



Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions



# Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience Management Program

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## Acknowledgement of Country

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) acknowledges the Malgana Traditional Owners and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community of Monkey Mia and the Shark Bay area.

The Malgana name for Shark Bay is Gathaagudu, meaning two bays, or two waters. DBCA acknowledges the important role that Malgana peoples have in sustaining and maintaining the unique environment that is Gathaagudu. We pay our respects to the Malgana peoples, past, present and future, and to their culture.

## Acknowledgments

This document was prepared by DBCA and has been informed by the 2018 review report of the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience by Dr Emmanuelle Martinez and Professor Mark Orams and through input from the Malgana Aboriginal Corporation. The management program has also benefitted from feedback received from key stakeholders including: RAC Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort, Shire of Shark Bay, researchers from the Shark Bay Dolphin Research Alliance and Shark Bay Dolphin Project; and Shark Bay World Heritage Advisory Committee.

DBCA staff from Shark Bay District; Midwest Region; Biodiversity and Conservation Science; Conservation and Ecosystem Management Division; and Regional and Fire Management Services Division also contributed information for the program.

# Summary

Monkey Mia is located on the traditional lands of the Malgana peoples on the eastern shore of the Peron Peninsula in Shark Bay, Western Australia. It is a popular tourist destination, world renowned for a small group of Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins that have regularly visited the area since the early 1940s to hunt in the shallow waters and receive handouts of fish. This is one of the longest histories of provisioning of wild bottlenose dolphins in the world. The feeding program, managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), draws on 25 years of research and monitoring of the Monkey Mia dolphins to ensure the dolphins spend most of their time behaving as wild animals by retaining their social structures and natural foraging abilities.

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience Management Program has been developed by DBCA to:

- guide the management of the Dolphin Experience in an ecologically sustainable manner, ensuring best-practice animal welfare and visitor risk management; and
- provide for continued delivery of a world-class nature-based tourism experience, raising public awareness and appreciation of dolphins, broader marine conservation and World Heritage values.

The Dolphin Experience is guided by the following principles that have been informed by scientific research, previous program reviews and stakeholder input:

- The Malgana peoples have traditional ownership and cultural connection to the lands and waters on which the program is conducted, and engagement with the Malgana Traditional Owners in the program is a key outcome for DBCA.
- The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience is managed in partnership with key stakeholders with recognition of the valuable contribution it makes to the tourism industry and the opportunity it presents to achieve conservation outcomes through delivering outstanding nature-based visitor experiences.
- Adaptive and responsive management strategies are based on the most up-to-date information and science.
- The welfare of provisioned dolphins and their calves is protected through best-practice standards.
- The program adheres to the principles of ecologically sustainable development (as detailed in section 4 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*) and risk management principles ensure the conservation of dolphins and visitor safety.
- The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience provides visitors with a genuine opportunity to connect with wild dolphins.

This document introduces the Dolphin Experience and its management context and details a vision, desired outcomes and actions that are designed to guide management of the program.

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# 1. Introduction

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience Management Program has been developed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to:

- guide the management of the Dolphin Experience in an ecologically sustainable manner, ensuring best-practice animal welfare and visitor risk management; and
- provide for continued delivery of a world-class nature-based tourism experience, raising public awareness and appreciation of dolphins, broader marine conservation and World Heritage values.

The Dolphin Experience is one of the longest running dolphin provisioning programs in the world which supports the local tourism economy. It draws on 25 years of research and monitoring of the Monkey Mia dolphins and is precautionary in its approach to ensure the dolphins spend most of their time behaving as wild animals by retaining their social structures and natural foraging abilities. The management program is underpinned by best-practice protocols which provide more prescriptive operational details for staff and volunteers.

This management program covers the welfare of the dolphins that visit the Dolphin Experience Area (DEA) at Monkey Mia, while conservation of the broader dolphin population of Shark Bay is addressed in the Shark Bay Marine Reserves Management Plan.

