

**To: Department of Water and
Environmental Regulation
Western Australia**

**Cc: Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
Minister for Environment
Western Australia**

Regarding: Public Consultation on the
Climate Change in WA Issues Paper

Submitted by: Julie Mason – member of the
Australian Parents for Climate Action -
Fremantle Group

28 November 2019

Firstly, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the climate change discussion paper for WA.

I am a concerned mum of two (1 and 3 years old) who wonders what sort of future waits for my sons. I am part of the Australian Parents for Climate Action - Fremantle Group, supporting the School Strikes for Climate Change. I work in a professional services organisation. After reading the latest IPCC report (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) I am deeply, deeply worried.

It is commendable that WA wants to "...to achieve net zero emissions for our state by 2050" as per the Paris agreement. Although Australia has met their first target reducing emissions to 5 per cent below 2000 levels by 2020, the government projections report in no way shows Australia meeting its next target of 26-28% below 2005 levels without drastic action, let alone WA who's emissions are rising; (<https://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change/climate-science-data/emissions-projections>).

I am also incredibly saddened to read;

- *'WA is the only state with rapidly rising emissions, due to uncontrolled pollution from LNG production growth.*
- *Currently the WA LNG industry is the biggest driver of Australian emissions growth. This pollution source is already responsible for a 4.7% increase on Australia's 2005 Paris Agreement baseline.*
- *WA LNG pollution has risen from 9% of the state's total in 2005 to 36% today. This represents a 35% increase on WA's 2005 baseline under the Paris Agreement.'*

Source; <https://www.cleanstate.org.au/media-release/was-runaway-train-lng-pollution-crashing-australias-carbon-targets/>

The latest UN climate summit also discussed that more was needed to achieve a reduced target of 1.5% warming and that targets of a 45% reduction by 2030 would be advisable. Therefore, it does not appear that the current plan goes far enough? Can we do better than trying to achieve the current national targets? How can we transcend our 'Mining state' so that people can transition to new industries? There is only a small window of opportunity before other countries take the lead in these new industries.

I read in your paper that "Western Australia contributes around 17% of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions" and that "our states emissions have increased by one quarter" since 2005. It doesn't appear the state is in line to meet current Paris agreement targets? How too, are we treating Australia's contribution to global emission levels through the sales of fossil fuels that are burned elsewhere? Are these included in our global contribution figures?

It is positive that the WA state has stated that it will agree a strategic plan and won't wait for the federal governments (in) action. I commend your leadership as public pressure for climate action continues to intensify from all areas of society. However, reading this paper and learning about

the great things that are happening in other states and countries, it is clear that this is nowhere near what is required and gives me little confidence that you plan to start reducing emissions immediately.

I ask, will you be declaring a climate emergency as 25 countries, 1,195 jurisdictions around the world and c. 75 Australian councils have? (<https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/climate-emergency-declarations-cover-15-million-citizens/>). I also ask, how you will be publicising the plan so that everyday WA residents can see the importance that the WA government is placing on these issues and the changes that need to be made.

We can see individuals changing their habits from a grassroots movement – but this will not be enough without clear policy change and leadership from government. What can we learn from other countries where governments are being courageous and are driving and leading systemic change? Firstly, I believe we need to commit to legally binding legislation as a matter of urgency in the areas of;

- Immediate reductions targets
- Net Zero targets
- Renewable energy targets

As requested in the consultation process, please find comments below in regards to the paper. I haven't cited many studies here as the science is clear and I am not a climate or environmental scientist. Your plan of action is surely driven by such analysis for example the IPCC report, but instead, for inspiration, have focussed on media reports and articles; *most* of them positive solutions occurring across the country and internationally.

