

**Geoff Grace**  
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To: Productivity Commission, Locked Bag 2, Collins St East, Melbourne, 8003

27 April 1999

## **SUPPLEMENTARY**

### **RE: SUBMISSION TO IMPLEMENTATION OF ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BY GOVT. DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

Below is a copy of an email dated 6 Jan 1999 to webmaster@pc.gov.au which explains the reason for this supplementary to my original submission of 9 November 1998.

I received a copy of the Report of the Inquiry into Ecologically Sustainable Land Management from the Industry Commission on 23 April '99. The report is entitled "A Full Repairing Lease" and the date on the cover of the report is 27 January 1998.

#### **COPY OF EMAIL SENT 6 JAN 1999**

Re: Inquiry by Productivity Commission into ESD by Commonwealth departments and agencies.

I made a submission to the above inquiry in the name of Geoff Grace - I understand that the report on the inquiry was completed in January 1998. Can you please help with information on the current status of the report?

I sent a letter to Minister Peter Costello attention Productivity Commission on the 10th November asking when the report would be tabled in Parliament so that copies of the report could be made available to former participants in the inquiry. No answer. I sent a further letter with copy of the first letter on 21 December 1998. No answer.

If you can locate either of my above letters it will tell you exactly why I need the report on that particular inquiry. The new inquiry re implementation of ESD by Govt depts needs to harmonise with the results of the former inquiry re ESD Land Management. Closing date for the current inquiry should be extended to allow the report to be distributed and read by participants in that inquiry.

I now try an email to see if that will yield a response. A one line email by return would at least be something. Can you please help? Thankyou.

Geoff Grace  
Tel. (02) 9817 2807  
Email **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION 27 April 1999  
From Geoff Grace  
TO  
**Implementation of Ecologically Sustainable Development  
by Commonwealth departments and agencies.**

The Report on *Ecologically Sustainable Land Management* (received 23 April 1999) draws to attention that in 1992, Australian Governments adopted a National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development. The strategy is concerned that the actions of the present generation should not compromise the ability of future generations to enjoy at least the same living standards and quality of life as the present generation enjoys. This is referred to as intergenerational equity. (Page 54 of Report on ESLM).

The report highlights the importance of “**natural capital**”. Page 3 of the executive summary:

“Many of the services of natural capital have the characteristics of a *public good* – a number of people enjoy them automatically and simultaneously but the extent of their enjoyment does not effect anyone else. **The larger the number of people affected the more difficult it is for individuals to conserve natural capital for future generations, either on their own or in voluntary cooperation with others.**”

Clearly, to conserve the maximum natural capital for future generations, the Government has a responsibility to ensure that the number of people in Australia – the ultimate population – is realised at the lowest possible number. That responsibility initially rests with the Minister responsible for DIMA – currently Mr Ruddock MP - to advise Cabinet of the inconsistency between high rates of immigration and intergenerational equity. The mission statement of DIMA should reflect that requirement.

Australia may be a large land mass but it is mainly desert and marginal land. It is in fact a small land with resources of soil and water (fundamental elements of natural capital) already stretched beyond limit. Page 1 of the executive summary states:

“At present, both agriculture and the environment are showing signs of stress. Many farmers are struggling with poor seasonal conditions and relatively low commodity prices – with little sign of improvement in sight. **The Australian Bureau of Agricultural Economics expects the gross value of agricultural production to drop by 1% in 97-98.**”

Immigration was once necessary for the development of Australia but that was before the extent of the fragility of our land was known. Population growth through immigration is now simply adding to existing problems in both cities and country. Further population growth through immigration is adding to domestic demand, adding to environmental problems, adding to infrastructure requirements and sapping agricultural exports. DIMA is sitting on its hands while intergenerational equity flies out the window. It is adding to the problems of this and future generations.

The current report into *Implementation of ESD by Govt Departments and Agencies* should recommend that the mission statement of DIMA be modified to incorporate the requirements of ESD with particular reference to maintenance of natural capital. The report should also recommend to the government that the need is urgent for Australia to develop a population policy.