



Department of Conservation  
and Land Management



Conserving the  
nature of WA

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MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

**BRIEFING NOTES: DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

As discussed with you on Friday 4 March, the Department has prepared a set of briefing notes for you.

While much of what is covered in this package is familiar to you, I particularly recommend that you read:

- the briefing note at the start of the folder, in which I have provided both background information and a suggested sense of direction and priority;
- the paper 'Government Policy Commitments' at the end of the folder, in which we have extracted commitments from the Government's election policies, and for each commitment involving or affecting CALM, initial comments are provided; and
- the briefing note titled 'Upcoming Media and Community Opportunities' at the end of Section 4 of the folder.

I look forward to discussing these matters with you so that we can put in place an action plan to address the key policy priorities.

Keiran McNamara  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
KM:jr

8 March 2005

Att.



## Department of Conservation and Land Management



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MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

### BRIEFING NOTES: DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

#### Outline of Briefing Package

Please find attached, in this file, briefing notes about CALM including its functions, structure, legislation and finances, as well as briefing notes about key issues and preliminary advice on strategies for implementing the Government's election policy commitments as they relate to CALM's functions. A contents page for this file follows.

Three further files are provided:

- legislation administered (CALM Act, Wildlife Conservation Act and Sandalwood Act);
- regulations administered (Forest Management; Sandalwood; CALM; Wildlife Conservation; Wildlife Conservation (Reptiles and Amphibians)); and
- some key publications:
  - Annual Report 2003-2004;
  - Corporate Plan 2002-2005;
  - Forest Management Plan 2004-2013;
  - A Biodiversity Conservation Act for Western Australia Consultation Paper (December 2002);
  - Towards a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Western Australia Discussion Paper (December 2004);
  - Indigenous Ownership and Joint Management of Conservation Lands in Western Australia Consultation Paper (July 2003);
  - Landscape magazine, Summer 2004 edition; and
  - three maps showing lands and waters managed by CALM.

Also provided is a copy of the publication *A biodiversity survey of the Western Australian agricultural zone*, which is yet to be launched.

#### Overview comments

##### *Vision and Mission*

CALM's Corporate Plan (a copy of which is in the attached files) gives our Vision and Mission as:

##### *Our Vision*

*A natural environment in Western Australia that retains its biodiversity and enriches people's lives.*

### *Our Mission*

*In partnership with the community, we conserve Western Australia's biodiversity, and manage the lands and waters entrusted to us, for their intrinsic values and for the appreciation and benefit of present and future generations.*

### *Role*

CALM is one of the Government's "Departments of State" responsible for policy advice and the delivery of its statutory roles across the lands and waters the Department manages and in respect of biodiversity conservation throughout the State. The Department is headed by an Executive Director who is responsible directly to the Minister for the Environment.

CALM is a relatively large agency, with some 1,300 staff and a budget of \$187 million, and a regionalised presence across the State.

CALM manages nearly 24 million hectares of national parks, nature reserves, State forest and other lands (including land purchased for conservation but not yet reserved), and 1.5 million hectares of marine parks and other marine reserves. The land area managed is nearly 10% of the State (i.e. larger than Victoria), yet the conservation reserve system (both terrestrial and marine) does not meet the adopted standards of comprehensiveness, adequacy and representativeness.

The lands and waters managed by CALM are the focus of considerable nature-based recreation and tourism, with nearly 11 million visitors in 2003/04. Many of the State's iconic attractions are in CALM-managed areas (e.g. Bungle Bungles, Karijini, Ningaloo, Nambung and old-growth forests), or have been developed by the Department (e.g. Bibbulmun Track, Munda Biddi Trail and Tree Top Walk). Independent research by the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism has placed a value of \$127 million a year on Ningaloo Marine Park and the adjacent Cape Range National Park in terms of tourism spending attributed to those two parks.

The marine parks and reserves system is an important focus in terms of recent and proposed growth. The system is based on multiple use principles, providing for biodiversity conservation, nature-based recreation and tourism, sustainable commercial and recreational fishing, and petroleum activities.

The State forests and timber reserves managed by CALM, as well as some other CALM freehold lands, provide for harvesting of native forests and plantations that is carried out by the Forest Products Commission.