I also highly recommend if not already consulted, that these resources are regarded. A lot of what you are asking for in regards to case studies, science, return on investments or opportunities have been covered;

- DRAWDOWN, The most comprehensive plan ever proposed to reverse global warming – edited by Pail Hawken
- The Third Industrial Revolution - Jeremey Firkin
- 2040 – The movie, the book or the Facebook groups

All around me I hear the climate crisis conversation happening. I see people frustrated at the government's lack of action and people joining groups such as the School Strikes, Extinction Rebellion, Environmental protection groups and Recycle, Reuse, Reduce groups. There is a movement happening and I am happy to see at last, how fast it is occurring. 'The vast majority of Australians agree that State and Territory Governments should be either taking a leading role in or contributing to action on climate change (84%)'. [APO Org](#).

Isn't it time for Australia to be seen as a leader rather than a follower and always one of the last developed countries to act? A 'wait and see what everyone else does' country? Why not get ahead of the game and 'Be on the right side of history' as Jacinda's government has done in NZ. [NZ Passes Leading Carbon Emissions Law](#). There appears to be more than enough funds if you make fossil fuel burning companies pay the appropriate taxes and carbons offsets that they should be paying and stop subsidising these sectors.



1. Transforming energy generation

Renewables;

- WA has consistently strong winds coupled with vast areas where wind farms could be positioned. It has been calculated that the savings generated by implementing these solutions greatly outweigh the costs so surely it makes common sense to invest heavily in this industry.
- What better free resource in WA but the sun for solar power! We need to ensure that government worthwhile rebates for solar energy remain in place to incentivise homeowners AND renters.
- I want to see targets / incentives for corporations to move to renewables or to install solar.
- We need policies / incentives for large scale rooftops such as storage facilities or factories to have solar installed on their rooftops.
- Introducing solar micro grid frameworks as mainstream and moving away from state run / corporation run power lines and infrastructure.
- Solar Battery rebates should be available for residential and commercial to encourage uptake
- Other states are already 100% renewable or close to it. How did they achieve this? Can we use their knowledge? Why are they so ahead of WA? We need to be on par at the very least. It is embarrassing and we are letting the country / world down.
- What a wonderful yet limited opportunity to retrain and reskill some of WA's workforce to new industries such as renewables. We need to offer training and incentives to move our workforce across as we anticipate further divestment from fossil fuel mining.

Resources & Examples

[Project Drawdown - Solutions](#)

[Atlassian 100% renewable energy by 2025](#)

[Woolworths solar installation](#)

[France rooftops to be covered in solar](#)

[World Economic Forum - Seoul solar panels on public buildings](#)

[RAC - Perth houses trading solar](#)

[Solar Micro grids](#)

[ACT Renewable](#)



2. Industry innovation

Fossil fuel mining;

- **There should be NO NEW coal, oil or gas projects and a clear plan to scale down and stop current sites. The public is asking why our leaders are continuing to invest. Where is the urgency to move away from these fossil fuel burning industries and move to clean industries? Wouldn't we want to jump on the limited opportunity to be a leader in this field or will we lose the race as other countries take the lead?**
- We need to stop subsidising carbon emitting / burning companies so that they are forced to evolve. They need to be onboard and part of the discussion to meet the state targets. Did we provide such subsidies to retail when online shopping reduced sales significantly? Those retailers are forced to evolve to the new state of the world, and thus so should fossil fuel organisations who are rich and fat from their profits.

Resources & Examples

[Global fossil fuel subsidies](#)

[Adani unviable without subsidies](#)

[Chevron Gorgan gas sequestration](#)

[Gorgan delayed carbon capture](#)

[WA govt Hydrogen renewables](#)

There should be no exemptions – just a plan for the way forward. We need to discontinue supporting corporations that profit from fossil fuels and move our support to renewable industries. Corporations in this industry need to have clear strategies to adapt to the new age and evolve to transform their businesses, just as they will do for other threats. **It is criminal** that the government is not listening to its people on this issue.

- When companies like Chevron breach their contracted environmental obligations, the government needs to authorise the strongest possible retribution and demand heavy fines and carbon offset actions to the same levels
- **ABOSULTELY NO FRACKING.** This has been banned in the UK. How anyone can think this wouldn't hurt our planet is beyond me.