## 1.1 Shark Bay

Shark Bay is located on the coast of Western Australia, approximately 850 kilometres north of Perth. The area was inscribed on the World Heritage list in 1991, being one of only five marine properties worldwide to satisfy all four of the natural World Heritage criteria. Since 1990, the pristine waters have been protected by the Shark Bay Marine Park and Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve and there are numerous terrestrial reserves and proposed reserves in the Shark Bay area with a total area of over 500,000 hectares. These marine and terrestrial reserves are vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission and managed by DBCA under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act).

The Dolphin Experience is conducted within the Monkey Mia Conservation Park (Reserve 49144) and Shark Bay Marine Park, managed under the CALM Act. Adjoining the conservation park is Reserve 1686 that is vested with the Shire of Shark Bay and the DBCA Executive Body for recreation. The Shire of Shark Bay owns the jetty immediately adjacent to the designated DEA and has vesting of the land leased by the Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort.

RAC Parks and Resorts operates the Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort under a lease arrangement with the Shire of Shark Bay. The resort and caravan park have capacity to accommodate 1,200 guests plus day visitors. There are around 100,000 visitors to Monkey Mia annually, the majority of whom are attracted by the Dolphin Experience.

Tourism is the biggest industry in Shark Bay in terms of employment and makes a major contribution to the local economy. The average visitor expenditure in the Shire of Shark Bay was \$73 million per year from 2015 to 2018. While popular with interstate and overseas visitors, Shark Bay is mostly frequented by intrastate visitors.

## 1.2 Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins

Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops aduncus*) hereinafter referred to as bottlenose dolphins are known to occur in four main regions around Australia: eastern Indian Ocean, Tasman Sea, Coral Sea, and Arafura/Timor Seas. The Species Profile and Threats Database of the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment lists the main threats to this species as indirect catches in trawl; gillnet (including in shark nets to protect bathers); purse seine and trap fisheries entanglements; tourism; habitat destruction and degradation; and overfishing. Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins are classified as 'near threatened' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, 2019.

Bottlenose dolphins are found throughout Shark Bay, with the total population estimated to be around 3,000. Shark Bay bottlenose dolphins can live into their 40s. Females reach sexual maturity around 12 to 15 years of age and typically produce a calf every 3 to 6 years. Dolphin calves in the Shark Bay area nurse for an average of four years (though this can be up to eight years) and they begin to catch their own fish at around four months of age.

It is estimated that there are around 300 dolphins in the waters around Monkey Mia, known as Red Cliff Bay. Up to five adults have been involved in the feeding program at any one time with numbers and the individuals involved changing over the years. Other dolphins also regularly visit the beach, with up to 26 dolphins visiting at any one time.

## 1.3 History

The Malgana Traditional Owners have fished the waters of Shark Bay for thousands of years and there is a history of net fishing at Monkey Mia. Dolphins often visited Monkey Mia seeking an opportunity to hunt for fish that escaped fishing nets.

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience has one of the longest histories of feeding of wild bottlenose dolphins in the world. Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins have regularly visited the area since the early 1940s to receive handouts of fish. As this became more widely known, visitors began arriving to feed the wild dolphins. Visitor numbers increased and a caravan park was established on the site in 1975. The caravan park provided locally caught fish to the public to feed to the dolphins, however there was no monitoring of which dolphins were fed or how much. Management of the program passed from the caravan park proprietors to the Shire of Shark Bay in 1986. By the early 1990s, it had been ascertained that calves of provisioned females had reduced survival rates and that there appeared to be changes in dolphin behaviour and interactions among those accepting handouts. Accordingly, in 1994, the first of several reviews of the program was commissioned. The then Department of Conservation and Land Management (now DBCA) assumed management of the program in 1996 and

the recommendations of a number of reviews have been progressively implemented since then, successfully managing this growing tourism attraction with the best science advice available. The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience is now an iconic nature-based tourism experience in Western Australia and a key motivator for tourists to visit the Shark Bay region.

The program has been refined and has strict protocols in place to protect the welfare of the dolphins visiting the DEA and the safety of visitors. Only a very small group of dolphins is included in the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience and all are females descended from one of three matrilines which have historically participated in the program. As each dolphin is only receiving approximately 10 percent of its total daily intake through the Dolphin Experience, the dolphins must maintain their normal feeding habits.

