

First Name

David

Last Name

Blair

What organisation are you from?

Australian National University, Scouts, Healesville soccer club, ENGOS

What do you think are the best value actions listed in the statement that are likely to help improve future air quality?

Reducing logging coupe burns. Making fuel reduction burns more targeted around housing areas, not burning large remote areas. Rapid shift to electric vehicles, including supporting infrastructure. Higher standards for new houses, cars, white goods etc to reduce emissions in production and through use (energy efficiency).

How would you build on or vary these actions?

Native forest logging should be phased out, particularly in the Central Highlands (close to Melbourne) and replaced by plantations (for many reasons, smoke being only one reason). Fuel reduction burning has been shown to be effective around houses, but far less effective if more than 500m from houses, so burn targets of 5% of the state should be dropped as these are just driving large burns in remote areas where ecological damage is high and asset protection gains are low. Instead, smaller areas, very targeted around housing should be prioritized. The shift to electric vehicles needs a parallel shift in renewable energy (so we are not just burning coal instead of petrol/diesel), incentives for people to buy electric cars/trucks - reduced registration, priority parking, charge facilities at shopping centres/work places, reduced tariffs etc until the e-car market is established. A greater share of transport infrastructure funding needs to be spent on cycle paths to encourage cycling and reduce reliance on roading.

Do you have any suggestions for further actions?

Cycle valet parking at major events, I have seen this in Vancouver (Canada), at major sport events and at markets. There is a secure parking location for your bike, surrounded by temp fenced with single gate in and bunch of rails to park/hang your bike from by the seat (as they do for checkpoints on all major bike ride events) with an attendant who checks in your bike, gives you a ticket for it (like checking your bag at the NGV) so you know your bike is looked after while you watch the footy/tennis/concert/whatever. I have also seen this used at markets (Vic Market would be perfect). Introduce an "air care" vehicle emissions test each year or two (as part of registration) to get the old polluting clunkers off the road that do the majority of polluting. Getting rid of the F1 and replacing it with the Formula E grand prix would be great!

Are there any air quality actions you believe should be avoided? Why?

I think there is a need for some Fuel Reduction Burning, but it needs to be a lot more targeted, and the government needs to stop calling all smoke in Autumn "fuel burn offs to keep people safe", when the majority of smoke is coming from logging coupes.

Are there particular areas of air quality (either pollution sources or geographic regions) you think the government should target for improvement? Why?

Smoke from logging coupes and FRBs directly around Melbourne are problematic, including where the majority of logging is occurring, in the Central Highlands. We have had several junior soccer players in our local club unable to play some weekends due to asthma attacks, the local wineries always complain of smoke taint in their grapes, towns like Healesville, Marysville and Warburton are often choked by smoke on the most tourist intense days of the year (Easter/school holidays). The potential health impacts on 5m people is a high price that is not factored into the costs of native forest logging in the Central Highlands. FRBs are also problematic in reducing the number of dead hollow-bearing trees and logs within a forest environment. Any fire severity, even low severity, greatly reduces the abundance of these important structural features.

Are you able to provide any data or information that will help government assess the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of air quality management actions?

Lindenmayer, D.B. et al (2013). Fire severity and landscape context effects on arboreal marsupials. *Biological Conservation* 167. Keith, H. et al (2017). Experimental Ecosystem Accounts for the Central Highlands of Victoria. Lindenmayer et al (2014). Broad decline of populations of large old trees. *Conservation Letters* 7(1). Taylor, C. et al (2014). Non-linear effects of stand age on fire severity. *Conservation Letters* 7(4).

Do you have other suggestions on how to secure a clean air future?

Additionally to reducing native forest logging in the Central Highlands to reduce direct smoke pollution, if the forests are left to grow old, we will have greater water runoff which will reduce the likelihood of needing to switch on the desal plant. Desal uses immense amounts of power, which currently will add to our coal use. Strong climate change targets and increased renewable energy. Clean air initiatives needs to include containing invisible pollutants such as CO₂! Australian car emissions standards are too low, but not sure State Gov will be able to influence this. Similarly, building standards, white goods standards etc can all massively reduce air pollution by enforcing higher standards for new products.