

Population

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1. Achieve a better-informed discussion among politics, business and economics about alternatives to 'business-as-usual' for growth and resource use.
2. Create new indicators for prosperity to measure and interpret feedback loops between the biosphere and human activity.
3. Maximise opportunities for the generation and application of energy: a resource that is essential yet essentially unlimited.
4. Maximise opportunities for the generation and application of the second resource that is essential and essentially unlimited: intellect.
5. Encourage an overt social return from the exploitation of non-renewable resources.
6. Reduce or eliminate waste going to landfill.
7. Use food better and re-direct it from waste streams.
8. Encourage and enable local government to manage population growth in particular localities.
9. Provide population policy and its subset – employment – with a local focus, because the local is where lifestyles and livelihoods are located within the physical environment.
10. Plan for limiting effects of water supply in all capital cities.

Introduction

The world is now hitting bio-physical constraints to human activities: We are at a point of historical consequence. Governments, businesses, social institutions and individuals are being asked questions of ethical, moral and humanist dimensions about our capacity to feed, clothe, educate, shelter, employ, keep safe and keep healthy 9 or 10 billion people by 2050. The distribution of institutions, relative wealth, consumption of 'stuff' and natural assets required to sustain human life is 'lumpy', favouring some localities. The question, therefore, for Australian Governments is, 'Where are these favoured localities and where are people at risk'? Physical environmental limitations will need reconciling with community expectations for lifestyles and livelihoods, rather than assuming an economic utopia of growth forever.

Donella Meadows and her team produced the first global models of population and capital (Meadows *et al.* 1972). Widely criticised during the 20 years following its release,