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience is one of only three authorised programs in Australia where members of the public can feed wild dolphins. The other two are in Queensland, at Tangalooma and Tin Can Bay. The Tangalooma program is run on Moreton Island, off the coast of Brisbane, where resort guests can feed a group of Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins. At Tin Can Bay, a three-hour drive north of Brisbane, Australian humpback dolphins (*Sousa sahulensis*) are fed by visitors who purchase fish from staff of the Barnacles Dolphin Centre.

## 2. Management context

### 2.1 Malgana Country

The Shark Bay area is part of the Yamatji region of WA with the traditional owners of the area around Monkey Mia being the Malgana peoples who have Native Title over the area. The Malgana name for Monkey Mia is *Irrabuga Mia*, with *irra* meaning 'mouth', *buga* 'to smell bad' (referring to dolphins' bad breath) and *mia* being the word for 'home'. Archaeological evidence from the Shark Bay region indicates Aboriginal peoples' presence in the area dates back 30,000 years. Many midden sites, quarries, rock shelters, burials, stone arrangements and artefact scatters exist in the area indicating that Aboriginal groups traditionally fished at Monkey Mia, and historical accounts suggest that dolphins opportunistically fished alongside Aboriginal people. Several Aboriginal heritage sites have been registered in the Monkey Mia area.

The Malgana Aboriginal Corporation has expressed strong support for joint management with DBCA of Shark Bay's conservation reserves including at Monkey Mia.

### 2.2 Legislative and policy framework

This management program provides detailed guidance for the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience which operates under national and state government legislation, regulation, and guidelines.

In Western Australia, the interaction with native fauna including feeding is regulated under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) and associated Biodiversity

Conservation Regulations 2018. Feeding and disturbing dolphins is prohibited unless authorised under the BC Act. The BC Regulations also require that people in the water remain at least 50 metres away from dolphins, and if a dolphin approaches, any person in the water must attempt to maintain a distance of at least 50m.

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience is included in two statutory CALM Act management plans, the *Shark Bay Marine Reserves Management Plan 1996 - 2006* and the *Shark Bay Terrestrial Reserves and Proposed Reserve Additions Management Plan 2012*.

The DEA is closed to all vessels and swimmers through a Marine Safety and Gazette Notice under the *Western Australian Marine Act 1982*. Similarly, the DEA is closed to all recreational and commercial extractive fishing activities through prohibition orders under the *Fish Resources Management Act 1994*.

At a Commonwealth level, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) includes provisions to enhance the protection, conservation and presentation of World Heritage values. Although dolphins are not specifically recognised as World Heritage values, the act provides an additional level of protection for the Shark Bay area. Shark Bay is also included on the National Heritage list, the values of which are protected under the EPBC Act.

Under the *Australian National Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching* the feeding of wild dolphins is only permitted under existing programs authorised by relevant national, state, or territory agencies. The *National Wildlife Biosecurity Guidelines* provide information needed to ensure biosecurity risks associated with wildlife engagement are appropriately assessed and managed. They deal with the disease risks of working with wildlife and specifically recognise the potential for morbilliviruses to infect marine mammals. The guidelines also cover the potential for disease transfer between animals and humans; give guidance on biosecurity practices to prevent spread; and provide direction on procedures and training required for their implementation.

## 2.3 Management setting

The Dolphin Experience takes place in the designated DEA in the Monkey Mia Conservation Park. The DBCA Monkey Mia Visitor Centre and shop are located adjacent to the office at the back of the DEA. All revenue collected by DBCA at Monkey Mia (from entry fees and sales at the shop including commissions from tour bookings) is used in management of the Monkey Mia Conservation Park, including the Dolphin Experience. DBCA endeavours to operate the program on a self-funding basis.

Visitors gather on the boardwalk outside the DBCA visitor centre and shop prior to each Dolphin Experience session. After an introductory presentation by DBCA staff, they are invited onto the beach to stand at the water's edge where dolphins can be viewed while visitors receive further information from staff. This is followed by a short session during which specific dolphins are fed a measured quantity of fish by nominated visitors. Strict protocols are in place to ensure disruptions to the dolphins' wild behaviour are minimised, while the visitor experience and learning outcomes are maximised during these sessions. There can be a maximum of three feeding sessions

per day and at the end of each session, visitors are requested to leave the beach to encourage the dolphins to conduct natural behaviours such as foraging or suckling young. In addition to visitor presentations by staff, information and interpretation about the dolphins and the correct ways to interact with them is available in the visitor centre and at other locations around the area.

