

Submission to the Tasmanian Govt's Population strategy

Enclosed is my submission. I wish to say at the outset that I find it disingenuous that the Govt is 'seeking community input' when really it has no plans to actually take on board the community's wishes: it's here we go again with the token 'consultation' process. Nevertheless there are many things I wish to point out not just to this Government (in the vain hope that somebody might be listening) but to anyone who might be disturbed about the growth of our population – growth we seem so utterly accepting of. The essence of my submission is simply this: Despite what we so readily accept as gospel, **No one** benefits from a bigger population *in the long term* despite us thinking otherwise!

I note that in one of the first paragraphs of the "Refreshing Tasmania's Population Strategy" one reads... "The Government continues to deliver a bold program of *life enhancing* (my emphasis) infrastructure in our roads, schools, health and housing sectors"... (nothing here or course about the environment). How is building more roads, more congestion, a lack of housing that cannot keep up with the demands of more and more people, *life enhancing*? The truth is the opposite: more and more people equals more and more congestion, angst and negativity, and ultimately is **unsustainable and degrading**.

You point out your commitment to a wellbeing framework,... "(it is) recognised that economic growth alone does not account for a community's success or progress over time"... yet you refuse to actually heed your own words. Our future *should*, of course, depend upon more than just success or progress. Indeed, whatever happened to peace of mind, the necessity for open spaces and parks that are not over-run with people.

The comment that... "includes how to achieve population growth in a sustainable way that respects what is uniquely Tasmanian"... is an oxymoron if ever there was one! It is impossible to achieve population growth in a sustainable way **or** that respects what is uniquely Tasmanian; by its very nature *growth* is not sustainable, and one only has to look at the degrading development that has occurred in our national parks and protected areas to see exactly what more and more people do to the natural world.

One only has to look at new subdivisions popping up everywhere to appreciate our footprint and how dramatically landscapes have changed; where once there used to be grassy paddocks or farming areas there now are housing estates (note the Rokeby area [housing) and the airport precinct [shopping estates]). We continue to be infected with landscape amnesia – quite simply we've forgotten what our state once looked like.

The Tasmanian population should decide how many people should come to Tasmania, not politicians. Already locals are frustrated by the impossible-to-remedy road congestion and increasingly overrun natural areas. A case in point: once tourist numbers began to increase in Freycinet National Park, government responded by building *another* Wineglass Bay viewing platform; what will happen when future tourist numbers double or triple – *another* viewing platform? Whilst it may be impossible to prevent people actually *coming* to Tasmania, it is insanity to **promote** Tasmania as a go-to destination or a place to retire.

One last point: the bigger the population, the greater the trauma inflicted on communities in a natural disaster: one only has to look at the recent earthquake in Turkey/Syria to appreciate that. The example of the flooding of Lismore in NSW and the concomitant unsustainable insurance cover rendering future settlement next to impossible should serve as a warning as to what happens to already-crowded communities.

No, there are already enough people in Tasmania. It is madness to promote a bigger population! In fact we should eliminate the portfolio of State Growth and begin to seriously consider a steady-state economy before our way of life degenerates into a dog-eat-dog future. A bigger population will seriously degrade what is one of the most unique islands on Earth.