

Dear Ms Wilkins,

The attention of the Public Health Association of Australia (WA) has recently been drawn to the call for submissions from the Biofuels Taskforce.

While time does not permit a comprehensive response, we are pleased to provide and support the following comments from the WHO Collaborating Centre on Environmental Health Impact Assessment at Curtin University.

Comment from the WHO Collaborating Centre on Environmental Health Impact Assessment on the Biofuels Taskforce, Western Australia

This comment on the Biofuels Taskforce in Western Australia focuses on the need for a thorough assessment of the health impacts of the biofuels industry in Western Australia. Time constraints prevent a comprehensive response to specific health impacts, however in general, we consider that an inclusive approach, considering not only health effects from vehicle emissions, but also those associated with the production, transportation, processing and distribution of biofuels and the proposed location of the industry, is required. Special attention should be given to air quality parameters such as particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrous oxides and air toxic levels. A thorough assessment of the whole industry should include comparative risks or benefits to human health compared to the existing fuel industry.

The World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health Impact Assessment at Curtin University is working to increase the recognition of need for health impacts in development projects. We believe that a thorough assessment of the health impacts of the biofuels industry is necessary to ensure that health impacts are clearly identified and assessed as early as possible. An open and objective assessment that includes a wide range of stakeholders, will contribute to an effective risk management of the biofuels industry in Western Australia, which should ultimately provide public health benefits.

We would encourage the Task Force to make contact with the Director of the Centre, Professor Jeffery Spickett, Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health to discuss these issues further. His contact details are as follows: School of Public Health Curtin University of Technology, GPO Box U 1987 Perth WA 6845. (Telephone 61892664346 ; Fax 61892662958 ; Mobile 0401103081 ; Email [J.Spickett@curtin.edu.au](mailto:J.Spickett@curtin.edu.au))

Yours sincerely,

Mike Daube

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