In 2003, CALM was also given on-ground management responsibility for fire preparedness, feral animals and weeds across nearly 84 million hectares of unallocated Crown land and unmanaged reserves outside the Perth metropolitan area and townsites.

Under the process of renewing pastoral leases in 2015, approximately 1 million hectares of land has been agreed with pastoralists for non-renewal, and is due to be reserved for conservation and management by CALM. This includes the coastal strip abutting Ningaloo Marine Park. Some of this land is likely to be surrendered early from pastoral leases.

The other major function of CALM is to conserve native animals and plants (or biodiversity) throughout the entire lands and waters of the State (i.e. regardless of land tenure). CALM therefore has significant roles and programs outside the lands it directly manages.

To perform its functions CALM employs a wide range of specialist as well as generalist staff, including a strong Science Division.

CALM also engages with the community and diverse interests across the entire State, including liaison with interest groups, neighbours, industry, indigenous communities, local government and others. There is a wide range of formal consultative mechanisms (e.g. park advisory committees, and a highly successful volunteer program with over 6,000 registered volunteers). CALM plays a significant role in helping a diverse range of community aspirations across the State to be met.

Fire management (both fire preparedness and wildfire suppression) is a major function of the Department by virtue of its land management responsibilities and its expertise. In particular, the forested south-west of the State is highly reliant on CALM for the protection of life and property from wildfires.

Lands and waters managed by CALM are (mostly) vested in two statutory bodies established under the CALM Act, namely the Conservation Commission and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority respectively. Both have appointed, community-based memberships and are responsible for proposing management plans to the Minister, auditing CALM's land and marine management against those management plans, and providing advice to the Minister. Consistent with Machinery of Government principles adopted by the Gallop Government in its first term, the Department is responsible to, and subject to direction by, the Minister, whereas the two statutory bodies are essentially advisory to the Minister in nature and do not direct the Department.

#### *Interaction with other interests*

One characteristic of the work of CALM (and indeed the role of the Minister for the Environment) is that it is highly interactive with many other interests. CALM's areas of interaction (both within and outside of government) include:

- tourism and recreation;
- mining and petroleum industries;
- primary industries (agriculture, beekeeping, forestry, fishing – both commercial and recreational)
- land-use planning;
- water supply;
- urban and infrastructure (e.g. transport) development;
- local government;
- indigenous groups and communities;
- conservation groups;
- natural resource management groups;
- research institutions;
- emergency response; and
- Commonwealth/State relations.

The level of community interest and involvement is very high, and continues to grow. This includes both community interest at the broad level, and the many individuals and groups involved in or affected by CALM's actions in managing lands and waters, or conserving wildlife. This level of interest is exemplified by the fact that the Minister for the Environment receives high volumes of correspondence and Parliamentary Questions relative to most other portfolios (this is across the entire portfolio responsibilities including those of the Department of Environment).

This also means that achieving outcomes in many issues requires considerable negotiation with community and industry interests, and across other agencies and Ministers. A notable example of this is the Fisheries portfolio in respect of commitments to the Biodiversity Conservation Bill, new marine parks and bioregional marine planning.

The Cabinet Standing Committee structure is an important element of achieving cross portfolio outcomes. The Minister for the Environment chairs both the Cabinet Standing Committee on

Environmental Policy and the Cabinet Standing Committee on Natural Resource Management and Salinity. The nature of CALM's business also necessitates attendance from time to time (by the Minister, the Minister's representative and/or CALM) at the Cabinet Standing Committee on Native Title and the Cabinet Standing Committee on Regional Policy. In the Government's first term, there was also a Cabinet Sub Committee on Old Growth Forests. The management of business across these multiple entities, including the roles of the Environmental Policy Unit in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Natural Resource Management Office in the Department of Agriculture, requires close attention to ensure consistency and integration in policy and programs

#### *Priority areas*

In the first term of the Gallop Government, the highest priority in the first part of the Government's term in CALM's area of responsibility was implementing the *Protecting our old-growth forests* policy. Other key policy initiatives such as a new Biodiversity Conservation Act, a State Biodiversity Strategy, World Heritage listing for Ningaloo/Cape Range, new marine parks and Ramsar wetland listings were not able to be actively worked on until later in the Government's term. This contributed to a range of policy commitments not being achieved or, in the case of marine parks, the outcomes being portrayed by some stakeholders as rushed and lacking in consultation.