Volunteers come to Monkey Mia from around the country and the world to participate in the program and are an integral component of the program. All volunteers must complete an induction session run by local DBCA staff.

A number of organisations and individuals' partner with DBCA in supporting the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience:

- RAC Parks and Resorts operates the resort, is a key point of contact for visitors to the area, and provides power, water and sewage services for DBCA.
- The Shire of Shark Bay is active in promoting the area to tourists from around the world and manages the Monkey Mia jetty and boat launching area as well as the Shark Bay World Heritage Discovery and Visitors Centre in Denham.
- The Shark Bay World Heritage Advisory Committee provides advice to the WA and Commonwealth Ministers for the Environment and the Environment Protection Heritage Council on a wide range of matters relating to World Heritage values, including activities at Monkey Mia.
- Scientific researchers, particularly those with a focus on the dolphins of Shark Bay, who are licenced by DBCA.
- Commercial tour operators based at Monkey Mia provide tourism opportunities to visitors and are licenced by DBCA.
- The community of the Shark Bay area supports the tourism sector through provision of services for visitors to the area.

### 3. Vision

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience is managed in an ethical and sustainable manner that protects the dolphins' health and social structures, and delivers a world-class nature-based tourism experience that raises awareness and appreciation of dolphins, marine conservation and World Heritage values in Shark Bay.

### 4. Management principles

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience is guided by the following principles that have been informed by scientific research, previous program reviews and stakeholder input:

1. The Malgana peoples have traditional ownership and cultural connection to the lands and waters on which the program is conducted, and engagement with the Malgana Traditional Owners in the program is key outcome for DBCA.
2. The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience is managed in partnership with key stakeholders with recognition of the valuable contribution it makes to the

tourism industry and the opportunity it presents to achieve conservation outcomes through delivering outstanding nature-based visitor experiences.

3. Adaptive and responsive management strategies are based on the most up-to-date information and science.
4. The welfare of provisioned dolphins and their calves is protected through best-practice standards.
5. The program adheres to the principles of ecologically sustainable development (as detailed in section 4 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*) and risk management principles ensure the conservation of dolphins and visitor safety.
6. The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience provides visitors with a genuine opportunity to connect with wild dolphins.

## 5. Values and potential threats

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience provides visitors a world-renowned nature-based tourism experience and an opportunity to learn about the wild Indo Pacific bottlenose dolphins, and to view them up-close as part of a wild managed feeding program. The experience attracts more than 100,000 visitors per year and continues to contribute significant social and economic benefits to the region and the State.

The long history of the program and extensive knowledge of the Shark Bay dolphin population, including that of individual dolphins and family lines, provides a high level of confidence to inform decision-making. Potential threats to the Dolphin Experience, if not managed under appropriate protocols, may include impacts to the provisioned dolphins and their calves such as increased calf mortality, food dependency and habituation of dolphins to humans. Uncontrolled feeding outside the Dolphin Experience could lead to detrimental impacts on individual dolphins such as dietary deficiencies, excess feeding, dependence or diseases. It may also put dolphins at risk of boat strike, if approaching vessels seeking hand-outs. These threats, or other factors such as climate change impacts to habitat or food resources (such as those experienced in 2011), could lead to a potential loss of dolphins to the Dolphin Experience. In addition, pollution, and unmanaged or inappropriate boat access or moorings could lead to boat strikes or impacts to the dolphins and visitor experiences. Impacts including potential loss of dolphins could result in a decline in the Dolphin Experience and visitation, impacting the local tourism industry.

