

30 December 2002

Professor Peter Newman
Director
Sustainability Policy Unit
Dept of the Premier and Cabinet
197 St Georges Terrace
Perth 6000

Dear Professor Newman

Thank you for sending me a copy of the consultation draft of *Focus on the Future*.

The draft is to be congratulated on the following statement:

“The global population needs to stabilise, as a continuously growing population undermines sustainability.” (p.75)

Why does the Draft not apply this to Western Australia? Page 75 claims that population issues with regard to WA are considered under other sections, but this is not the case. For example the section on Water (p.153) discusses the aim that annual water consumption per capita should be reduced from 170 kl to 155 kl by 2012. This is an admirable aim but it will achieve nothing if population increases by a similar proportion.

Your draft contains no graph or table giving population growth figures for WA. A graph for the growth of Sydney is attached. If one were prepared for WA over the same period it would be the same shape. As you say, a continuously growing population undermines sustainability.

You omit the size and growth of the WA population from your document despite the fact that it is a multiplying factor for every issue you raise.. It is the elephant in the lounge room, the emperor with no clothes. Without factoring in population growth your excellent initiative will remain a futile semantic exercise. That would be a shame.

Yours sincerely,

Jill Curnow, Vice-President, NSW Branch, SPA Inc

600 Rydal Road Hampton NSW 2790

2 January 2003

Professor Peter Newman
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Dept of the Premier and Cabinet
197 St Georges Terrace
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SECOND SUBMISSION

Dear Professor Newman,

I refer to my submission of 30 December in which I noted that *Focus on the Future* ignored population size and growth in WA.

Frustrated by lack of information in the document I prepared my own graph and a copy is attached. It is drawn by hand but gives an accurate picture. Population size in WA doubles almost every generation, yet *Focus on the Future* ignores this issue.

A key target for sustainability is on p.150: **“Reduce resource consumption by a factor of 4 by 2020”** This is an admirable target which should go a long way to achieving sustainability, but it has profound implications for the people of WA.

With continuing population increase this means that the citizens of WA will need to reduce their individual consumption first to a quarter, then to a fifth, and so on.

Of course if population in WA were falling, then it may be possible to decrease overall consumption while per capita consumption remained constant or even rose.

For sustainability to be understood the targets need to be quantified while allowing for population size and growth. Failure of the document to acknowledge this could reduce its value to little more than wishful thinking.

Yours sincerely,

Jill Curnow, Vice-President, NSW Branch, SPA Inc
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