

What do you think are the key environmental challenges which will impact the EPA in the future?

Over Population, Climate Change and Sustainability - urbanisation, over-consumption, increased motor vehicle traffic and congestion, noise pollution, air pollution, light pollution, waste disposal, loss of green spaces in and around expanding cities, loss of prime agricultural and food producing land, e.g. market gardens close to cities, loss of native vegetation due to excessive fear of bushfires risk, health and wellbeing effects of extreme weather events, litter and oil pollution of waterways and oceans, loss of biodiversity and species extinction

What aspects of the EPA's work do you value and wish to preserve in the future?

I want to see the EPA strengthened and more adequately funded to do all that it currently does and more, including strengthening regulations, adequate compliance and enforcement strategies for breaches of regulations, preventative actions re environmental problems focusing on wellbeing as well as on health, biodiversity and protection of the natural environment as much as possible.

How can the EPA effectively work in partnership with other government agencies to meet the environmental challenges of the future?

The EPA needs to have increased input and more power to override environmentally destructive actions carried out due to poor planning controls by state and local governments, which although professing sustainability, are destroying vegetation at an alarming rate, e.g. Mornington Shire, where vegetation overlays are no longer prevent the destruction and removal of vegetation on public and private land. All developments, whether housing, industry or vineyards need to comply with stronger EPA regulations. e.g., in my local area, irrigation for vineyards is depleting local creeks to the point that lower down the creek is a smelly dying mess.

How can the EPA's role in safeguarding the community against the health impacts of pollution be clarified or strengthened?

Tighter regulations, including re light pollution from unnecessary outside lighting; re noise pollution from leaf blowers, barking dogs, pool pumps, loud music in shopping centres and stores etc. The focus needs to go beyond simply health effects to focus on the amenity, liveability and general wellbeing.

How could statutory frameworks more effectively prevent future environmental risks and land use conflicts?

All new developments need to comply with statutory frameworks, and penalties for failure need to be strengthened. The environment must always take precedence over the economy as without a healthy environment we will not have a viable economy. Conflicts of interest are inevitable, but the environment must take precedence over other interests and 'stakeholders'.

What role should the EPA play in emergency management?

As far as possible take a preventative role. e.g. gain advice from aboriginal elders re cool burns at appropriate times to reduce fuel loads and so diminish likelihood of severe bushfires, rather than the current DWELP policy of 5% burns in the wrong places at the wrong times. Reduce likelihood of flood by no building levies, but allowing rivers to flood over flood plains, plus regulations to prevent building developments on flood plains. Surely Fisherman's Bend is a flood plain! Why build a new city there?

How can the EPA better identify and, where necessary, address problems that are the result of past activity?

Encourage public vigilance and reporting, and then act where necessary to enforce compliance with effective regulations and effective penalties.

What role should the EPA play in improving environmental outcomes beyond those necessary to safeguard human health?

Safeguard liveability and general wellbeing, as well as health. Focus on and biodiversity and the health and wellbeing of the environment and non-human species as well as human. Take a role in the education of citizens about the essential nature of having a sustainable environment for the survival of our planet.

What role should the EPA play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

Education re the importance of renewables and say NO to any new coal mines. Consider the option of phasing out cattle and moving to kangaroo meat for human consumption, rather than discarding culled kangaroos. Factor in a price or tax on greenhouse gas emissions.

How do you see environmental justice being applied to the work of the EPA?

They must work hand in hand and both be adequately funded by the federal government.

What can we adopt from other regulators and regulatory models to implement best-practice approaches and ensure that the EPA can rise to key future challenges?

Look at, adapt and adopt, best practice found in other parts of the world, e.g. the city of Boulder in Colorado USA, has set limits to the spread and growth, and is therefore still surrounded by green space and controlling its population. Similarly, villages in France are small clusters of housing surrounded by green space. Find out how this is controlled.

Are there any other issues relevant to the Terms of Reference that you would like to raise?

Only that I believe the EPA needs to be expanded and strengthened to do their job to protect the environment of Victorian. I imagine this would require more adequate funding and increased statutory powers. I fully support this. It is essential for our survival against competing interests.

What can the EPA do to avoid potential future problems?

Consult more with aboriginal elders about their knowledge of managing our environment. There is a wealth of knowledge there that we ignore at our peril. e.g. cool burns at the right time in the right places to prevent the build up of fuel and so reduce the risk of severe

bushfires. Make sure the environment takes precedence over the economy. Without a healthy and sustainable environment we will not have a sustainable economy in the future. Phase out coal mines and focus on renewables. Tax pollution and packaging.