

Blue Mountains Gazette - Letters To The Editor

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Mindless Growth

It would be obtuse to suggest that mankind's population and per-capita consumption of resources (and waste generation) can increase continuously. To the contrary, scientific studies recommend a sustainable population for Australia of between 20 and 30 million. None support a bigger Australia. But that doesn't deter governments and much of big business from their delusional, self-serving trumpeting of the desirability of such growth. After all, although most Australians lose quality of life as a result, businesses are the winners, albeit from a short term economic perspective.

Now the Doctors for the Environment Australia group has prepared a poster titled *"Advancing Australia Fairly!?" - "Population growth, more of us, less for all"*, asserting that "population pressure impacts on cost of living, food and water security, traffic congestion, productive farmland, inactive children, social cohesion and quality of life", to name a few'. They were particularly annoyed that the federal government's issues paper on a sustainable population strategy for Australia did not include a scientific review of what a future ideal population for a healthy Australia would be.

Australia's absurdly high population growth rate precludes liveable communities. It is innovation that improves quality of life, not economic growth per se. It is overwhelmingly clear that we're currently living beyond our means in terms of our natural assets. We need to adjust our growth and consumption-driven economic model which damages our finite resources and fragile environment. We are not only part of the natural world, we depend on it and suffer when it suffers.

Yet, from Keneally, O'Farrell and WSROC we have the forum "Getting Western Sydney Growing". For whose benefit?

Peter Green

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