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Inquiry into the Queensland Government's economic response to COVID-19 submission

Dear Committee Secretary and Committee members,

Recent events (drought, fires, insect plagues, floods, pandemic) have given us the unprecedented opportunity to see what a fossil free future could look like and to fast track sustainable energy and employment resources in the community.

Public money and resources could be used to fast track the transition from Oil, Coal, Gas and Fracking industries to sustainable energy and employment opportunities in local communities.

I just watched the launch of the Million Jobs plan by the Beyond Zero Emissions millionjobs.org.au (a copy can be accessed at this website <https://bze.org.au/the-million-jobs-plan/>) which was launched on 29 June, 2020. On the same day, Americas largest fracking company Chesapeake filed for bankruptcy. In a Carbon constrained economy Australia has unprecedented opportunity to create jobs in this exciting new future where investors are lining up to take part (as they are divesting from fossil fuels).

To get to this future existing fossil fuel producers need to be encouraged to change clean up operations to capture all fugitive emissions. Could Defence force personnel be seconded to help and introduce these transitions into the operations and communities?

Establishing employment, energy and food sources in the local area substantially reduces costs of travel, infrastructures and transport and would mean that the containment of these pandemics would not cause the devastating impact on the economy that it has to date.

Providing public funds and government resources to promote investment, development, research and implementation of local area projects will future proof the economy and communities in respect of future events:

People should be encouraged to repair, reduce, reuse, repurpose and recycle to change their wasteful attitude to a resourceful one. Developing a self sustaining kerbside collection model to reduce larger items going to landfill.

Recycling facilities and programs in local areas like Ewaste, men's shed. Introducing a recycling system similar to that introduced in Germany (they introduced legislation which made the manufacturer and purchaser responsible for the cost of disposal of all packaging including packaging for transport). This might include establishing a process to create filament from recycled plastic (for use in Micro factories in local area)

Micro Factories using 3D printers so whatever is needed can be produced in the local area. (eg printed solar panels as being researched by Prof. Paul Dastoor's and colleagues at University of Newcastle).

Superfood (nutrient dense foods) production using Aquaponic, Hydroponic, Solar Powered Vertical Garden systems (See Shane Sadkowsky of Space Plants VGS), permaculture (See Morag Gamble of Our Permaculture Life <https://permacultureeducationinstitute.org/>).

Easy access education- establishing access to practical local learning and practical experience opportunities for anyone interested in learning them e.g. permaculture gardening, Motor Mechanics, bike maintenance, shoe making and leather work (Tactile Learning Centre <https://tlcentre.com.au/>), Vertical Gardens, Space Plants VGS, Biodigestors- Biobowser Ron Lakim, Pinjarra Hills, Organic Composts John Daly of Ecoenviron, Ewaste technology recycling and Shedwest mens shed woodwork and metal work.

People on unemployment benefits could volunteer at local organisations in a field or area they are interested in for a couple of days a week.

This education should also be available in prisons so to create job opportunities and aid with reintroduction into society. Self sustaining prisons (i.e. produce their own food and water) should be placed in remote locations for placement of long term, violent offenders a 24 hour video stream should be available for viewing by public. If anyone shows that they have been rehabilitated by their behavior they can get early release and be returned to society.

Establishing opportunities for local unemployed to help out in the community or have the opportunity to pick fruit by providing accommodation and transport to fruit picking locations.

Every constituent member should have the opportunity to grow food where they live and work. Introducing community food waste, sewerage and composting systems which capture methane and reduces need to transport to another area.

Biodigestors (see Biobowser at Pinjarra Hills) in all Office buildings, Shopping Centres, Nursing Homes and Hospitals to produce methane and fertiliser to heat water and feed into food production systems. The introduction of sustainable, hydro, solar and wind energy, water capture, gravity fed batteries and food gardens might also be considered.

This would involve a revision of building design to establish social housing with 7.5 energy rating to incorporate capture and processing of grey water to feed into the watering system for the

garden. Incorporate Food gardens, energy efficient capture from multiple sources and safe use of technology (according to Environmental Health Trust recommendations (corded and optic fibre systems rather than wifi). See recommendations in BZE Buildings Pre-release Briefing 16 June, 2020 - ahead of The Million Jobs Plan on 29 June, 2020 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLdo_KKP_DY). Energiesprong has retrofitted some public housing in Nottingham in UK and made the costs of energy for those taking up the retrofit to lower, whilst making their houses more comfortable and energy efficient.

Development of Gravity fed hydro batteries (see gravity light) using shipping containers to store captured solar, wind, tidal and heat energy.

Other considerations for future proofing our economy.

Logging - Please cancel all logging licences in all states. The management of all natural environment should be left first and foremost to rangers trained in Aboriginal land care methods in conjunction with voting land holders and voting residents of the local area. Please refer to David Holmgren's 'Bushfire Resilient Land and Climate Care' for measures to build more bushfire resilient communities.

