

SUMMARY REPORT

Summary of results from community information sessions for marine parks and reserves planning in the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions

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and Conservation
Kensington, W.A.

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21 October 2008

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary report presents the results of community information sessions held in Perth, Broome, Eighty Mile Beach, Port Hedland, Karratha and Onslow between 10-18 April 2008. The community information sessions were conducted by the Marine Policy and Planning Branch (MPPB) of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and will contribute to a broader project to expand the marine parks and reserves system in the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach (PEMB) regions which is being coordinated by MPPB in collaboration with DEC's Pilbara Region and West Kimberley District.

The community information sessions were carried out to raise awareness within communities of the marine parks and reserves planning project in their area and provide a forum for individuals to find out how to be involved in the planning process. A secondary objective was to source information from stakeholders about their level of knowledge of the marine environment and marine parks and reserves, their issues and opinions as well as any biological and social values of the study areas.

Approximately 54 people attended the six community information sessions and a further 18 local businesses were visited during the field trip. A large number of other contacts were made through enquiries and over the phone and email. The advertisements, media, mail and email correspondence as well as word of mouth are believed to have raised awareness within the local community about the project. A large number of people were added to the PEMB 'community contacts database' and many details were updated with new information.

From the 36 people that were surveyed during the information sessions, the majority understood that Western Australia has marine parks and reserves (Ningaloo being identified) but had a low understanding of the need for marine parks and reserves or the permitted activities within them. A large number of people thought that marine parks and reserves were fully no-take or "locked out" to fishing and some people thought that the primary aim of marine parks are to maintain fish stocks but had little understanding of other benefits. People were generally positive about the government proposal to expand the marine parks and reserves system in the PEMB region. Many were predominately concerned with improving protection whilst maintaining access for human uses such as fishing.

The information obtained during the community information sessions will assist in targeting the community education program and in the planning process for new marine parks and reserves in the PEMB region.

The authors would like to acknowledge the assistance of Matthew Fossey, Marc Wohling-Shaw and John Lloyd from MPPB for their assistance in conducting the community information sessions.

This report may be cited as:

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1 INTRODUCTION

This summary report outlines the objectives, methods and results of a series of community information sessions conducted in Perth, Broome, Eighty Mile Beach, Port Hedland, Karratha and Onslow from 10-19 April 2008.

The community information sessions were conducted as part of the project to expand the marine parks and reserves system in Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach (PEMB) regions. This project is being coordinated by the Marine Policy and Planning Branch (MPPB) of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC).

The primary purpose of the community information sessions was to increase awareness within communities about the project and provide a forum for individuals to find out how they can be involved in the planning process. A secondary objective was to source information from stakeholders about their level of knowledge of the marine environment and marine parks and reserves, their issues and opinions as well as any biological and social values of the study areas.

The information obtained during the community information sessions will be used to inform MPPB staff on local values, issues, opinions, knowledge and uses of the PEMB study areas, which in turn will be used to assist in targeting the PEMB community education program and be used to assist in planning for new marine parks and reserves in the region.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The State Government is committed to the establishment of a world-class system of marine parks and reserves in Western Australia that is comprehensive, adequate and representative. Several areas in the Pilbara region were identified as priority areas for reservation by the Marine Parks and Reserves Selection Working Group (MPRSWG) which was tasked with identifying candidate areas for marine reservation. The MPRSWG report was released in 1994.

In addition to these areas being highlighted as a priority for reservation by the MPRSWG, on 12 December 2006 the State Government announced its commitment to the rapid expansion of the terrestrial and marine reserves system in the PEMB regions, subject to established planning and approvals processes under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act). These new reserves are intended to improve protection for the marine biodiversity and provide additional protection for marine turtles (in particular flatback turtles) to the maximum extent possible. This Government decision was part of the consideration of environmental mitigation and offset measures associated with the proposed Gorgon Gas Development on Barrow Island Nature Reserve.

Before new marine parks and reserves can be established there is a requirement for:

“Extensive assessment, community consultation and management planning ...” An essential component of this is:

“A comprehensive assessment of the area’s biological and economic resources, and social values is carried out.” (Western Australian Government, 1998)

In view of the high conservation value of the priority areas identified in the PEMB regions by the MPRSWG and the Government decision of 2006, DEC has undertaken a rapid resource assessment of the ecological and socio-economic values in the region to provide the

necessary information for selection and design of new marine parks and reserves. One part of this is the identification of key stakeholders and collation of community views, issues and local knowledge of these priority areas. The MPPB has developed a PEMB 'community contacts database' which includes the contact details of key stakeholders and people who wish to be kept informed of the planning process. The community information sessions will contribute to the identification of key stakeholders and the collation of community information for use in the planning process. The information sessions will also raise awareness in the community about the marine parks and reserves planning process in their area and ensure a smoother transition into a more comprehensive community-based planning process.

2 OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the community information sessions were to:

- increase awareness within communities about the project; and
- provide a forum for individuals to find out how to be involved in the planning process and register their details on the projects 'community contacts database'.

A secondary objective was to:

- source information from stakeholders about their level of knowledge of the marine environment and marine parks and reserves, their issues and opinions as well as any biological and social values of the study areas.

This information is useful in identifying key stakeholders, targeting the education program and in identifying issues for possible consideration in the planning process. Local knowledge is a key aspect of this data collection, which is not well recorded in literature.

3 METHODS

Three DEC staff conducted the community information sessions which were advertised as open to everyone and where people could come for as long as they liked during the advertised time. A list of venues, dates and times is outlined in Section 3.1. Media and communication for the information sessions is outline in Section 3.2.

Upon arrival to the town and prior to the community information session, DEC staff visited local businesses to drop off pamphlets and to speak to interested people about the community information session and planning process for marine parks and reserves in their area. Fishing tackle stores, dive shops and tourism outlets were particularly targeted. This was aimed at assisting in advertising the information sessions, meeting with people who were unable to attend the information sessions and allowing the survey form to be filled out prior to the information session with people who may be particularly negative about the project. Ensuring that one-on-one discussions were held with these people may also assist in avoiding negative "lobbying" behavior at the information sessions. In addition, these businesses are often key points in the community where interested individuals discuss proposals affecting their activities. Ensuring that businesses are well informed may help dispel rumors and also assist with disseminating accurate information to stakeholders. Support from these businesses can also result in them 'championing' the proposal in the community when discussing the project with their clients.

The room was set-up with display boards showing information about marine parks and reserves, the planning process and marine ecological and social values of the study areas. Several tables displayed large maps of the study areas where people were welcomed to record their areas of importance. Other tables had information and fun give-aways for people to take away and read at a later stage. A list of information on display and for take away is outlined in Section 3.3.

During the information sessions people were welcomed to read the information available, take information home with them and also to talk to a DEC officer issues, opinions and areas of importance as well as any question they may have. Participants were also asked if they wanted to be registered on the PEMB 'community contacts database' and receive more information about the project during the planning process. If the participant agreed, their issues, opinions and areas of importance were recorded onto a survey form. A copy of the survey form is included in Appendix I. The information obtained from the survey was recorded in a spreadsheet and their details entered into the 'community contacts database'.

More information on materials, methods and protocols is outlined in the field program report (Davidson & Thompson, 2008).

3.1 VENUES, DATES & TIMES

Community information sessions were arranged for the following venues, dates and times:

- **Perth - Thursday 10 April 6-9 pm**
DEC State Operations
17 Dick Perry Avenue
Technology Park, Western Precinct, Kensington
- **Broome - Monday 14 April 4-7 pm**
Recreation and Aquatic Centre, Multi-purpose Room
Cable Beach Road, Broome
- **Eighty Mile Beach - Tuesday 15 April 4.30-7.30 pm**
Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park
Great Northern Highway
- **Port Hedland - Wednesday 16 April 4-7 pm**
Gratwick Hall, Civic Centre
McGregor St, Port Hedland
- **Karratha - Thursday 17 April 5-8 pm**
Welcome Lotteries House
7 Morse Court, Karratha
- **Onslow - Friday 18 April 4-7 pm**
Shire Hall (R.M. Forrest Memorial Hall)
Second Avenue, Onslow

3.2 COMMUNICATION & MEDIA

Community information sessions were advertised in statewide and local newspapers, specifically:

- *The West Australian*, Wednesday 9 April 2008
- *Broome Advertiser*, Thursday 3 and 10 April 2008
- *North West Telegraph*, Wednesday 2 and 9 April 2008
- *Pilbara News*, Wednesday 9 and 16 April 2008
- *Onslow Times*, Friday 21 March 2008

A copy of the newspaper advertisement is included in Appendix II.

In addition to these advertisements, information was made available on DEC's Naturebase website www.naturebase.net/pilbara80mile. The webpages were available to view approximately three weeks prior to the information sessions. In addition, a letter and information was mailed to approximately 300 organisations, groups and individuals approximately four weeks prior to the community information sessions and an email was sent to approximately 230 individuals the week prior to the community information sessions.

