

To Secretariat to PESRAC

Dear Sir or Madam,

I heard Don Challen's interview on ABC radio during which he invited members of the public to forward suggestions that may be helpful in re-establishing economic progress after the COVID 19 crisis. Following are my suggestions.

1. Extend the agricultural irrigation schemes to the East Coast of Tasmania to try and drought proof that area and increase agricultural productivity. The Great Lake is an underutilised storage facility. It is suggested that wind power be used to pump surplus water from the West Coast to the Great Lake from where it can be reticulated to the East Coast agricultural areas. Filling the Great Lake would also help drought proof the Hydro.
2. Try to develop a pharmaceutical industry around the existing poppy and alkaloid industry. Australia has a high dependence on pharmaceuticals manufactured either in China or in India by Chinese owned companies. This is obviously a strategic liability. This program may be part of a national effort to address this problem.
3. Invite and give assistance to UBQ Materials from Israel to set up in Tasmania. This company has a process to convert raw garbage to thermoplastic. If this can be successfully implemented, it would substantially reduce landfill in Tasmania and provide a raw material that Enviroinex at Georgetown may be able to use in their products. It may be possible to arrange capital to enable them to expand their production if they were agreeable.
4. At present there are reports that premium Tasmanian Timber is exported to China, fabricated into furniture, then returned. It should be possible to get the Tasmanian School of Creative Arts to design furniture suitable for competitive computerised manufacture in Tasmania. Flat pack designs could also be considered. Now that freight to China is likely to be less competitive, this should give an economic advantage.
5. There has been a growing interest in Tiny Houses in Australia for retired people or others looking for affordable housing. These are now being built in Tasmania but there is a lack of Tiny House Village sites in Australia. The minimum lot size in Tasmania is 450 square metres, but a tiny house would only require half that area. Establishing Tiny house Villages at places like Ross which is heavily dependent on tourist activity would provide a base load of activity for local businesses. Because of the very small roof size on a Tiny House reticulated water is essential. Composting toilets can be used but sewage connections would be preferable.
6. Progressively return Tasmania's native forests to the system the Aboriginal People used. This will permit continuous selective logging of eucalypt and minor species and continuous access to leatherwood and other trees for honey production. The Aboriginal method is basically rows of trees separated by rows of grassland. This makes fire management much more effective. It had the advantage of providing shelter for native species in the rows of trees and food for them in the grassed areas. Trees bring up nutrients from the deep subsoil and their leaves fertilise the grassed areas. How this was organised in Tasmania prior to settlement has been extensively documented in the book 'The Greatest Estate on Earth' by adjunct professor Bill Gammage. The book was published in 2011. This system should permit increased production of Tasmanian Oak, Blackwood and other minor species as well as honey. It would greatly reduce the risk of the catastrophic fires that have recently been experienced on the mainland and would remove any justification for forest protests. The arrangement of forest into discreet areas, readily permits 'cool burns' to reduce the fuel load in the undergrowth.
7. Native and feral animal populations like deer, are an underutilised resource of highly nutritious food in this state. As management of our ecosystem continues to improve population growth will require culling. This already occurs but the profitability of this operation could be greatly improved. Some of the meat is suitable for human consumption and all of it can be used for pet food.

Yours Sincerely

David Langlois