Renewables industry;

- Divestment is happening at a rapid pace. WA needs to be ahead of the game and think strategically, positioning us as leaders in the fields of Renewables.
- The Hydrogen from renewables industry provides a great way to do this and to provide jobs for WAs workers that will surely be affected in the coming years with divestment. Redirecting funding to this new industry, instead of subsidies provided to the fossil fuel industry, could potentially set the state up for a strong economic future.
- Marine permaculture looks to have huge implications for reducing carbon emissions and creating a new industry. What an opportunity!
- We need to work with potential employers in these areas to train and upskill future employees to transition from mining to the renewables industry. We need to be strategic. Let us learn from past experiences such as the Australian car manufacturing industry. It was clear the end was coming. It is more strategic to fund the retraining and redeployment of employees to a new industry rather than subsidising and funding to try to keep a dying one afloat. **And IT WILL DIE.**
- Philanthropists are contributing to a greener future everywhere. We need to see who wants to support these new industries and technologies in WA.
- Wave and tidal power technology is 'making waves'. How can we take grasp of this opportunity in our sea side state?

[Climate Foundation](#)
[Marine](#)
[Permaculture](#)

[The Intrepid](#)
[Foundation](#)
[Seaweed](#)
[Regeneration](#)

[Collapse of AU car](#)
[industry](#)

[Bill Gates back](#)
[company solar](#)
[breakthrough](#)



3. Future Mobility

Electric Vehicles (EV);

- How upsetting to hear that the plan for WA is to keep the '512 compressed natural gas buses and 1 138 diesel buses' when there is so many other options in this space. Budget responses are not enough at this time. We need investment. There will be initial costs but costs we need to bear.

**Resources &
Examples**

[Parliament WA -](#)
[Public transport](#)

[China EVs](#)

- A definite barrier is the cost and availability of electric vehicles and the availability of charging stations. We need to increase the number of charging stations, minimise taxes on EVs to make them more affordable and offer rebates, incentives or tax cuts for those who purchase EVs.
- We need to set restrictions on imports of fuel cars or impose higher taxes. We need to set targets for imports of EVs and make them more affordable for the average citizen who would choose an EV if there were more affordable options. Other counties are actively doing this already.
- Imposing targets on corporations who have fleets to migrate to EVs
- Could building EV be the new industry innovation for WA?

[Transport NSW](#)
[Electric Vehicles](#)

[EV Cabs](#)

Public transport;

- Perth seems to be one of those cities where everyone uses their car – How so we make public transport faster, safer, cheaper and more appealing?
- Taxis are expensive and can be an unattractive option. Is that is why Uber has done so well here? We need to make Taxi's cheaper and more accessible. Incentives / subsidies for Electric taxis would assist.
- Electric / Solar buses and trains etc –NSW seems to be doing a lot in this area, we need to learn from them.
- Future state – driverless cars! Can people owning cars become a thing of the past – imagine how much land that would free up with no garages required or parking lots – we could plant trees!

Precincts;

- Ensure that residential precincts are have access to things like supermarkets so that cars do not have to be used for short trips.
- We need to have more blue sky thinking / challenge the norm - Wouldn't it be better if people could take their shopping trolley home with them? I would walk to the supermarket and walk home if I could take a trolley with me – if one was close enough to walk that is.
- Trains around the state. The distances in WA are insane. Surely trains around the state down to Margaret River and beyond and up to Ningaloo reed would not only create jobs and increase tourism but decrease the need to use cars on long road trips?



4. Regional Prosperity

- As we are seeing with the NSW fires and national droughts, climate change is happening and we are starting to see and feel the impacts. Climate emergencies are being declared across councils but state and national plans are needed. As more and more of these occur, the pressure on government will surely increase.
- Water is being redirected to mines that Australian's don't support and agriculture that is outdated and drives climate change, diverting from

**Resources &
Examples**

[Adani plans to take 12.5 Billion litres of water](#)

natural ecosystems and rivers. How can we possibly sign off projects and large operating sites like this when our country is in drought?