A flyer was distributed to members of the Interagency Working Group for distribution to their members and the flyer was also put on notice boards in the local area including:

- Broome, Port Hedland, Karratha and Onslow shopping centres.
- DEC & DoF offices at Broome and Karratha.
- Local shire offices at Broome, Port Hedland, Karratha and Onslow.
- The Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park.
- Other tourism outlets in town if agreed.

A copy of the flyer is included in Appendix III.

A media statement by the Minister for the Environment was prepared, however this was not released during the field trip. It has since been released by DEC. During the trip interviews were given to *North West Telegraph* in Port Hedland, which resulted in an article being written and ABC Radio in Karratha, which was aired on 17 April 2008.

3.3 EDUCATION TOOLS & PRODUCTS

The following education tools and products were available at the community information sessions for people to take away or read on display boards:

- Fact sheets –
 - Marine Parks and Reserves for the Pilbara and lower west Kimberley.*
 - Marine Parks and Reserves in Western Australia.*
- Pamphlet –
 - Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach: Multiple objectives, one marine planning process.*
- Posters –
 - The planning process.*
 - Community input during the development of the indicative management plan.*
 - The Interagency Working Group: Who? What? Why?*
 - Study area map.*
 - Marine Parks and Reserves in Western Australia.*
 - Living Links.*
 - Take a closer look – six study area posters.*
- Displays – Three Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach colour banners.
- Give-aways – boat key rings, book marks, stickers and paper bags.

Copies of the above products are included in Appendix IV.

4 RESULTS

4.1 ATTENDANCE AT THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

Approximately 54 people attended the Community Information Sessions, with the most number of people attending in Broome, Eighty Mile Beach and Karratha (Table 1). A further approximately 18 local businesses were visited during the field trip and other contacts were made over the phone (no estimate of phone contacts). A total of 34 survey forms were completed during the field trip recording people's views, issues and opinions. In addition, the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council has assisted DEC in distributing the survey form to commercial fishing licence holders in the Pilbara and lower west Kimberley region. This resulted in one survey form being returned (as at 24 April 2008).

Table 1: Attendance at community information sessions

Community Information Session/Town	Attendance	Other contacts during trip	Survey Forms
Perth	8	NA	7
Broome	12	3	8
Eighty Mile Beach	12	1	2
Port Hedland	7	4	7
Karratha	11	5	7
Onslow	4	5	3
Commercial fishing survey	NA	NA	1
Total	54	18	35

Although only approximately 72 contacts were made during the field trip, it is believed that awareness of the planning process reached far greater into the local community than just these people. It is believed that awareness was raised through the large amount of advertising of the community information sessions in local and statewide newspapers as well as the email and mail distributions to hundreds of contacts on the 'community contacts database', ABC North West radio interview, media release, notices in shop windows of local shires and businesses and word of mouth. This is evidenced by the increase in phone and email enquiries about the information sessions and planning process for a number of weeks before and after the information sessions.

4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND REGISTRATIONS TO THE 'CONTACTS DATABASE'

The community information sessions and other contacts made before, during and after the field trip have resulted in the identification of key stakeholders and many new contacts being added to the PEMB 'community contacts database'. Many contact details have also been updated with more accurate information. A total of 466 contacts (as at 13 October 2008) are now registered on the database. The 'community contacts database' will be continually maintained and updated during the life of the planning process.

4.3 RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

For privacy reasons, only general information is outlined in this summary report. Other more detailed information has been obtained by DEC staff for use in the planning process.

4.3.1 Sectors and primary area of interest

A total of 35 people completed the survey form (Table 1).

During the survey people were asked to list in order of priority the activities that they were most interested in or most actively involved in. This information allows a summary of representation of people from general sectors within the community. Of the 36 people that were interviewed majority were from the recreational fishing (including commercial charter fishing) sector, conservation sector and commercial fishing (including pearling/aquaculture) sector (Table 2). This data is representative only of the 36 people who were surveyed at the community information sessions.

Table 2: Representation (or general sector) of people who were surveyed

Sector	No. of people surveyed
Recreational fishing (includes commercial charter fishing)	14
Commercial fishing (includes aquaculture/pearling)	6
Conservation	6
Petroleum/mining/exploration	4
Tourism	2
Ports/shipping/infrastructure	1
Pastoral/agricultural	2
Diving	1
Total	36

People were asked to list in order of priority the study area that they were most interested in. Some people had several study areas as their first priority. Of the 36 people who were interviewed majority of people were interested in other areas not within the study areas including Port Hedland, the Dampier Archipelago and Broome. A large number of people were primarily interested in the Cape Thouin to Cape Lambert study area (12 people) and a smaller number of people were primarily interested in Eighty Mile Beach (7 people). This data is representative only of the 36 people who were surveyed at the community information sessions.

4.3.2 Issues and opinions

People were asked to voice their issues and opinions about the marine environment in their area, marine parks and reserves and any local issues and concerns that they think are important to note during the planning process. DEC staff recorded these directly on the survey form and then allocated a category to each of the issues and opinions raised. Many other issues and opinions were recorded which will be considered during the planning process. Of those issues and opinions recorded on the survey forms, the majority were about wanting more protection for the marine environment generally and maintaining access for fishing (Table 3). Other frequently raised issues and opinions included conflicts between users, changing the fishing rules/regulations (most often to decrease bag/size limits or to restrict access of a particular commercial or recreational fishing activity e.g. net fishing or fishing on scuba), and general comments about management of fisheries.

Table 3: Issues and opinions recorded on the survey forms during the community information session (as categorised by DEC staff)

Category of issue/opinion raised during survey	No. of people
Wants more protection (general)	17
Access (for fishing)	16
Conflict between users	10
Change fishing rules/regulations	9
Fisheries management (general)	9
Species specific	7
Consultation process (general)	5
Access (general)	5
Wants more protection (no-take)	4
DEC management (general)	4
Access (for 4WD)	3
Planning process (general)	3
Indigenous hunting	1
Research/monitoring	1
Access (indigenous)	1
Indigenous engagement	1

4.3.3 Knowledge and understanding

During the survey people were also asked to discuss what they understood about the marine ecological and social values of the study areas, marine parks and reserves and what activities are permitted within them and sanctuary zones and why they are enforced. DEC staff could then address any misunderstandings. Local knowledge about ecological and social values was recorded. A secondary objective was to assess people's knowledge to allow DEC to target the community education program during the planning process. For privacy reasons this information has not been analysed, but will be used to target the community education program and in planning marine parks and reserves.

DEC staff who attended the information sessions noted the following, generally:

- people knew that there are marine parks and reserves around Western Australia (Ningaloo being the most well known), but had low understanding of the need for them or the permitted activities within them;
- a large number of people thought that marine parks and reserves were fully no-take or "locked out" to fishing;
- some people thought that marine parks and reserves were to help maintain fish stocks and had little understanding of other values protected by reserves or their benefits to conservation;
- some people were aware of the breadth of ecological and social values in the Pilbara, but majority of people were concerned predominately with fishing and fish stocks.

4.3.4 General feeling about the proposal

People were asked what their general feeling was towards the proposal to expand the marine parks and reserves system in the PEMB regions. Majority of people surveyed said that they were generally positive about the Government proposal, a smaller number were cautious and even smaller numbers were undecided or negative.

Table 4: People's feeling about the Government proposal to expand the marine parks and reserves in the region

Feeling	No. of people
Positive	14
Not assessed	10
Cautious	7
Undecided	3
Negative	2
Total	36

5 SUMMARY

The community information sessions and subsequent media were successful in raising awareness within communities about the project and the sessions provided a forum for people to find out how to be involved in the planning process. New contacts were identified and registered on the 'community contacts database' and many details were updated with new information.

The information obtained from the survey and also one-on-one discussions with community members has been helpful in informing DEC staff on local values, issues, opinions, knowledge and uses of the PEMB study areas, which in turn will be used to assist in targeting the PEMB community education program and be used in planning for new marine parks and reserves in the region.

People were generally positive about the government proposal to expand the marine parks and reserves system in the PEMB region. People were predominately concerned with improving protection whilst maintaining access for human uses such as fishing.

6 DATA MANAGEMENT

6.1 SUMMARY REPORT

Hard copies of this summary report will be held at DEC's:

1. Marine Policy & Planning Branch, Suite 3, Level 3 Queensgate Building, 10 William St. Fremantle, WA 6160. Ph: 9336 0110 Fax: 9450 5408.
2. Karratha Region, Lot 3 Anderson Road, Karratha Industrial Estate, Karratha, WA 6714. Ph: 9182 2000 Fax: 9144 118.
3. West Kimberley District, 111 Herbert St. Broome, WA 6725. Ph: 9195 5500 Fax: 9193 5027.
4. Science Library, Wildlife Place, Woodvale, WA 6026. Ph: 94055100 Fax: 9306 1641.

