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I have been a resident of Mt Nelson in Hobart for the past 12 years and prior to that lived on a farm in the north of the state. This experience has given me some insight into the sustainability of our economy, population, society and environment.

I have been following climate change science for over 30 years now and the predictions and computer modelling from the 1990's has proved to be accurate. Climate change is already impacting our state and having major impacts on Australia as a whole. How will our state deal with long periods of drought, increased likelihood of intense rainfall events, severe fire events and changing ocean environments? It is vital that we consider the implications of these matters in establishing a population strategy. The other Eastern states have been impacted by all of these in a single year.

Tasmania must prepare. The Strategy must identify the environmental risks and negative impacts associated with unsustainable population growth. As petrol prices rise and electric vehicles become more common there will be a large section of communities that cannot afford personal transport and will want jobs and services close to home or good public transport options. A good population strategy must consider this likelihood and make provision for it.

The paper suggests a number of positives to population growth with particular emphasis on stronger economic growth. However this is an out-of-date 50's concept which would only provide short-term gains but not prepare for the future needs and problems of this island.

Tasmania and Australia need to transition the economy to one that plans around a stable population as the best way to achieve and maintain a liveable, resilient and sustainable community. The Strategy should recognise that it is better to determine a long-term sustainable population size rather than by picking an arbitrary population growth number.

Tasmania should transition its economy from a reliance on continuous population growth towards an optimal stable population to achieve the best possible sustainable social, environmental, cultural, economic and well-being outcomes.

The Strategy should commit to using our state's university to provide research

- Into what would be an optimal sustainable and stable population level,
- to determine the environmental protections needed to support that population,
- the industries required to support the needs of that populations.

It is a contradiction that a government which believes in free market economies feels the need to increase population for the benefit of those economies rather than the well-being of the communities.

Our government should begin not with the economy but with improving the viability of services for community members and appreciating and increasing the social contribution of migrants, bringing new ideas, perspectives and relationships

If the population strategy began with a desire to improve living standards and maintaining Tasmania's low emissions profile then it would encourage home building, school and health facilities and employment in these areas would be local and stimulate local industry and services.

## **1. Enable planning arrangements that improve liveability**

*1.1 In the next five to 30 years, what liveability related issues do you see impacting your sector, or the community you live in?*

Any population strategy must be concerned with the future housing needs of an increased inner city population, but to maintain liveability the new accommodation units will have to include greenspace and pleasant walking spaces at street level. Is it wise to encourage an increased urban population for our major cities at the expense of rural areas. Can the strategy address the rural decline?

*1.2 What in your view are the top two opportunities which have the potential to increase liveability? Please share potential partnerships and other approaches that could assist in progressing these opportunities.*

Sound strategic planning and aiming to become a world leader in sustainability would both improve liveability for communities in Tasmania.

*1.3 How could all levels of government, business and community organisations work together to design and plan services to improve liveability?*

Hobart City council through its precinct plan and the LPS is making sound planning decisions. The UTAS proposal for new buildings in the city and transforming Sandy Bay campus into a mix of housing styles to provide for future needs of a varied community. This will be the sort of development the state needs in the future as long as it includes green space, walking areas, possibilities for a mix of accommodation types close to community support services.

The state needs a dedicated Planning Department and should introduce a design policy for high-quality urban design. The planning scheme as it stands is a building guide rather than a document which encourages developers to create sustainable communities close to the services they need.

## **2. Reduce unnecessary barriers to those wishing to have and raise children**

Planned families depend on reliable support services, housing and employment. The increase in part-time employment and in the cost of living has increased the stresses on most families and a population strategy which fails to recognise the existing problems will only create further social problems.

Childcare services provide employment opportunities but mothers need support to work part-time also and should not be penalised or denied promotion opportunities because they stay at home for their children's early years.

## **3. Align emerging employment opportunities, changing workforce needs and overseas and interstate migration**

There should be a moratorium on Government efforts to actively promote migration to Tasmania until there is clear evidence demonstrating that population growth benefits Tasmanian individuals and communities;

*3.1 What is needed to help support the next generation of 15 to 18 year old Tasmanians to thrive and choose to continue live in their home state?*

There is a need to prepare our state for the effects of climate change. All levels of government need to support training of workers for bushcare work, riverine restoration, fire prevention activities, fire fighting, soil restoration, training in regenerative agriculture and so on.

*3.2. What more can be done to attract and retain more 18 to 44 year olds from interstate and overseas to address labour and/or skills shortages over the next five to 30 years?*

Why are we not training our locals for the jobs that are available? Why is there such large unemployment in the north-west? What shortages are we trying to address? Could they be met from current residents and good training schemes?

*3.3 How do we better support successful settlement for skilled migrants and newly arrived community members in different parts of Tasmania?*

We do this very poorly. Racism is a problem in our community. They have to be able to find employment beyond UBER and packing supermarket shelves. Federal government should be offering special funds encourage for community integration, education and employment opportunities.

*3.4 How might emerging workforce needs across a range of sectors and industries be better met through joined up efforts?*

It will be essential for all levels of government to work with and educate the community to successfully integrate new immigrants to the state

#### **4. Manage a structurally ageing population**

There should be an increase in numbers of workers in this sector and more training and opportunities for aged care workers.

I do not see this sector as creating problems for the population strategy. Population turnover in the next 10 years will provide changes and an improved housing capacity.

Rural areas are losing population and this needs to be addressed. How does the state maintain a successful agriculture sector into the future

The Strategy must clearly recognise the environmental risks and negative impacts associated with unsustainable population growth. The strategy fails to come to terms with the disadvantages of increasing the population.

- Planning around the State has not been strategic and as PMAT reports it 'is moving in a direction that has impacts on cultural heritage, loss of bushland, scenic landscapes and biodiversity, impacts on urban amenity, quality of life, liveability and well-being'.
- Water is a basic need for humans and yet we do not protect our freshwater ecosystems nor maintain river health. TasWater is a move in the right direction for urban water supplies but the system is not ready for an influx of new developments.
- Agriculture provides our other basic need – food. But we see a loss of agricultural land and a failure to improve soil fertility and adopt regenerative practices which will be necessary to cope with climate related problems.
- Sustainable issues already exist for waste management,

An increase in population will further stress the natural and social environment as well as public services including health, education, housing and associated infrastructure costs. The population strategy should recognise the basic needs and wants of the community. Using these as the starting point for the economy will be essential if any population strategy is to be successful in maintaining a society that provides for the well-being of its communities.

Sincerely  
Margaret Taylor

