


Dave Munro

  
Penshurst  
VIC 3289

**SUBMISSION TO MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO EPA**

I am pleased to have the opportunity to make the following points regarding the effective operation of the EPA. I recognise that the Act has been in operation for over 40 years and that circumstances have changed significantly in that time and that a review is very timely.

**Point 1.**

It is important that the environmental laws be fair and equitable. Environmental justice should be an essential part of the Environment Protection Act. This principle should be embedded in all aspects of the administration of the Act.

**Point 2.**

The present situation where the EPA is brought to bear only when incidents of pollution are imminent or indeed after the event is not acceptable. There should be an enforceable general duty not to pollute.

**Point 3.** Man-made carbon pollution is now a fact and should be covered within the EPA. It should have a clear legislative mandate to deal with it.

**Point 4.** Individuals and communities should be able to access information on polluting processes which affects them more freely than is currently the case.

**Point 5.** The EPA should have a stronger and more proactive involvement in land use planning. The EPA should have the power to protect community and environmental interests in the area of zoning and permit decisions.

**Point 6.** The EPA should have the power to enforce rehabilitation and clean up of abandoned, dirty mine sites.

**Point 7.** The funding model of the EPA needs to be fundamentally revised. It is unacceptable that it should derive a large proportion of its income from levies on waste. It needs to have adequate independent funding to guard against possible conflicts of interest and to be able to meet community expectations with the necessary technical expertise.

**Point 8.** The EPA should be able to exert more influence on catastrophic polluting incidents such as the Hazlewood mine fire. The law should be clearer on which body is responsible for all forms of pollution that affect individuals, community and the environment.

**Point 9.** The Environment Protection Authority should never lose sight of its core purpose,... to effectively protect the environment by regulation and the enforcement of clear standards.

  
Dave Munro

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