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience offers a high level of visitor safety and quality of education outcomes along with the unique opportunity to interact with wild dolphins in a World Heritage setting, which has led to a high degree of visitor satisfaction. Potential threats to visitor safety and satisfaction, if not managed appropriately, may include: inappropriate visitor interactions such as swimming with, chasing or harassing dolphins during or outside the Dolphin Experience (which may increase risks to visitor and dolphin safety); as well as negative perceptions of the Dolphin Experience. Other potential threats to visitor safety include pollution, and inappropriate boat access or mooring. Overcrowding due to increased visitor numbers or inappropriate infrastructure and signage to manage visitation, may lead to reduced visitor satisfaction or potential injury. The Dolphin Experience is centred on maintaining the

dolphins' wild behaviour (such as natural foraging and calving with no touching permitted) and managing visitor expectations in terms of the experience they are expecting can pose a challenge. In addition, with a significant number of international visitors, language barriers have the potential to impact on visitor safety and experiences, due to possible misunderstandings and misinterpretations between staff and visitors.

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience is managed by DBCA and supported by the local tourism industry and key stakeholders including the Malgana people. The department provides a world-renowned nature-based experience, underpinned by professional staff, volunteers, researchers and through supportive partnership arrangement. Potential threats, if not appropriately managed, may include inability to attract staff and volunteers to the Dolphin Experience due to high cost of living; lack of awareness of the opportunity to volunteer; or lack of appropriate infrastructure and accommodation. A collaborative partnership approach to management will improve potential impacts from inconsistent messaging by tourism managers or potential tension between management approaches. In addition, strong collaborations with Malgana People and researchers will improve the knowledge and information supporting the Dolphin Experience and management decision-making.

DBCA addresses potential threats through an adaptive management program, including through the implementation of best-practice protocols for staff and volunteer training; dolphin interactions; recruitment; and visitor safety.

## 6. Management outcomes and actions

### 6.1 Malgana Traditional Owner engagement

**Desired outcome:**

The Malgana Traditional Owners are engaged as partners with DBCA in the joint management of the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience

**Actions:**

1. Seek joint management of DBCA-managed reserves at Monkey Mia with Malgana Traditional Owners in the wider context of joint management throughout Shark Bay and seek to create employment and business opportunities for Malgana peoples in association with the program.
2. Maintain mutually beneficial working relationships with the Malgana Aboriginal Corporation and work with the Malgana peoples to incorporate cultural knowledge and customs in education and interpretation materials and programs, including incorporating traditional information into training for staff.

## 6.2 Dolphin interactions

### **Desired outcome:**

Dolphin interactions are undertaken in an ethical and ecologically sustainable manner

### **Actions:**

1. Continue to implement and refine, a clear set of dolphin interaction and visitor management protocols to manage interactions based on the best available information, including to minimise disruption to mother-calf interactions.
2. Conduct regular reviews of the management protocols, including comparisons with other provisioning programs, and use adaptive management in response to new research findings and changes in program outcomes or environmental factors.
3. Maintain a health program for all dolphins visiting the DEA based on veterinary advice and coordinate delivery of a veterinary response to any signs of ill health or significant injury, including monitoring of calves born to females visiting the DEA.
4. Continue to collect and analyse data for each feeding session to support adaptive management including: identity of dolphins and their offspring; times of attendance and feeding for each dolphin; quantity, species and weight of fish offered to each dolphin (noting any refusals); any dolphin injuries or important behaviours; visitor numbers; and meteorological conditions.
5. Continue to collect and analyse general data on dolphin wellbeing to support management; take photos for the fin catalogue and for monitoring dolphin health; and on an opportunistic basis record dolphin interactions and behaviour surrounding Monkey Mia (e.g. offshore).
6. Comply with the National Wildlife Biosecurity Guidelines in managing the Dolphin Experience.

### **Desired outcome:**

Recruitment is based on a risk assessment underpinned by research on dolphin health and wellbeing, where decision-making processes effectively integrate both long-term and short-term economic, environmental and social considerations

### **Actions:**

1. Recruit new dolphins to the program according to the following principles:
  - a recruitment plan will consider the need for succession; dolphin welfare and lifetime reproductive success; manageable number of provisioned dolphins; and visitor experience.
  - new recruits will be preferentially selected from the female offspring of the three matrilines that have been historically provisioned at Monkey Mia as these matrilines have their core home range area in Red Cliff Bay. Recruitment of dolphins from other matriline/s that have their core home range in the Red Cliff Bay area may be considered where recruitment strategies fail to attract new dolphins.