Industrial Hemp; (has no psychedelic affects) seed is a superfood and has been shown to have exceptional versatility in the textile industry (clothing, paper, houses, biofuel, an airplane has been built out of it stronger than steel, a supercapacitor more conductive then graphene as well as filament used by 3D printers). Industrial Hemp may therefore be a sustainable option to replace or complement plastic in the 3D manufacturing area.

There is increasing evidence that current farming practices requiring increasing amounts of chemical fertilisers, insecticides (which destroy beneficial insects, microbes and soil structure) and herbicides (such as Glyphosate classified as a probable carcinogen and found in most foods we eat) are more costly and less sustainable than regenerative farming practices. Regenerative farming practices involve improving the soil with organic matter and soil conditioners (such as John Daly's eco-environment products). Healthy soil means more water retention, the plants are healthier and the fruit is healthier. Healthier plants are not as susceptible to pests and disease and have more nutrients. Companion planting and variety are an important part of regenerative farming (like permaculture).

Current Water licences are based on who has paid the most money. This is unsustainable. Family farms and individual voters who are producing food crops should have a free water allocation calculated by industry experts in consultation with those farmers. Australian owned food companies employing Australian voters using regenerative farming practices should come next. Priority of the remaining water allocations would be given to those crops produced regeneratively which are multipurpose and require less water for more nutritional or functional density ie Hemp over Cotton, macadamia nuts over almonds, chai and linseed over rice. We need to consider the water requirements of a crop first and foremost in all agricultural pursuits to ensure best economical use of precious water supplies.

Given that there are far more sustainable options which could be implemented and create jobs in the local and wider area, I would appreciate your valued consideration of these ideas and concepts. Should you have any queries or questions about anything contained in this submission please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for taking the time to review these suggestions and all you do to direct us into a better future for our children and the world.

Best regards

Margaret King

Reasons to change course from fossil fuel energy sources

The drop in Oil, Gas and Coal prices have shown that these industries with their intensive water use, expensive establishment, transport, infrastructure and environmental costs and Fly in and out employment structure are not economically viable or sustainable in the foreseeable future. Since Methane has the Gross Warming Potential over the next 20 years of 86 times that of carbon dioxide we should be doing our best to ensure that all existing operations capture any leaks and remedy safety breaches which are affecting our all important aquifers.

There are over 15000 CSG operations in Queensland with a handful of inspectors. The recent CSIRO safety check examined 6 operations selected by Origin Energy. There are valid concerns regarding the lack of independent oversight in the Coal, Oil, and particularly Gas and CSG industries.

A Reuters article by Shadia Nasralla on 26 June, 2020. Satellites reveal major new gas industry methane leaks (1). This includes an undated image showing methane emission hotspots associated with oil, gas and coal between Jan 2019 and May 2020 showing that Queensland and NSW have some significant uncaptured emissions contributing to global warming.

An Australian Financial Review article (2) by Brad Thompson on 2 July 2019 indicates research foretold of these fugitive emissions being a problem which was not accounted for when applications for licences were being made.

Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility director of climate Dan Gocher said the expansion plans of Origin Energy, Santos, Woodside and others were not compatible with reducing gas usage to prevent global warming.

"These projects will lock in emissions for the next 30 years and for that reason investors must push back on gas companies' expansion plans in the strongest possible terms," he said.

Beyond Zero Emission chief executive Vanessa Petrie said Australia should take advantage of abundant wind and solar potential to become a world leader in renewables.

"Businesses and governments that remain wedded to high-carbon strategies, like fracking, are taking a gamble with high-risk stranded asset projects," she said.

An Sydney Morning Herald article (3) by Nick Toscano on 24 June 2024, shows that the reduction in energy consumption during the coronavirus lockdown has resulted in a reduction in the need for coal powered fuel during the day due to renewable energy pushing down wholesale prices.

1. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-climatechange-methane-satellites-insi/satellites-reveal-major-new-gas-industry-methane-leaks-idUSKBN23W3K4?fbclid=IwARoG5jvykLeUQ5BTYCwWBUNJIor6N9aH42ZErD5SPfRbnVU7n3U-PZ--HRs>
2. <https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/research-shows-lng-bigger-climate-change-threat-than-coal-20190701->

[p5231w?fbclid=IwARoEvsOgPwZCrZSv5tW7gVbGr7M1B5AHL_mkQCT5ypEjrTsU2jgkIsW920](https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/nation-s-top-coal-plant-cuts-output-amid-covid-19-renewables-pressure-20200624-p555qf.html?fbclid=IwARoEvsOgPwZCrZSv5tW7gVbGr7M1B5AHL_mkQCT5ypEjrTsU2jgkIsW920)

3. <https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/nation-s-top-coal-plant-cuts-output-amid-covid-19-renewables-pressure-20200624-p555qf.html?fbclid=IwAR1XKTzAeonWLOswK1RoSKhoHrYzFIpyNpGN2zRhVkYXciocTmNc2MLtFBw>