It is recommended that a firm action plan be adopted very early to drive the achievement of outcomes in the first half of this term of Government. Experience shows that outcomes that are often somewhat controversial at the time of announcement are able to be built on and consolidated over a period of time, and achieve wide acceptance.

The following list is not exhaustive, but illustrates areas that should be subject to early focus. While these areas are generally the subject of further notes in this package of briefing papers, most will require personal discussion and more specific and detailed briefing. The list of issues includes:

- **Biodiversity Conservation Bill**  
Current Wildlife Conservation Act is 55 years old and is seriously out of date. A consultation paper for a replacement Biodiversity Conservation Act was released in December 2002. Drafting instructions have been prepared. Policy negotiations within Government are required.
- **Biodiversity Conservation Strategy**  
Discussion Paper released December 2004, and stakeholder briefings underway. Draft strategy to be prepared after close of public comments (15 April 2005), followed by final whole-of-Government strategy.
- **Biodiversity Commission**  
Environment Policy commits to creating a new Biodiversity Commission combining the Conservation Commission and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority.
- **Marine parks**  
Policy commitment to marine parks at Geographe Bay/Leeuwin-Naturaliste/Hardy Inlet; Dampier Archipelago; Walpole/Nornalup; and Recherche Archipelago. Need for engagement and consultation processes to improve understanding and acceptance. Relationship with commitment to bioregional marine planning to be determined.

- Terrestrial conservation reserve system
  - Implement outstanding reserve proposals (e.g. there are about 220,000 hectares of tenure changes in the Forest Management Plan yet to be implemented, and about 5 million hectares of former pastoral leasehold land that have been purchased for conservation reserves but are not yet reserved).
- Policy on exploration and mining in national parks and nature reserves
  - Policy was one of prohibition in Government's first term. Environment policy for Government's second term is silent on the issue. Prohibition policy is a serious obstacle to expanding the parks and reserves system.
- Forests
  - Pursue removal of conflict of interest inherent in reliance on the Forest Products Commission for part of CALM's budget. Carefully manage wet soil logging issue in winter 2005 to avoid mill closures.
- Rottnest Island National Park
  - Commitment announced by Government in 2004. Rottnest Island Authority has not progressed the Government's commitment, and has been pursuing alternatives to what was intended.
- World Heritage
  - Ningaloo/Cape Range proposal developed during Government's first term, largely through an "independent" committee process which recommended boundaries that posed significant land use, industry and community problems. Government announcement in late 2004 was that more consultation was needed, and proposal would be pursued in 2005.
- Heritage (general)
  - The Government needs to determine a central coordination point for interactions with the Australian Government on national heritage matters. Commonwealth legislation covers indigenous, built and natural heritage in an integrated manner, and gives it powers to place areas on a national heritage list with consequent Commonwealth protective powers. The Hicks report presented to Cabinet in late 2004 suggested CALM should take on this role, with small additional staffing. CALM understands there was some support for this but the matter was set aside until after the election.
- Ramsar wetlands
  - In late 2004 Cabinet endorsed a list of wetlands to be the subject of consultation with a view to listing as wetlands of international importance under the Convention on Wetlands (known as the Ramsar Convention). This was followed by an announcement by the Minister for the Environment. This should be pursued in 2005.
- Tourism licences and leases
  - There are licensing and leasing arrangements in the CALM Act to govern tourism activities and concessions in parks, to ensure environmental sustainability, appropriate standards, and equitable access. Tourism interests call, from time to time, for easing of restrictions and for removal of facilities such as the Tree Top Walk near Walpole from park management
- Indigenous involvement
  - Need to finalise approach formalising Indigenous involvement in park management and heritage protection. Amendment to the CALM Act required.

