
Meeting 10 Communiqué

The tenth meeting for the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Advisory Committee was held in Exmouth 31 October – 01 November 2017. The committee held discussions on the following items:

Planning activities

The committee discussed a range of planning initiatives in and adjacent to the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area (NCWHA), that have the potential to affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property:

1. The committee discussed the recent submission to the Draft Gascoyne Coast Sub-Regional Planning. The committee agreed to revisit the discussion once the final plan has been made public.
2. The committee were briefed on the role of the Gascoyne Development Commission (GDC) and the Gascoyne Tourism Board (GTB). The committee discussed the lack of knowledge and promotion of the OUV through the GDC and the GTB. The committee discussed concerns with maintaining conservation values within the area with growing tourism. The committee agreed to engage with the GDC and the GTB to find areas of collaboration.
3. The committee was briefed on the Shire of Exmouth Ningaloo Trails Master Plan. The plan identifies opportunities for trail development, proposes trail locations and outlines a staged implementation plan. A steering committee has been established and includes key stakeholders in recognition of the diverse users within the Shire. The committee agreed to make a submission providing advice on potential impacts to the OUV and opportunities for appropriate public access to the terrestrial component of the World Heritage area.
4. The committee discussed the draft management plans for the NW Region of Australian Marine Parks and endorsed the draft submission to the Commonwealth Government. The committee agreed that the proposed draft plans failed to take account of the extensive public consultation process in the review of the original plans and made unsupported changes to zoning in the Commonwealth Gascoyne Marine Park.

Oil and gas industry

The committee discussed current oil and gas activities adjacent to the NCWHA which have the potential to impact on the OUV:

1. The committee discussed the successful inclusion of World Heritage OUV reference included in NOSPEMA guidelines.

Potential risks to the Outstanding Universal Value

The committee discussed a range of issues that have the potential to impact the OUV of the NCWHA:



1. The committee discussed and endorsed the draft correspondence to the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, (DBCA's) Parks and Wildlife Service (formally the Department of Parks and Wildlife) regarding concerns over the level of control over commercial tourism operations around manta rays within the NCWHA, the effects of recreational fishing on manta ray aggregations, and the level of protection afforded to manta ray aggregations through sanctuary zones.
2. The committee was briefed on the humpback whale in-water interactions review and informed of the working group that is being set up comprising key stakeholders that will provide advice and recommendations to the Minister for Environment, via DBCA's, Parks and Wildlife Service.
3. The committee were briefed on DBCA's, Parks and Wildlife Service current funding for feral cat control within the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area and acknowledged the need for long term funding.
4. To committee discussed the UNESCO Report 'Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage coral reefs' and the potential threats on the OUV from climate change. The committee agreed to discuss this matter further as a separate workshop item in a future meeting.
5. The committee were briefed by DBCA's Parks and Wildlife Service on a recent plastic debris event within Ningaloo Marine Park, most likely the result of shipboard waste discarded in waters outside the World Heritage are and driven inshore by winds.

Fisheries matters

1. The committee discussed and endorsed draft correspondence to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) Fisheries (formally the Department of Fisheries) regarding concerns with the taking of large sharks for recreation, the lack of size limits on the take of sharks in the Gascoyne Region, the practice of "chumming" and the effects of shark fishing on the Outstanding Universal Value of the NCWHA. DPIRD Fisheries briefed the committee on a range of projects being undertaken by the Department to better understand the potential impact of shark depredation on overall fishing related mortality.
2. The committee was briefed on the Recfishwest project proposal to install permanently deployed Fish Attracting Devices (FADs) within Ningaloo Marine Park to enhance recreational fishing experiences. DBCA's, Parks and Wildlife Service discussed concerns with the proposal with the committee. The committee agreed to provide written feedback to DBCA's, Parks and Wildlife Service on the proposal.

Research

1. The committee were provided with a summary of on-going recent research projects within the NCWHA.
2. The committee were presented with a summary of research into the impact on community understanding associated with the Ningaloo Research Program (NRP) -



designed to generate new scientific knowledge about the Ningaloo Marine Park and surrounding region.

3. The committee discussed a recent report on the current status of the Ningaloo Outlook Research Project.
4. The committee discussed the current state of the Ningaloo Atlas and supported the need to resurrect the website as a platform for engaging with stakeholders, community, researchers and students.

Promotion and presentation of the Outstanding Universal Value

The committee discussed recent promotional opportunities to enhance the OUV of the NCWHA.

Stakeholder engagement

The committee were briefed by key government representatives on current planning activities and items of interest relevant to the World Heritage area: The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Parks and Wildlife Service (formally the Department of Parks and Wildlife); the Department of the Environment and Energy; the Department of Defence; the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Fisheries (formally the Department of Fisheries); the Shire of Exmouth; and the Shire of Carnarvon.

Development of OUV framework workshop

The committee discussed efforts to expand on the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) commenced in April 2015 and decided to defer completing the OUV framework at this time. Instead the committee decided to start to identify the values within the OUV where the committee needs more information.

Wilderness and World Heritage (Bill Humphreys/Simon Woodley)

The committee discussed the concept of “wilderness” and different definitions of relevant within the WHA including the DBCA policy #62 on wilderness and other definitions previously provided to the Committee. The Committee agreed to continue to seek to understand the concept of “wilderness” and its importance to the OUV of the Property.



Attendance:	
Committee Members: Mr Simon Woodley (Chairperson) Prof Bill Humphreys Mr Frazer McGregor Ms Hazel Walgar Ms Jacqueline Hine Ms Leonie McLeod Mr Tony Evans Mr Tony Dowling	Government Observers Mr Cameron Woods (Shire of Exmouth) Mr Mark Sweetman (DOD) Mr Mathew Kuhn (DPIRD) Mr Ray DeJong (DBCA) Mr Peter Barnes (DBCA) Ms Heather Lake (Exmouth Shire Council) Executive support: Ms Tegan Gourlay (DBCA)
Guest Speakers: Ms Juliane Bush (Gascoyne Tourism Board) Dr Christopher Cvitanovic (University of Tasmania)	

Note: Guest speakers present at meeting for relevant items only.



Further Information:

If you require further information on any of the above topics please contact Tegan Gourlay, Executive Officer, Ningaloo World Heritage Advisory Committee tegan.gourlay@dbca.wa.gov.au or (08) 9947 8023

Alternatively, please contact one of the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Advisory Committee members listed below:

Members	Stakeholder Affiliation	Contact Information
Mr Anthony Dowling	Local community interests	addowling@bigpond.com
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Ms Jacqueline Hine	Conservation interests	jacqueline.hine@bigpond.com
Professor William Humphreys	Scientific research (Terrestrial)	bill.humphreys@museum.wa.gov.au
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Mrs D. Ann Preest	Indigenous Heritage Exmouth	preestann@bigpond.com
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Mr Simon Woodley (Committee Chair)	Scientific research (Marine)	sjwoodley@iinet.net.au

* Ningaloo World Heritage Advisory Committee membership as at October 2017.

