters on *Global Sustainability* and *Sustainable Use of Natural Resources*.
- Libraries play a vital role in sustainability through the collection and dissemination of information on the natural and cultural heritage (the stories of place and people) and make an important contribution to business and industry.

- Given its location on the Indian Ocean, Western Australia has a special advantage over other states in developing social, cultural and trading relationships with the countries of the Indian Ocean Rim. The arts and cultural portfolio is particularly well placed to exploit this comparative advantage and assist the development of these relationships through cultural exchanges, research and exhibition partnerships. It has already participated in a number of projects of this kind with its regional neighbours and is planning further activities, which will actively contribute to regional sustainability. The Strategy should acknowledge that cultural understandings are central to sustainability and development of business, trade, social and security relationships in the Indian Ocean region. A statement to this effect should be included in the section *Contributing to Global Sustainability*.
- The long-term development of appropriate cultural infrastructure is essential to the sustainability of the State's arts and cultural life. It has the potential to be iconic in nature and can contribute significantly to the built environment adding meaning and identity to urban and regional landscapes. It can have significant implications for tourism and the economy. Development of this infrastructure should be seen as a tourism and economic investment, as well as a social and cultural investment.
- Suggest re wording of

5.32 Replace "Ensure" with "Recognise"

5.33 Replace "Support Indigenous issues in planning..." with the words "Involve Indigenous people directly in planning..."

5.36 Replace the words "Improve the opportunities for children and young people..." with the words "Actively engage children and young people..."