- Regenerative / Carbon farming has been shown to dramatically reduce the effects of climate change and improve soil health and farm yield. We need a plan for education, grants and subsidies provided to farms that are run within this new ethos.
- Studies are clear that the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers are bad for our soil health, ecosystems especially bees. These should be banned. Subsidies should be applied to organic or carbon farms. WE need to encourage a shift in thinking and incentivise farmers to farm differently.
- Studies are clear that a plant based diet is better for both our planet and our health. How can we encourage farmers to move from livestock to plant based agriculture? A clear state plan is needed for how we use our land. Have we examined our imports versus exports to restrict or encourage imports and exports for the betterment of WA?
- WA has vast stretches of vacant land –we need to invest to plant more trees.



5. Waste Reduction

- As Fremantle residents, we commend the FOGO initiative. This has even gone some way to reducing my mental anxiety around climate change feeling like I am contributing to a better future. Imagine when this is WA/Australia wide and the impact it has on not only waste but mental health?
- A war should be declared on single use plastics - everything from bags to plastic knives and forks to cling wrap. There are so many products on the market that are biodegradable or made from corn starch or sugar products that it is now criminal to pedal items that are directly contributing to waste. Taxes and disincentives need to be added for the sale of these items. Organisations making 'green' alternatives should be supported. A state/national standard should be applied - A green star rating.
- Supermarkets are some of the biggest food wasters and should be held to account for their actions. Food waste when there are people hungry is criminal and waste from packaging and plastic should be addressed with a matter of urgency. We need to place more onus on some of the biggest contributors to state waste. Annual reporting should be provided with ways to reduce waste identified. There are many examples where food waste from supermarkets needs to be donated to charities in Europe.
- How can we educate the people in the state around waste and their purchasing power? Most people have a TV. We need to introduce state advertising around this such as previous campaigns on littering or

[Carbon8 Regenerative farming](#)

[Carbon farming](#)

[Drawdown plant rich diet](#)

[Ethiopia plants 250M trees in one day](#)

[NZ to plant 1 Billion trees](#)

[India plants 220 million trees in one day](#)

Resources & Examples

[Drawdown Reduced food waste](#)

[France supermarkets to donate food waste](#)

[Italy passes a law to send unsold food to charities](#)

[2040 for schools and teachers](#)

public safety issues. How can we educate our school kids? The 2040 team are doing some wonderful work in this space.



6. Safe and Healthy Communities

- More and more we are hearing about Climate change anxiety. It is no wonder with the majority of climate and related scientists around the globe agreeing that we have limited time to make drastic changes or there is no going back. We are hearing stories of children with anxiety and related depression and through conversations with concerned parents, we are hearing comments such as lying awake at night and a feeling of helplessness. This is a public health issue. People are feeling powerless and hopeless and therefore shut down and are unable to discuss climate change. They aren't making any moves to changing their lifestyles as 'what is the point' with the government and corporations not leading the cause. How motivating to feel that our leaders have acknowledged the issues through declaring a climate emergency and then are making clear and planned actions to address the issues.
- As we have seen through the devastation of the NSW fires, fire chiefs are frustrated with the lack of action around climate change, the lack of action from their warnings, and now being told not to discuss climate change. It is time to listen to the experts. Panels and committees need to be set up with a power outside of politics.
- Education / tell the truth / community events and information sessions on the plan for the state and achievements against targets / dashboards / rally everyone to work together and feel empowered to contribute instead of them feeling complicit in a system they can't change.

Resources & Examples

[Climate Anxiety](#)

[Fire Chiefs demand action on climate change](#)

[NZ Climate Commission](#)



7. Water Security

- As mentioned above, natural water resources need to be made more available to the environment and communities, before agriculture and factories / mines.
- How can we ensure that the rain that does fall is absorbed into the ground eg; Regenerative / carbon farming, clever water management, digging holes etc. We can learn from other countries where water is limited?
- Household green water systems should be subsidised or made compulsory by a certain date
- Can we introduce new initiatives where grey water from the houses goes through a filter to the street to water the verge trees? Smart thinking so that nothing is wasted / circular?