A digital copy will be located on the MPPB server and full backup tape.

6.2 DATA

The information obtained during this field trip has been entered into an excel spreadsheet which is located on the MPPB server and full backup tape. Hard copy maps and survey forms are filed in the MPPB official file 2007/002512-2.

7 REFERENCES

Government of Western Australia (1998) *New Horizons the way ahead in marine conservation and management*. Department of Conservation and Land Management. Perth, Western Australia

Marine Parks and Reserves Selection Working Group (1994) *A representative marine reserve system for Western Australia*. Department of Conservation and Land Management. Perth, Western Australia.

APPENDIX I: SURVEY FORM FOR USE IN THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

SURVEY OF COMMUNITY ISSUES & OPINIONS Pilbara & Eighty Mile Beach

The issues analysis helps DEC to:

- hear what the community wants;
- understand where issues and conflicts exist;
- collect local knowledge; and
- target community engagement appropriately.

Registration / Associations / Interests

1. Would you like to receive regular updates on the project?
[if yes, please fill out registration form]

2. Do you know anyone else who would like to receive information on the project?

Name:

Organisation:

Position:

Postal address:

Postcode:

Phone:

Email:

3. Are you affiliated with any clubs, associations, organisations or agencies? If yes please provide details.

4. Which study area(s), in order of priority, are you most interested in? [refer map overleaf]

Eighty Mile Beach

Fortescue River to Cane River

Spit Point to Cape Keraudren

Serrurier Island

Cape Lambert to Cape Thouin

Rocky Point to Locker Point

5. In order of priority, what are your interests in the study areas?

[e.g. nature appreciation, beach combing, 4WD, diving, boating. If recreational fishing how do you undertake it e.g. shore-based fishing, small boat fishing, deep water fishing]

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6. Local Knowledge - This section helps DEC to understand the level of local knowledge and understanding of issues and how to focus the engagement and education program. Please share your local knowledge about the following:

a) What do you consider are the important ecological values of the study area/s?

b) What do you consider are the important social values of the study area/s?

c) What do you understand about the purpose of marine reserves and the activities allowed in them?

d) What are Sanctuary zones and why are they declared?

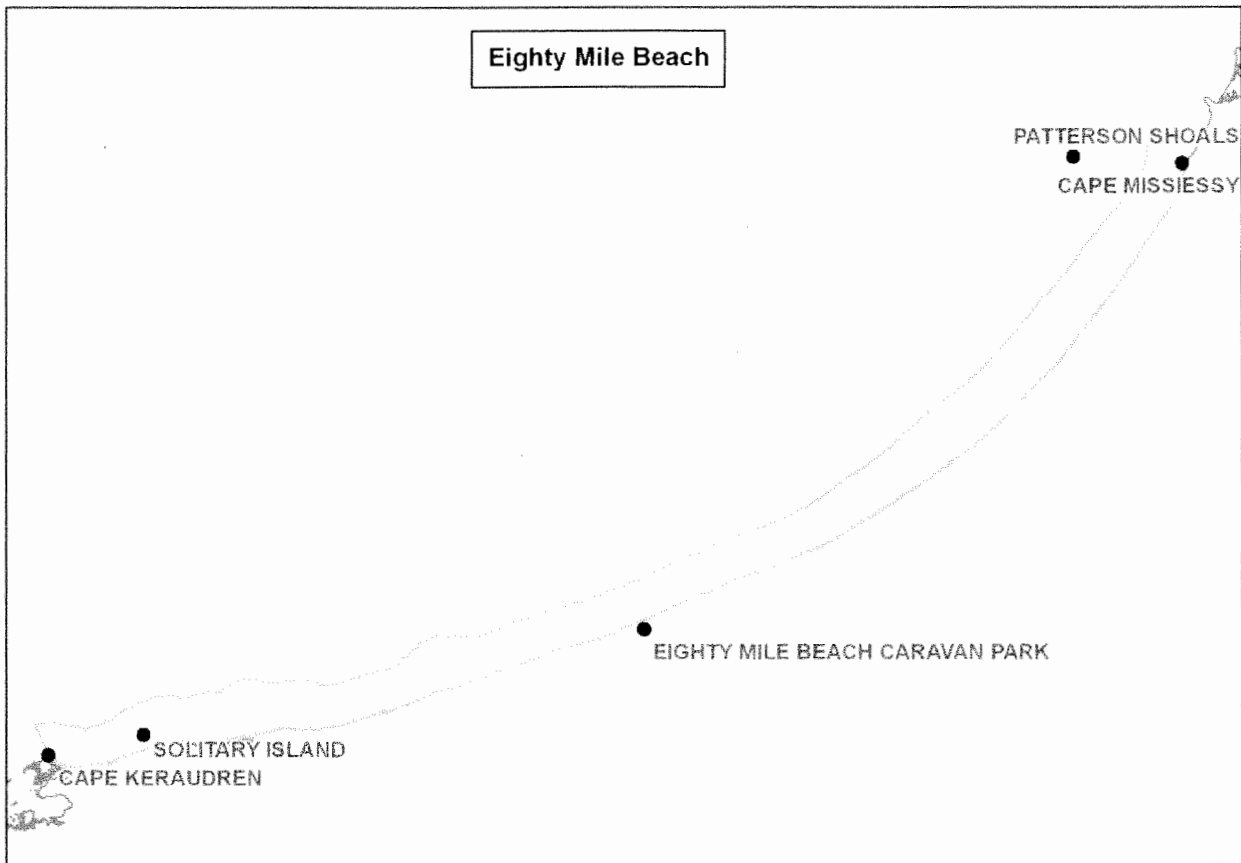
e) What do you think about the Government proposal to consider establishing marine parks and reserves in the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions (negative, undecided, positive)?

7. Issues / Opinions - This section helps DEC understand your issues and opinions.

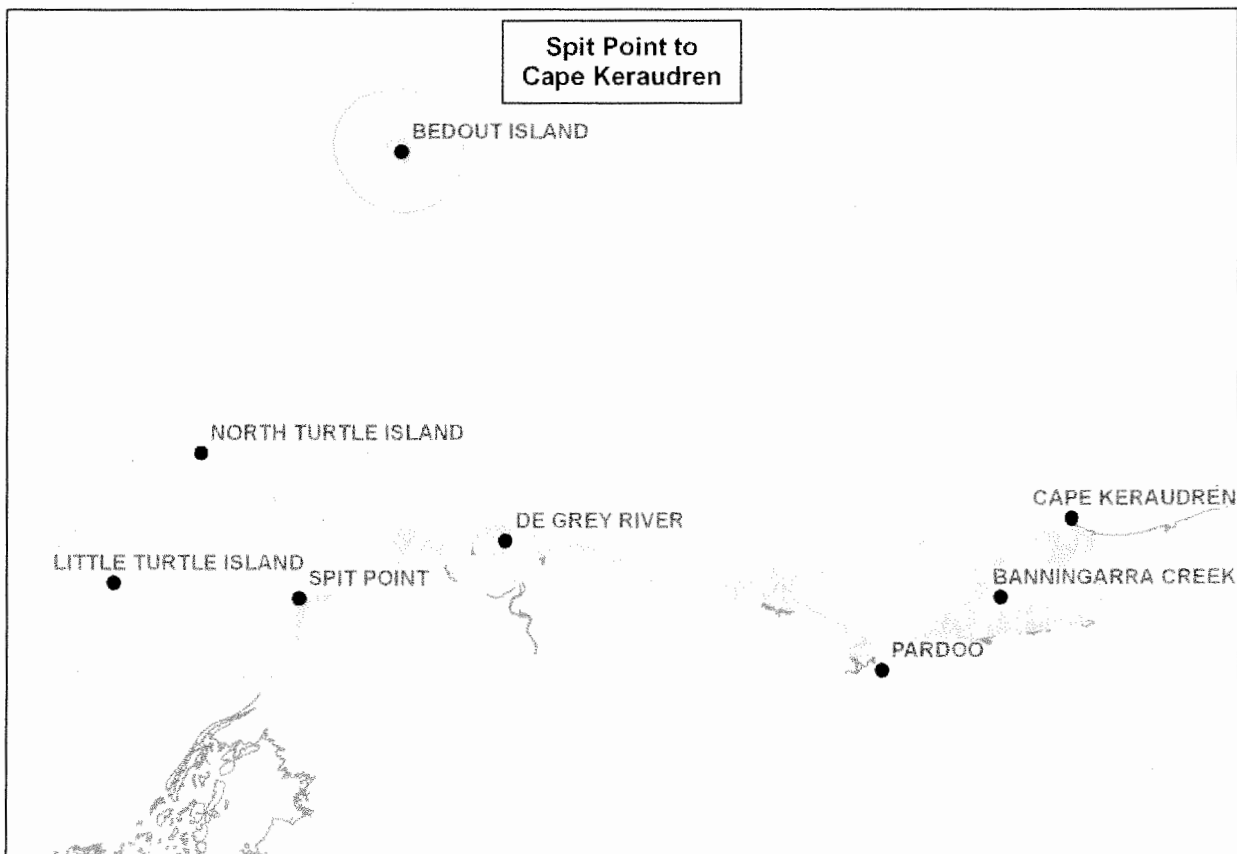
- a) What are your opinions regarding the marine and coastal environment of the study area/s?
[e.g. specific human uses, changes in envt or particular sp eg turtles, fish, sharks]
- b) What are your issues regarding proposed establishment of new marine parks and reserves in the study area/s or planning process? [e.g. maintaining access to fishing area, consultation process]
- c) Are there any specific local issues or concerns at specific locations that we should know about? [e.g. conflicts between uses, changes in the environment]

On the maps below, please draw areas you think are important for: 1) protection; 2) fishing or other usage; and 3) special biological features or values. For each feature you draw on the map please specify why you think it's important.

