

SUBMISSION TO PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO CLIMATE CHANGE

I would like to very briefly address 5 issues that have a profound impact on climate change and how we are dealing with it.

1. **Government Representation**

I feel that we are being misrepresented by our current government – both federally and locally for the main reason that their political donors are too powerful. I would like to propose that all donations to political parties be banned and all financial interests of party members be declared and scrutinised by the ATO and the Electoral Commission. Parties should be allocated a budget from parliament of campaign publicity based on membership numbers. Also, Government investment should be more environmentally orientated. For example, the Government Super Fund investments need careful scrutiny. There is too much investment in Managed Investment Schemes that rely on water delivered down to the lower catchment that is environmentally unsustainable and could act to skew policy.

2. **Revegetation**

All landholders should be encouraged to plant more trees. Land could be leased from farmers for revegetation at attractive commercial rates just as land is leased for solar farms. Landcare groups be better funded and resourced to conduct field days to aid in revegetation and sustainable land management.

3. **Public Land Management**

Better resourced. More controlled burns – not just asset protection. Embers travel a long way! Reforestation of public lands for controlled timber production. No more logging of existing state forests. Encourage logging companies to plant their own forests.

4. **Renewables**

Encourage investment and research in renewable energy production and storage.

5. **Water Reliability**

Otherwise known as Water Security. This is essential for irrigated agriculture and our food security. The Broken River system, for example, has been ruined for irrigation in the name of the environment. Hardly a sustainable, mutually beneficial solution. With increasing storm events and a drying climate, a reliable water supply will become an increasingly valuable resource. We need to re-investigate the concept of passing environmental flows, many of which were merely figures plucked out of the air during Bulk Entitlement reviews. Few are based on any scientific evidence. Some of this water could be retained in storages to aid reliability for users. Some water licences may need to be bought back to also help bolster our storages. More thought needs to be given to investing in more storages, especially in the upper catchment, that can have a dual purpose of hydro power and be gravity fed to users. More thought needs to be given to reducing storages in the lower catchment that are subject to excessive evaporation. Transfer of water between the upper and lower catchments should come with an environmental reduction factor, and vice versa. One ML of water from the upper Murray, transferred to the lower Murray should only be worth, say, 0.5ML because of the losses along the way and the cost of getting it there. This would encourage investment in irrigation

in areas that can make better use of the water not just in areas that have cheap land that perhaps should not be irrigated because of poor drainage and salt accumulation.

With thanks

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