- **Natural resource management (NRM) and salinity**  
Given its policy, strategic and delivery roles in land management and biodiversity conservation, CALM is one of the three key agencies (with Agriculture and Environment) involved in NRM and salinity.
- **Off-reserve incentives programs for biodiversity/vegetation/wetlands conservation**  
CALM is the delivery agency for a range of Government programs in this area, e.g. Land for Wildlife, voluntary nature conservation covenants, Urban Nature, Bushland Benefits, Biodiversity Adjustment Scheme, management agreements. At the request of the Cabinet Standing Committee on Environmental Policy, CALM is preparing further advice on an integrated package. Maintenance of a coordinated and integrated package of programs through CALM is advocated, whereas the Department of Environment essentially has a regulatory role via clearing regulations and proposed Wetlands Environmental Protection Policies.
- **Good neighbour policy**  
Finalise good neighbour policy drafted in 2004 in conjunction with WA Farmers Federation, Pastoralists and Graziers Association and WA Local Government Association. Designed to establish good relations with neighbours and improved credibility in rural communities. Includes a strong focus on fundamentals of land management such as fire, weeds and feral animals. Credibility will rest on adequate resourcing.
- **Swan River Park**  
CALM's understanding is that proposed legislation for establishment of the Swan River Park has been drafted in a way that affects vesting of the existing Swan Estuary Marine Park and its management under the CALM Act. This will need resolution.
- **Wedge and Grey**  
Management of squatter shacks and future development in the context of the coastal road committed to in the Government's election policy ("Labor commits to Indian Ocean Drive and stage 2 of Geraldton southern transport corridor").
- **Commonwealth Government**  
The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Heritage is from Western Australia. There has not been, since the Federal election last year, an active strategy of engaging the Minister to maximise support for WA initiatives and programs. This needs to be addressed.

There are considerable complexities to many of the foregoing issues. I recommend detailed discussions to assist in defining the way forward.

As you are aware, field visits are also essential and I suggest a visit to Ningaloo/Cape Range/Exmouth/Coral Bay as an early priority.

#### *Media and community announcement opportunities*

CALM's roles and products provide many opportunities for positive announcements by the Minister for the Environment. While these are positives in their own right, they can also play a key role in offsetting negative community reactions when development and other decisions are made by the Government that affect some aspect of the environment.

Opportunities in the near future include:

- immediately
  - purchase of five freehold blocks within D'Entrecasteaux National Park, as promised in the Government's Environment Policy (subject to provision of \$1.99 million from Treasury);
  - CALM's autumn 2005 prescribed burning program as well as the employment of an additional 20 workers by the end of March (and a further 20 by August) for fire management, forest thinning (to improve runoff for water supply) and conservation works.
- as soon as an event can be arranged
  - release of the scientific publication *A biodiversity survey of the Western Australian agricultural zone*, which presents the results of a major biological survey program and is a significant contribution to salinity and natural resource management at the State and national scales (a copy of the book is attached).

There are also regular opportunities in areas such as the opening of new park facilities and infrastructure, launches of park management plans, and wildlife recovery programs such as threatened species translocations. Upcoming examples include the Bluff Knoll facilities in Stirling Range National Park and the "Turquoise Coast" (Jurien Bay region) management plan.

#### *Government reforms*

During the first term of the Gallop Government, the public sector was subject to review firstly through the Machinery of Government exercise and secondly through the Costello Functional Review. These resulted in affirmation of principles governing the roles of departments of State relative to the roles of statutory authorities. These reviews also resulted in confirmation and support for CALM's roles, with the addition of on-ground management roles on unallocated Crown land and unmanaged reserves (from the former Department of Land Administration) and some small conservation programs that had been housed in the former Department of Environmental Protection.

An issue that will significantly affect all agencies including CALM over the next two or so years is the rollout of corporate services and procurement reforms. Under the new arrangements agencies will obtain much of their corporate services from a centralised shared service. Similarly a significant amount of Government purchasing will be centrally controlled. The models that have been adopted pose significant challenges for CALM and several other large agencies. The scope of the central shared service has changed since the original proposal. CALM together with a number of other departments will now retain provision of their own industrial relations and occupational health and safety programs, in recognition of their agency-specific risk profiles and needs.