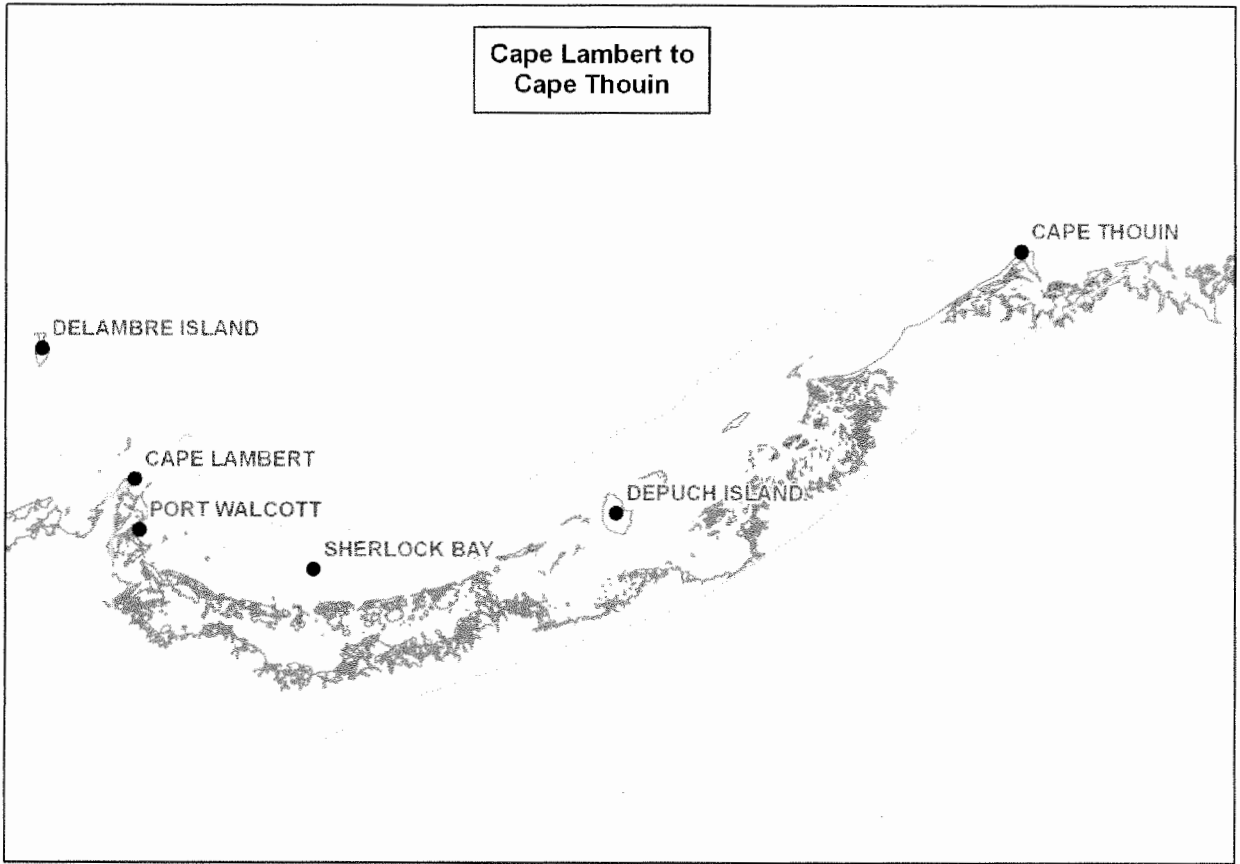
Eighty Mile Beach



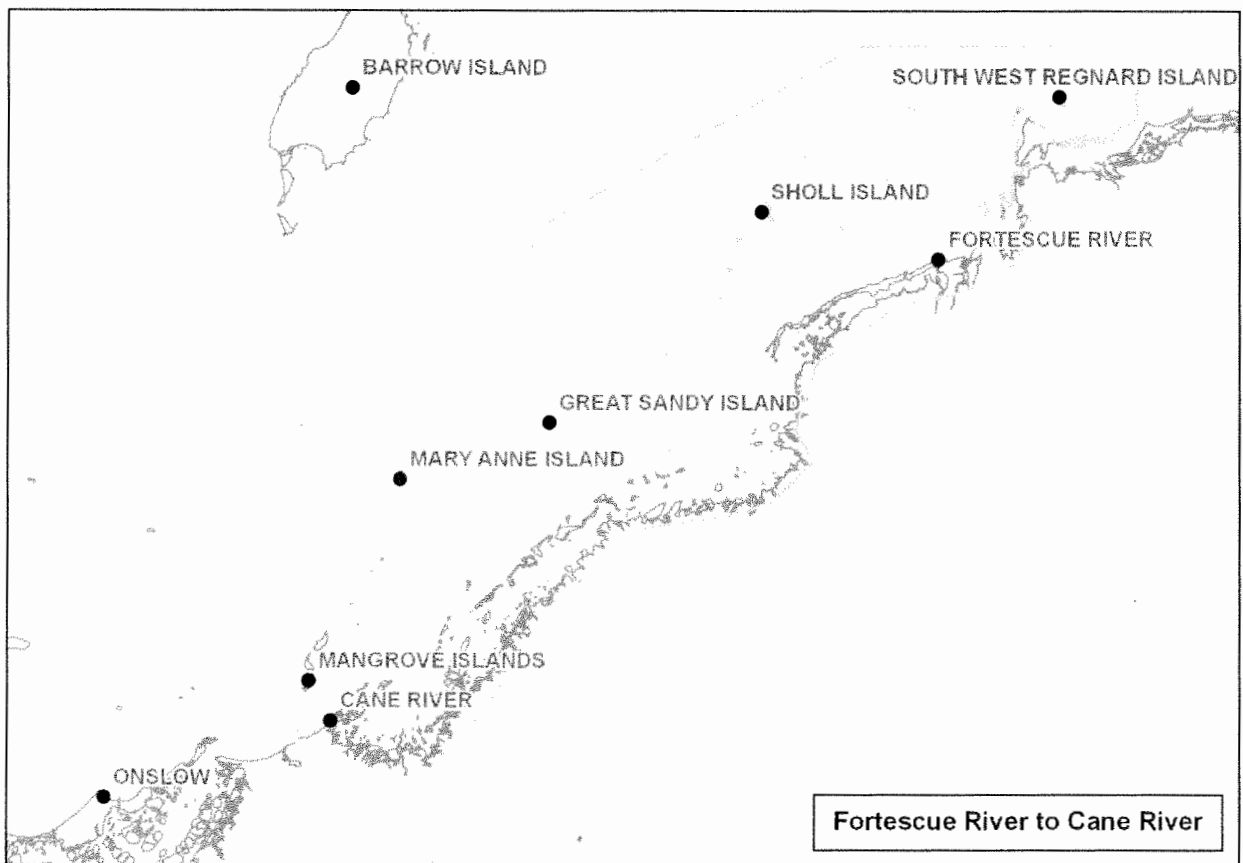
Spit Point to Cape Keraudren



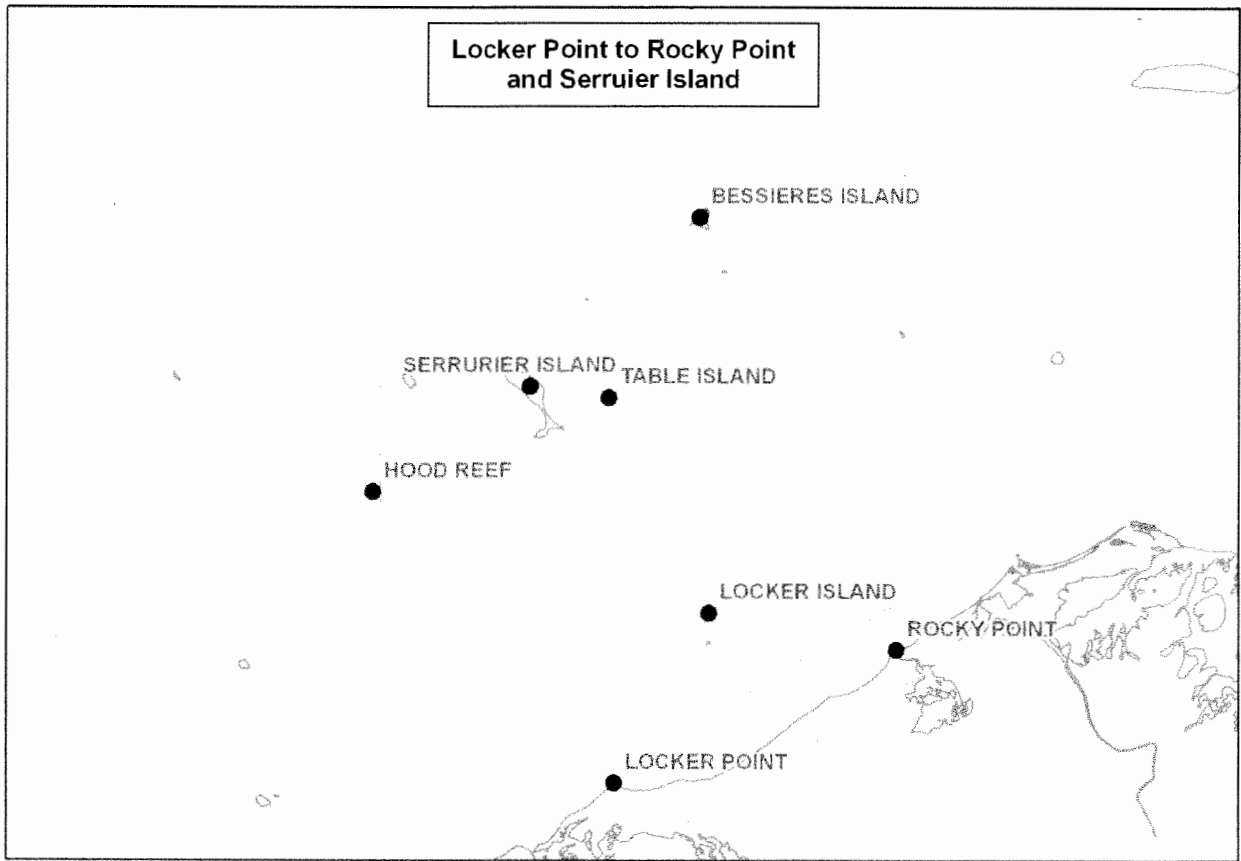
Cape Lambert to Cape Thouin



Fortescue River to Cane River (Great Sandy Is. NR & surrounds)



Locker Point to Rocky Point / Serrurier Island



APPENDIX II: NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS



Department of Environment
and Conservation
Government of Western Australia

Community Information Sessions

Planning for proposed marine parks and reserves in the Pilbara and lower west Kimberley

The Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions contain unique and diverse marine and coastal environments including mangroves, seagrass, and coral habitats that support a wide variety of marine wildlife. These environments also support valued recreational and commercial uses including fishing, nature appreciation, shipping, and oil and gas interests.

The State Government is seeking to expand the marine parks and reserves system in the region as part of its commitment to establish a world-class system of marine parks and reserves in Western Australia.

A series of information sessions will be held to provide an opportunity for community members to find out more about the proposal and to share local knowledge about the environment and usage.

Information sessions will be held at:

Perth DEC State Operations 17 Dick Perry Avenue Technology Park, Western Precinct Kensington	Thursday 10 April	6 - 9 pm
Broome Recreation and Aquatic Centre Multi-purpose Room Cable Beach Road, Broome	Monday 14 April	4 - 7 pm
Eighty Mile Beach Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park Great Northern Highway	Tuesday 15 April	4.30 - 7.30 pm
Port Hedland Gratwick Hall Civic Centre McGregor St, Port Hedland	Wednesday 16 April	4 - 7 pm
Karratha Welcome Lotteries House 7 Morse Court, Karratha	Thursday 17 April	5 - 8 pm
Onslow Shire Hall (R.M. Forrest Memorial Hall) Second Avenue, Onslow	Friday 18 April	4 - 7 pm

Come along anytime (for as long as you like) during the information session. Children are welcome.

We value your input and look forward to your participation.

For more information, please contact DEC on 93360100 or email pemb@dec.wa.gov.au.

www.naturebase.net/pilbara80mile



APPENDIX III: FLYER ADVERTISING THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS



Community Information Sessions



Planning for proposed marine parks and reserves in the Pilbara and lower west Kimberley

The Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions contain unique and diverse marine and coastal environments including mangroves, seagrass, and coral habitats that support a wide variety of marine wildlife. These environments also support valued recreational and commercial uses including fishing, nature appreciation, shipping, and oil and gas interests. The State Government is seeking to expand the marine parks and reserves system in the region as part of its commitment to establish a world class system of marine parks and reserves in Western Australia.

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For more information, please contact DEC on 93360100 or email pemb@dec.wa.gov.au www.naturebase.net/pilbara80mile



APPENDIX IV: INFORMATION AND PRODUCTS FOR THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

Multiple objectives

WA's marine parks and reserves cater for a range of uses. The project to expand the marine parks and reserves system in the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions aims to:

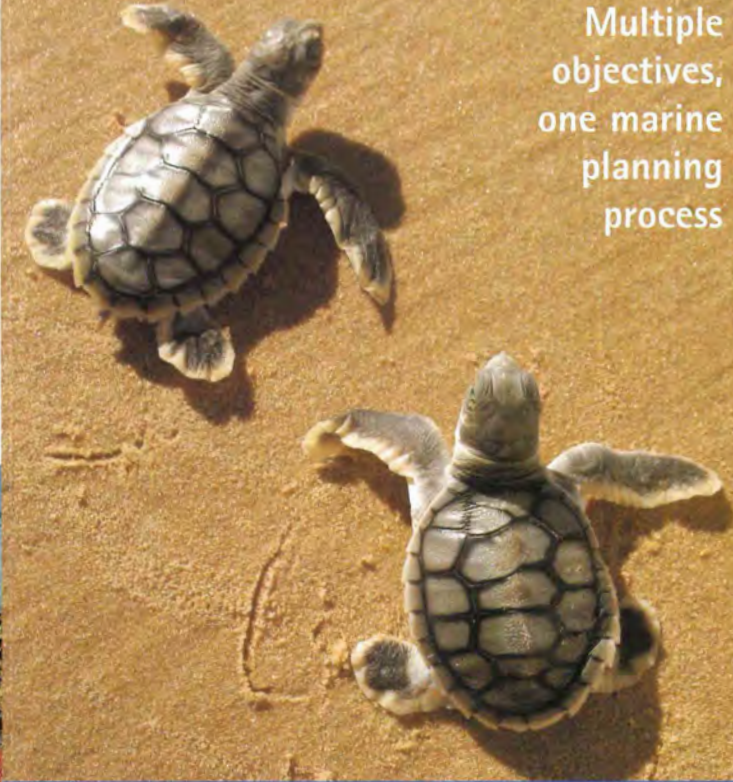
- better protect marine biodiversity, threatened marine wildlife (such as turtles), habitats of special significance (such as mangroves, seagrass and coral reefs) and unique areas (such as spawning sites and cultural sites);
- consider environmental impacts of existing/proposed developments particularly in and adjacent to existing reserves in the region (such as Barrow Island Nature Reserve, Montebello Islands Marine Park, Barrow Island Marine Park, Barrow Island Marine Management Area, proposed Dampier Archipelago Marine Park and proposed Regnard Marine Management Area);
- develop opportunities and linkages for the local community (such as future management arrangements with Indigenous people and benefits for local businesses, industry and tourism ventures);
- minimise the impacts of new marine parks and reserves on commercial and recreational uses (such as recreational and commercial fishing, aquaculture and industry).

Have your say!

- Place your name on DEC's contacts database if you would like to be involved in the process and receive updates during the planning process.
- DEC will meet with stakeholders to seek feedback on issues and aspirations and identify the location of human activities (such as fishing and dive sites, commercial fishing areas and proposed industrial developments).
- Workshops will be held in major towns, with local Indigenous communities and in Perth so stakeholders and community members can have input into the process.
- You can find information about the project at www.naturebase.net/pilbara80mile. The 'Latest News' and 'Have Your Say' sections will be updated regularly.
- When an indicative management plan (with proposed reserve types, location and zoning) has been prepared and approved by relevant Government Ministers, there will be a three-month public submission period to provide opportunity to comment.

Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach

Multiple objectives, one marine planning process



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The human 'footprint' in the Pilbara and lower west Kimberley marine environment is growing and there is a need for more integrated marine planning and management to keep our marine environment in excellent condition.

The State Government is expanding the marine parks and reserves system in the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions. This is part of its commitment to establish a world-class system in Western Australia that meets criteria of comprehensiveness, adequacy and representativeness, and protects special marine ecosystems.



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Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach Study Areas

Six study areas have been nominated (see map) from within which marine parks and reserves will be identified. Extensive community and stakeholder consultation will be undertaken before any reserve boundaries are proposed within the study areas.

A Government Interagency Working Group has been established to develop the proposal and includes staff from:

- Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) – coordinator;
- Department of Fisheries;
- Department for Planning and Infrastructure;
- Department of Industry and Resources;

- Western Australian Museum;
- Department of Indigenous Affairs;
- Office of Native Title;
- Tourism Western Australia.

To ensure the process of identifying appropriate marine park and reserve boundaries is scientifically rigorous and to allow a thorough analysis of options, DEC and the Interagency Working Group will use a systematic reserve planning approach and may seek advice from an independent scientific panel in developing principles to guide planning for marine parks and reserves in the region.

The Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach area is a unique and diverse coast that supports mangroves, coral reefs, sponge gardens, seagrass meadows, seaweed beds, barrier and offshore islands, protected lagoons, deltas, rocky shores and sandy beaches inhabited by marine turtles, dugongs, whales, dolphins, seabirds, fish and colourful invertebrates.

The region supports growing mining and petroleum industries, commercial fishing, aquaculture and pearling and many recreational uses such as nature appreciation, boating, fishing, diving and four-wheel driving. The area has many cultural sites of importance to Indigenous people such as traditional living areas, sacred sites and rock art galleries.





Marine parks and reserves for the Pilbara and lower west Kimberley

The Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach is a unique and diverse area. It contains a number of important marine habitats such as significant mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass meadows and sponge gardens which support marine turtles, dugongs, whales, dolphins, seabirds, fish and many colourful invertebrate species.

The Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach coast and sea is special.

- It is home to **threatened and vulnerable species** such as flatback turtles that are only found in northern Australia.
- It has **unique areas** such as the longest uninterrupted stretch of beach in Western Australia (Eighty Mile Beach), which is a key feeding ground for more than 500,000 migratory shorebirds. Eighty Mile Beach is also an internationally listed wetland.
- It supports **habitats of special significance** such as mangroves, which are important nutrient sources for the adjacent marine environment and act as nursery areas for many species.
- It is **used by many people** for food, income and enjoyment.

What is the Western Australian Government proposing for the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach?

The State Government has started a planning process to establish new marine parks and reserves in the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions. It has listed six study areas in which marine parks and reserves may be identified. The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and the Interagency Working Group will consult with the community on proposed management arrangements.

In developing these arrangements, the State Government will work with the community to design reserves that maximise benefits to the community and achieve conservation goals. Receiving accurate information about the location of your activities (such as favourite fishing and diving locations) will be very important.

What is the Interagency Working Group?

The Interagency Working Group with representatives of key State Government agencies has been established to help plan new marine parks and reserves. These agencies are committed to working together in developing a plan to protect the marine environment and manage human uses in an equitable and sustainable manner.

Will there be sanctuary (no-take) zones?

Yes, sanctuary zones or no-take areas are very important to ensure long-term sustainability of our marine environment. The location and size of sanctuary zones will be considered during the planning process. When developing zone boundaries and management arrangements, DEC and



the Interagency Working Group will aim to maximise benefits to the community (e.g. sustainable fishing, tourism and industry) and achieve conservation goals.

How can I take part in the planning process?

The community can take part in the planning process through:

- **Local Reference Groups** – these groups will comprise local community members and be established in major towns adjacent to the proposed reserves. They will meet at key stages during the planning process to comment on the management options developed by the Interagency Working Group.
- **Peak body consultation** – these groups will be kept informed throughout the planning process. They will also have the option of forming a ‘consultation group’ to help in developing an understanding of their sector activities and comment on management options developed by the Interagency Working Group.
- **Interest groups** – interested groups or individuals may register their interest in receiving regular updates on the project. These groups can organise their own feedback to DEC where appropriate.
- **General community consultation** – the community can obtain information and participate in the process by:
 - attending community information sessions which will be held at key stages in towns in the region;
 - visiting DEC’s *NatureBase* website (www.naturebase.net/pilbara80mile);
 - joining DEC’s contacts database to receive regular email updates; and
 - writing a submission to DEC once Government has released the indicative management plan for the statutory three month public comment period.

An engagement program is also being developed to ensure effective partnerships are formed with Indigenous groups.

For further information contact DEC
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Marine parks and reserves in Western Australia

Our coastline spans more than 13,500 kilometres and is home to some remarkable ecosystems and marine wildlife, including majestic whale sharks, humpback whales, several threatened species of marine turtles, sea lions and fur seals, leafy seadragons, little penguins and the world's longest fringing reef in Ningaloo Marine Park. Many of Western Australia's marine plants and animals are found nowhere else in the world.

Marine recreation and tourism are very important in this State. Activities such as scuba diving, wildlife viewing, swimming and boating are very popular and surveys indicate that at least 500,000 Western Australians enjoy recreational fishing. Tourism is extremely important to regional and local economies. For example, tourism associated with whale shark viewing in the Ningaloo Marine Park generates an estimated \$12 million of expenditure each year. Other commercial uses, including fishing, aquaculture and pearling, shipping, petroleum and mining are also very important to the State.

With increased use of our marine environment and resources, careful and responsible management is required and all interests need to be considered when creating and implementing marine parks and reserves.

What are marine parks and reserves?

The Western Australian Government is committed to developing a world-class system of multiple-use marine parks and reserves. Marine parks and reserves cover about 12 per cent of State waters.

Multiple-use marine parks and reserves balance conservation of the marine environment with the use of marine resources. By managing the wide variety of activities that occur in the sea, marine park and reserve managers help to ensure that our marine habitats and wildlife remain healthy. This makes the areas more resilient and better able to withstand and recover from increasing pressures such as pollution, fishing, mining and development, disease and climate change so that present and future generations can enjoy the environmental, social and economic benefits provided by marine parks and reserves.

There are three types of marine parks and reserves in Western Australia: marine parks, marine nature reserves and marine management areas.

Marine parks protect natural features and aesthetic values while enabling recreational and commercial uses that do not compromise conservation values. Western Australia has nine marine parks, and three more will be established in the near future. Within marine parks there may be four types of management zones:

- **Sanctuary zones** are 'look but don't take' areas managed solely for nature conservation and passive, non-extractive recreation and tourism, scientific study and education and nature appreciation.
- **Recreation zones** provide for conservation and recreation, including recreational fishing.



- **Special purpose zones** are managed for a particular use or issue, such as protection of habitat or nursery grounds, seasonal events such as whale watching or a particular type of priority activity such as aquaculture. Commercial and recreational activity may be allowed if it is compatible with the primary purpose of a special purpose zone.
- **General use zones** are managed to conserve natural values while allowing such activities as sustainable commercial and recreational fishing, aquaculture and pearling, and petroleum exploration and production where they do not compromise the conservation objectives of the marine park. This zone forms the bulk of most marine parks.

Marine nature reserves are created for conservation and scientific research. These areas are no-take areas and nature appreciation and scientific study are the primary uses. Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve at Shark Bay is the only marine nature reserve in WA.

Marine management areas are created over areas that have both high conservation values and intensive multiple-use. There are two marine management areas in WA (at the Muiron Islands and Barrow Island), with another proposed at Regnard (near Dampier).

Why are marine parks zoned?

Zoning is an important management tool for achieving conservation outcomes, through the management of recreational and commercial uses. While a range of activities are permitted in multiple-use marine reserves, not all activities are appropriate in all areas. A zoning scheme helps minimise conflict between incompatible activities such as industry development and nature appreciation.

What do marine parks and reserves mean for you and your family?

You are very welcome to swim, dive, snorkel and enjoy passive, low-impact activities throughout all marine parks and reserves. However, to protect specific areas there are some restrictions on extractive activities such as fishing, particularly in sanctuary zones and other 'no-take' areas. In most cases (with the exception of Barrow Island Marine Park and Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve), fishing is still permitted in the majority of the marine park or reserve. Including no-take areas in marine parks and reserves helps to ensure that future generations can see the same range of marine plants and animals and undertake similar activities in these areas that we do today.

What is the process to declare marine parks and reserves?