Resources & Examples

[Re-greening Africa through digging holes](#)

[WGEA reporting](#)

- Corporations and large organisations should be required to report water usage with penalties or incentives applied. Can we publicise or name and shame to encourage innovative ways to reduce usage? If there is nothing to drive or incentives change, why would they change? This has been applied for things such as WGEA reporting to drive corporate change. So too should it be applied for the climate?



8. Liveable towns and Cities

Resources & Examples

- Everything mentioned above
- Perth is just too hot! Children are kept indoors to protect them from the sun. With more heat, air conditioning use goes up, plants die, skin cancers increase etc. If Perth keeps heating to 2.7% hotter by 2030 as predicted in the paper, will anyone want to live here? How will that effect the economy?
- We need Initiatives that cool the suburbs down. How can we do town planning better? Planting more trees and creating shading areas to bring down temperatures makes good environmental sense. Green roofs and more green spaces. What can we do with roofs and housing materials to bring the temperature down? What other initiatives are we seeing that we can introduce?
- Shady and drought ready trees rather than scrubby natives. Suburbs with olive trees (?) on the verge are shady and cool. Street with natives have limited shade. Maybe native is not the best answer all the time. Can we use household grey water to run off (mentioned above) to water verge trees so we can have shadier varieties to bring down temperatures in residential areas?
- Where is our rain water run off going with more and more concrete? What is the plan to get water into the soil rather than running off into drains?
- We are seeing new residential and commercial areas devoid of trees. Policies should be in place for new residences whereby you can't build a house without installing a quota of new trees
- The Drawdown project shows removing refrigerants to be the no1 solution. We need to move to phase out HFC's and introduce greener alternatives and invest in ways to destroy discarded appliances with refrigerants without emitting HFC's. As Perth has such a hot climate, which is increasing rapidly, cooling systems will be used more and create a cycle. We need to address this as a matter of urgency.

[Drawdown - Refrigerants](#)



9. Resilient Infrastructure and Business

Resources & Examples

- We seem to be taking too long to make decisions and directing funds to the wrong areas such as managing climate change rather than preventing climate change. EG; managing coastal erosion

[Italian council is flooded immediately after rejecting measures on climate change](#)



10. Protecting Biodiversity

Resources & Examples

- It is imperative that we stop the mass collapse of our species. Our coral reefs are in danger and therefore the animals that live in this ecosystem. Koalas are in serious decline. Bees and insects are on the decline. One cannot understand why these issues are not a matter of national priority and funding considering the impact this will have on tourism, biodiversity and food supply.
- A Committee of environmental scientists and climate scientists with the power and funding needed to affect change should be assembled. Governments should be acting on their advice in this state of emergency.
- We need to minimise the use of chemicals and fertilizers to stop poisoning our land and the risk of them running off into our waterways
- What can we learn from national and international innovative practices Eg; Africa digging holes?
- As mentioned above, invest in Marine permaculture to bring our oceans back to life and to sequester the massive amounts of carbon our country is producing
- We need to ensure that our old forests are protected and that new trees are planted
- Are we seriously considering endangering Ningaloo with mining, pipelines and fracking? [REDACTED]

[Re-greening Africa](#)

[Protect Ningaloo](#)



11. Strengthening Adaptive Capacity

Resources & Examples

- **Publicly declare a climate emergency** so we can get everyone on board and set expectations for change. We need to be strong setting targets, and driving change – this is not optional – we all need to do our part. It will be uncomfortable but it is a matter of life and death – literally.
- Education, advertising and funding can assist communities and sectors to move to a more sustainable way of living.
- Look at how fast we moved from single use plastic bags. It doesn't actually take much time to make fundamental changes in society but we need to be brave and courageous and there is no other time than

now.