

Sustainability Blueprint

THE WA Environment Alliance's Sustainability Focus Group recently released its blueprint for sustainability in Western Australia.

The Sustainability Focus Group submitted a comprehensive 126 page submission to the Government's discussion paper *Focus on the Future - A Sustainability Strategy for WA*.

The submission covered the definition of sustainability, the role of sustainability in Government decision making, the role of government structures and processes, how to assess sustainability, the role of industry, education and cultural shift, the role of the community and specific issues such as natural resource management.

The Alliance commended the Government, in particular, for:

- pursuing positive environmental outcomes alongside, and not at odds with, positive social and economic results;
- its commitment to a reasonably comprehensive process of consultation; and
- the establishment of a Sustainability Policy Unit.

The Alliance however, has a number of concerns and reservations about *Focus on the Future*, including:

- the Government's definition of 'sustainability' does not, in itself, include goals for the process;
- whether or not sustainability will be integral to all levels of Government decision-making;
- whether the pursuit of sustainability will be adequately enshrined in legislation;
- how businesses will be involved with the sustainability agenda;
- how the community will be involved in decision-making;

The pursuit of sustainability in WA will, in itself, be unsustainable if the State does not promote a cultural paradigm shift in the community, the private sector and all

levels of government. Sustainability should be promoted as the way of life in the 21st century, not just a particular Labor Party initiative.

This means a new way of doing things – we can't promote sustainability while continuing to support developments that are fundamentally unsustainable.

The submission made 83 recommendations with priorities on:

- The need for fundamental change if WA is to become sustainable.
- Adoption of a whole of government, integrated approach to sustainability.
- A comprehensive review of all legislation to ensure that sustainability principles are incorporated (similar to that carried out for competition policy).
- The establishment of a Sustainability Commission via legislation.
- Use of Government's considerable purchasing power to drive the agenda for change.
- The commitment of substantial resources to developing and implementing the Strategy.
- The establishment of an integrated assessment process for all Cabinet submissions.
- Development and implementation of a program on sustainability by each government agency.
- Development of strategies to move WA away from an economy based on being an energy intensive, bulk exporter of low value goods to an economy that uses less energy, natural resources and materials and does not produce large amounts of greenhouse gases.

Sustainability was a key election commitment of the Gallop Government, and it must take a strong leadership role in promoting and pursuing sustainability. We look forward to the release of a comprehensive draft Sustainability Strategy in August. ■

Burrup Development Proposals Fail the Test

THE Conservation Council fully supports the Karratha and Dampier communities in their campaign to save Hearson Cove and the Burrup Peninsula.

Conservation Council Coordinator Rachel Siewert said, "Locating \$6 billion of polluting industrial plant and equipment on the Burrup will seriously degrade the region's only easily accessible swimming beach."

"The people of Karratha and Dampier love Hearson Cove. To pollute such a beautiful place with noise and gas emissions, and visually offensive industrial structures, that would be permanently lit, would be an act of environmental vandalism.

"The Gallop Government has inherited a bad piece of environmental planning. The Burrup is simply not suitable for this type of development. But it isn't too late to re-direct this phase of the region's industrial development to the nearby Maitland industrial estate.

"Any sensible assessment of development shows Maitland best meets the needs of industry, the local community and those who want to see the Burrup's world heritage rock art and conservation values protected.

"Maitland is the ideal site for industries processing north-west shelf gas. Indeed, it has been identified for later phases of development. Rather than spend \$220 million on infrastructure for the Burrup, and later \$300 million developing Maitland, the cheapest and best environmental choice is to invest now in quality infrastructure for Maitland. This will save the environment and taxpayers' money. ■