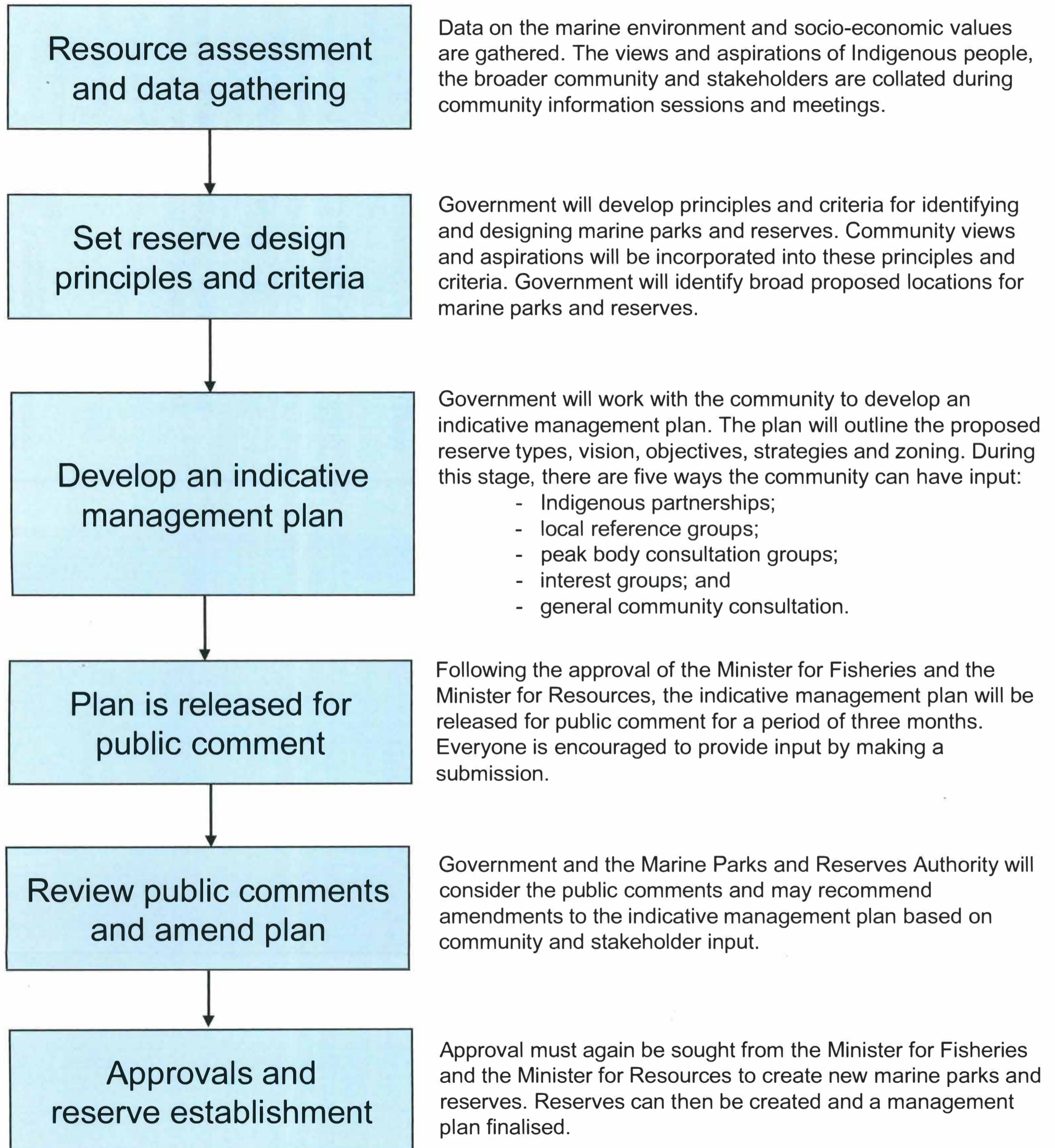
The process to declare marine parks and reserves are outlined in the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act). The CALM Act requires that an indicative management plan be prepared and public consultation conducted before a marine park or reserve is formally created. DEC facilitates the development of the plan on behalf of the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority and the State Government. A public submission period of at least three months is required and the submissions are reviewed to assist in finalising the plan. At key stages in the planning process the support of the Minister for Fisheries and the Minister for Resources is required to ensure that fishing and industry related issues are adequately considered.

For further information contact DEC
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THE PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process for new marine parks and reserves in the Pilbara and Eighty Mile Beach regions has a number of key stages:



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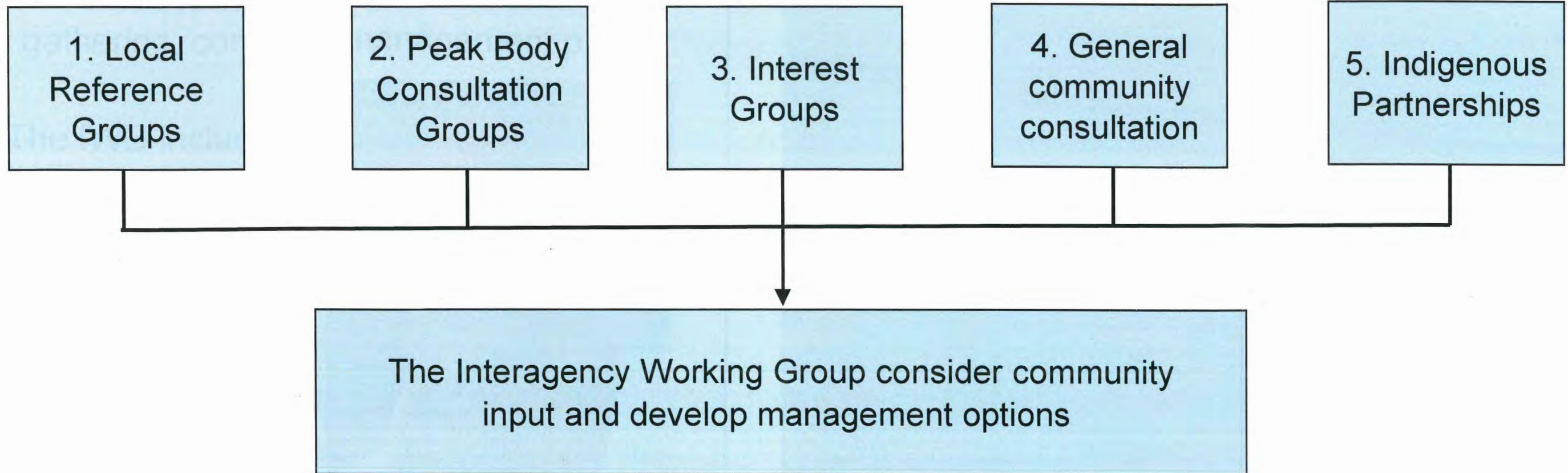


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COMMUNITY INPUT DURING DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDICATIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

There are five ways that community members can engage in the planning process:



1. Local Reference Groups will comprise local community members and be established in major towns adjacent to proposed reserves. They will meet at key stages to comment on management options developed by the Interagency Working Group.
2. Peak bodies have the option of forming a 'consultation group'. These groups will be kept regularly informed and shall assist in developing an understanding of their sector activities, as well as commenting on management options.
3. Groups or individuals may register their interest in receiving regular updates on the project. Interest groups can organise their own feedback to DEC and the Interagency Working Group where appropriate.
4. Community members can also be kept informed by: attending community information sessions at key stages; registering with DEC for regular e-mail updates; visiting DEC's *NatureBase* website; and providing comment once the indicative management plan is released.
5. An engagement program is being developed to ensure effective partnerships are formed with Indigenous groups.

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THE INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP: WHAT, WHO AND WHY?

A Government Interagency Working Group (IWG) has been established to assist in data gathering, consideration of cross-agency issues and developing an indicative management plan.

The IWG includes representation from:

- Department of Environment and Conservation;
- Department of Fisheries;
- Department of Industry and Resources;
- Department for Planning and Infrastructure;
- Department of Indigenous Affairs;
- Office of Native Title
- Tourism Western Australia;
- Western Australian Museum.



Photograph: John Lloyd/DEC

The formation of an IWG ensures that all relevant Government agencies take part in the planning process. This means that any current and proposed programs and agency responsibilities in the region will be considered early on in the planning process. IWG members will also identify areas that are a high priority and feasible for reservation.

