

Submission to the Senate Committee Inquiry into the Australian Governments 'Direct Action Plan'.

I make this submission on behalf of my 11 year old son. It is my son, and those peers of his generation, who will be living with the consequences of our collective inability to take meaningful and decisive action, on a national and global scale, to address the catastrophic effects of climate change. I also speak for those who cannot speak, for the poor and disenfranchised, for the planets wildlife and wild places, and for the many indigenous peoples who will suffer some of the greatest impacts of our inaction.

The utter contempt that this government displays for the legitimate and scientifically rigorous concerns of the vast majority of Australias population is truly beyond comprehension. It amounts to criminal negligence. This government does not have a mandate from the people to abolish the Climate Commission, repeal the carbon tax or to provide public subsidies to the mining and fossil fuel industries. The callous disregard for the future well being of the planet, in order to maintain profits for transnational corporations is nothing less than disgraceful. Australia was once a respected leader in the world community. Today we are nothing more than corporate puppets writing and repealing legislation dictated by transnational corporations.

If planet Earth is to have any chance of avoiding catastrophic climate change, then immediate action must be taken. Close all coal fired power stations, end all coal mining , stop all subsidies and tax breaks to miners and fossil fuel corporations and ban all gas fracking. We must build a 100% renewable energy economy as fast as possible, we must revegetate vast areas of our country as fast as possible, we must provide a safe future for our children, future generations and all life on Earth. And finally our leaders must regain the courage, strength and determination to act at all times in the public interest, ahead of narrow corporate interests.

The legal concept known as the Public Trust Doctrine, holds that governments have a fiduciary responsibility to hold the 'commons' in trust for the people. Climate change affects the commons in many ways, as does its major cause, the emission of greenhouse gasses. The Australian government has this responsibility to the Australian people, and it must implement and uphold this responsibility. The illusion of endless 'economic growth' on a finite planet is now beginning to be recognised for what it is, an illusion. The madness of advocating relentless growth must cease and we must recreate a 'steady state' economy based on no growth. I realise that this concept may appear radical or fringe, but it is absolutely necessary if we are to maintain a liveable planet.

All the scientific and anecdotal evidence shows that climate change is already having immediate and catastrophic consequences, and these will only be exacerbated if we do not act with courage and conviction. The time for political bickering and corporate control of public policy is well past being finished. We need to act with the urgency required to address the greatest existential threat the Earth has ever faced.

The governments Direct Action Plan is simply tinkering at the edges, fiddling while the planet burns. It does not offer anywhere near the level of response and action needed to have any meaningful effect for a liveable future.

Our children and grandchildren, and those who cannot speak for themselves, will hold us entirely responsible for the catastrophic world they will inherit if we fail to act decisively.

Julian Sharp.

17th January 2014.