- preference will be given to recruiting females that are independent and have established foraging strategies, range patterns and social networks.
- priority will be given to recruit females that have successfully reproduced (i.e. had a calf survive to age three). Recruitment of females that have not reproduced or have a calf over one year may be considered where recruitment strategies fail to attract new dolphins.
- a female with a newborn calf will not be recruited until the calf is over one year old.
- develop, review and implement protocols for recruitment, based on adaptive management and ecological sustainable development principles.

2. In the event that recruitment fails to address succession into the program, consider alternative strategies for recruitment in accordance with the recruitment protocol and in consultation with the Conservation and Parks Commission, where appropriate in respect to consistency with the *Shark Bay Marine Reserves Management Plan 1996 - 2006*. These strategies may include occasional feeding of dolphins (of not less than two years) to enable calf learning of feeding as a specialised foraging technique.
3. Seek to maintain a minimum provisioned group of five dolphins, with up to seven dolphins for periods, to allow for succession, following the death of older animals.

**Desired outcome:**

A diverse group of staff and volunteers with appropriate qualifications, skills and training supports management of the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience

**Actions:**

1. Work with Tourism WA and Australia's Coral Coast and other tourism partners to promote the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience to attract high quality staff and volunteers from within Australia and overseas.
2. Provide training for staff and volunteers in effective interaction with, and provision of information to visitors.
3. Seek support from partner organisations to enhance delivery of the Dolphin Experience.
4. Investigate options for after-hours visitor supervision at Monkey Mia including the feasibility of accommodating campground hosts to provide management support to staff and volunteers.

## 6.3 Visitor experiences

### **Desired outcome:**

The Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience provides an outstanding, enjoyable and safe visitor experience

### **Actions:**

1. Develop and maintain visitor facilities at Monkey Mia to a world-class standard in accordance with the Monkey Mia Master Plan.
2. Implement DBCA's visitor risk management program on lands and waters under its management at Monkey Mia to protect the safety of visitors to the area.
3. Monitor dolphin interactions with visitors at Dolphin Experience sessions and develop, implement and publicise any new protocols which may be required to keep visitors and dolphins safe.
4. Continue to implement relevant legislation relating to the protection of dolphins (such as prohibiting swimming with or feeding dolphins other than through the Dolphin Experience sessions) and design education and compliance programs to ensure that wildlife protection requirements are understood by visitors.
5. Develop and implement an education and interpretation plan for Monkey Mia.
6. Undertake research into visitor experiences at Monkey Mia to inform management including visitor surveys (covering questions on expectations; satisfaction levels; and compliance with directions); analyse the results on an ongoing basis; and use the information obtained to refine management approaches as required.
7. Work with key stakeholders and tourism bodies to promote the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience as a premier nature-based tourism experience and maximise benefits to the local economy.
8. Investigate opportunities to diversify dolphin interaction and other nature-based tourism activities at Monkey Mia within an ecologically sustainable development framework, including investigating options and risks associated with commercial swim-with-dolphin tourism.

## 6.4 Partnerships

### **Desired outcome:**

DBCA's engagement with stakeholders is open and collaborative

### **Actions:**

1. Maintain constructive working relationships with relevant stakeholders, including local community in managing the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience.
2. Seek partner and stakeholder organisation involvement and attendance at the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience induction training provided by DBCA and encourage volunteering in the program.
3. Seek access to relevant information collected by stakeholders so it can be used to inform the management of the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience.

## 6.5 Research and monitoring

### **Desired outcome:**

Management of the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience is based on sound science and adaptive management processes

### **Actions:**

1. Develop a research and monitoring plan that will inform management of the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience.
2. Continue to gather research data on population numbers and home ranges throughout the Shark Bay area and use this information in evaluating any changes observed for provisioned dolphins.

## 7. Implementation and review

This management program will guide the management of the Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience for a period of 10 years. The program will remain in place until it is reviewed, revised or revoked. In alignment with this management program, protocols will be developed, reviewed and revised as new information becomes available to ensure active adaptive management.

The actions in this management program will be implemented by DBCA in consultation with its partners. Implementation will be in accordance with operational priorities and resources and in the context of the management of the Shark Bay World Heritage Area.