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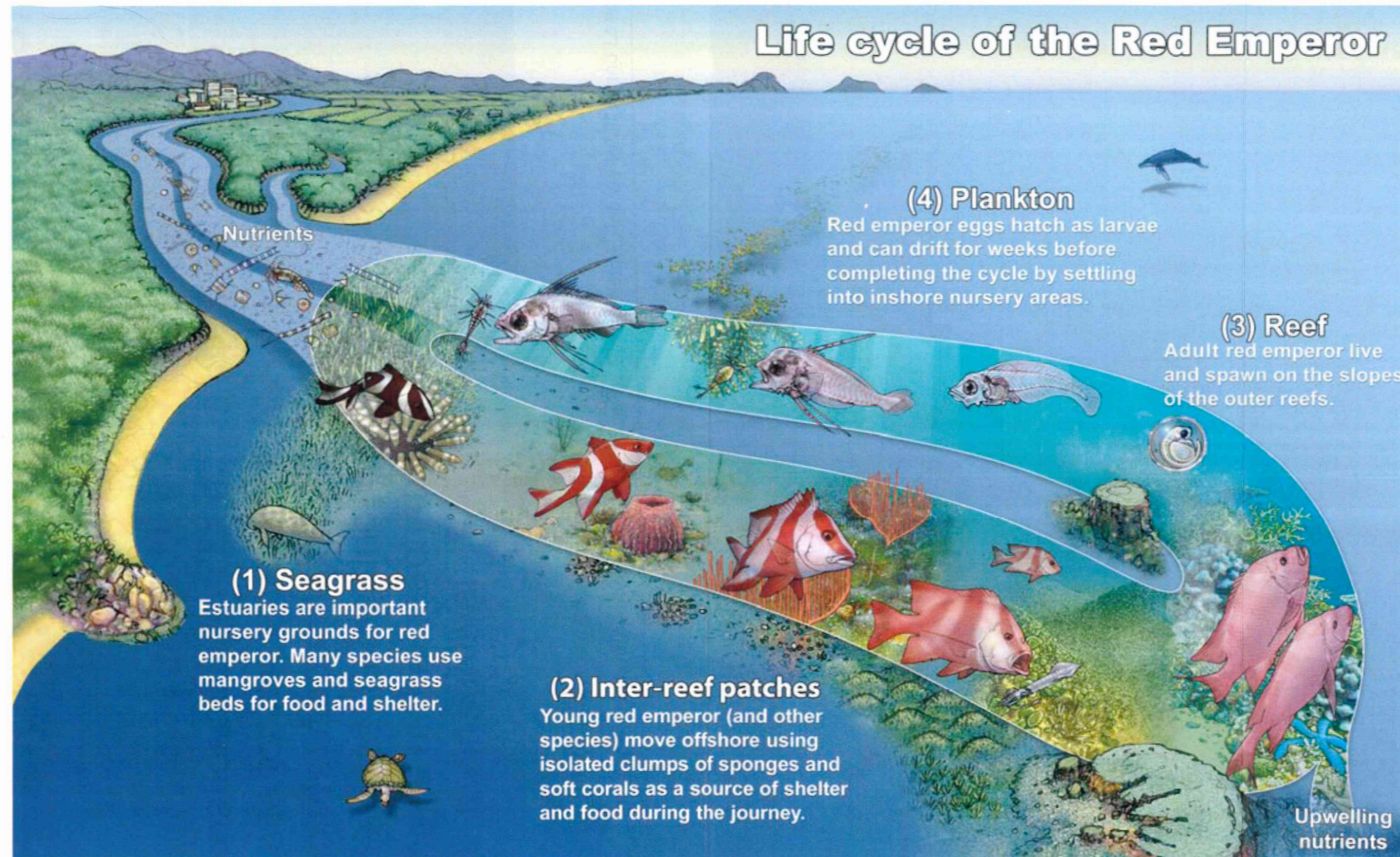
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LIVING LINKS

The habitats of Western Australia's coastal waters are linked. Because most fishes and invertebrates use multiple habitats during their lives, they are vulnerable to many natural and human-induced pressures.

The life cycle of the red emperor (*Lutjanus sebae*), an important species for fishers, illustrates how a species uses more than one habitat and how this has implications for management.



The message from this species is clear. To complete its life cycle, the red emperor needs a number of habitats. If one habitat is damaged or not available, the species may disappear from the system. Consequently, for new WA marine parks and reserves to be effective, it is essential for all habitats to be represented.

WHAT'S ON YOUR DOORSTEP?

Take a closer look at the Eighty Mile Beach study area

The beach is fronted by extensive tidal mudflats which support rich communities of invertebrates including sponges, soft corals, and millions of crustaceans, molluscs and worms.



Eighty Mile Beach is a major rookery for the threatened flatback turtle.

The beach is an internationally significant site for migratory shorebirds. About half of the world's great knots depend on parts of the beach for their survival.



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Photographs: Steve Bunce, Andrea Whiting and Leanne Thompson/DEC

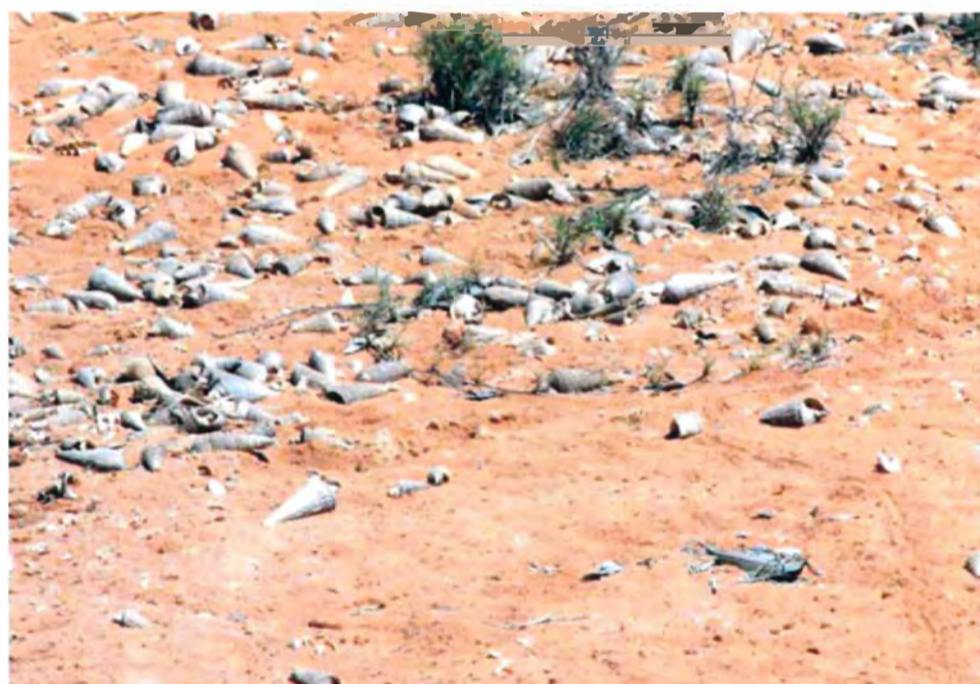
WHAT'S ON YOUR DOORSTEP?

Take a closer look at the Cape Keraudren to Spit Point study area



Bedout Island supports one of the largest colonies of brown boobies in WA with over 10,000 breeding pairs. The island also supports masked boobies, lesser frigatebirds, common noddies and crested, roseate and sooty terns.

The Cape Keraudren area boasts a strong Aboriginal association with many shell middens, burial and ceremonial sites. European cultural interests include remnants of the end of the rabbit proof fence and a lookout post used in WWII.



The De Grey River Delta is designated as a regionally significant site for mangroves. All eight species found in the Pilbara region are recorded here.



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Photographs: © Commonwealth of Australia and John Lloyd/DEC

WHAT'S ON YOUR DOORSTEP?

Take a closer look at the Cape Thouin to Cape Lambert and Bells Beach study areas

Cowrie Beach and Bells Beach are important turtle nesting sites, in particular for the vulnerable flatback turtle. Rookeries also occur at Cape Thouin.



Mangroves are very extensive, forming an interconnected habitat through which fauna can move. Four sites have been identified as regionally significant.

Depuch Island has a large number of sites with important Aboriginal rock art and engravings.



WHAT'S ON YOUR DOORSTEP?

Take a closer look at the Fortescue River to Cane River study area



Shallow coastal waters contain important seagrass meadows which support significant numbers of dugongs and turtles.

The extensive mangrove system is home to a diverse range of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. The Robe River Delta is designated a regionally significant site for mangroves.



Intertidal mudflats around the Mary Anne group of islands are rich in burrowing invertebrates and are important feeding areas for wading birds.



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Photographs: © Commonwealth of Australia, Matthew Fossey and Jam van de Kam

WHAT'S ON YOUR DOORSTEP?

Take a closer look at the Locker Point to Rocky Point and Serrurier Island study areas

These areas have been identified as major feeding and nesting areas for green and loggerhead turtles, and possibly for other turtle species.



Coral growth has been described as possibly the most spectacular in the Pilbara region and the coral reef fish and other marine animals are extremely diverse.

A variety of seabirds nest on and around Serrurier Island, including the largest populations of wedge-tailed shearwaters in the region.



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Photographs: John Huisman, DEC and Richard Woldendorp/DEC