There has been increasing recognition that the complexities of some larger agencies, including CALM, present difficulties for provision of standard shared services by a central agency. Senior staff from the Functional Review Implementation Team have recognised that the current design for processes provided by the new shared services does not fully meet CALM's essential needs for management information from financial systems, and discussions are occurring with CALM to address this issue.

It is CALM's view that there are also opportunities to improve efficiencies and delivery of conservation and land management services across the agencies in the Environment portfolio, for example in respect of land owned by or vested in the Department of Environment (Water and Rivers Commission).



**Conclusion**

I trust these initial briefing notes are of assistance, and I would be pleased to brief you further on any of the matters raised in this package.

Keiran McNamara  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

8 March 2005

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## **Section 1**

# **DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

- Functions
- Structure
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## FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND STRUCTURE OF CALM

CALM's statutory functions are created by section 33 of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*. The principal functions are to:

- manage national parks, nature reserves, conservation parks, regional parks, State forests, marine parks, marine management areas, marine nature reserves, timber reserves and some freehold land;
- assist the Conservation Commission and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority;
- to conserve and protect the flora and fauna throughout the State and be responsible for the administration of the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*;
- promote and encourage the planting of trees and other plants for the purposes of the rehabilitation of land and conservation of biodiversity throughout the State;
- enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Forest Products Commission relating to the performance of CALM's and that Commission's functions in respect to the harvesting of forest products by the Commission;
- promote and encourage the use of flora for therapeutic, scientific or horticultural purposes;
- promote and facilitate public recreation on CALM Act lands and waters;
- be responsible for the permanent preservation of the plant collections of the Western Australian Herbarium;
- promote the conservation of water, and develop policies that provide for water to be taken, from CALM-managed lands; and
- undertake studies and research into the management of land, the conservation and protection of flora and fauna, plant taxonomy and related matters.

The position of Executive Director of the Department is created by section 38 of the CALM Act. Section 42 of the Act creates a Director of Nature Conservation, a Director of Forests and a Director of National Parks. Under proposed legislation to give effect to Machinery of Government outcomes, it is intended that the Executive Director position be retitled as Director General, and that the other three offices be abolished as statutory positions.

8 March 2005

**DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE (MARCH 2005)**

**(not available in this electronic format)**

## DISTRIBUTION OF CALM STAFF

The following two maps and table illustrate the distribution of CALM staff by location around the State. The various regional entries in the map include not only the staff based in the named towns, but also staff such as national park rangers living in parks in those districts.

As illustrated in the two maps, CALM is a highly regionalised organisation. When Swan Region and Regional Parks staff are excluded from the head count in Perth (because they manage the Department's field responsibilities in the Perth area), 458 FTEs or 36% of the Department's total are based in Perth in the Executive and central branches as well as the Science Division.

The figures provided in these two maps are for FTEs (permanent and fixed term employees) as at mid-February 2005. The actual head count (e.g. because of part-time employment) is 1,379 permanent and fixed term employees. In addition, CALM currently employs 137 casual employees (52 FTEs) and 34 seasonal employees (29 FTEs). These numbers drop during the winter months (e.g. in June 2004, 92 casual workers and 23 seasonal workers were employed).

The Government has recently authorised CALM to employ an additional 40 permanent field workers in its three south-west forest regions for fire management, catchment thinning and other conservation works.

8 March 2005

**MAPS SHOWING STAFF DISTRIBUTION**

**(not available in this electronic format)**



**MAP AND TEXT SHOWING REGIONALISATION OF CALM STAFF**

**(not available in this electronic format)**

## LEGISLATION ADMINISTERED

The Department of Conservation and Land Management administers the following legislation:

### **Acts:**

*Conservation and Land Management Act 1984;*  
*Wildlife Conservation Act 1950;*  
*Sandalwood Act 1929.*

### **Regulations:**

*Forest Management Regulations 1993;*  
*Sandalwood Regulations 1993;*  
*Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002;*  
*Wildlife Conservation Regulations 1970;*  
*Wildlife Conservation (Reptiles and Amphibians) Regulations 2002.*

The functions and powers of CALM are housed in the CALM Act. That Act also deals with the management of lands and waters that come under the Act. The Wildlife Conservation Act provides generally for the protection of wildlife throughout the State, and the governance of circumstances in which that wildlife may be taken (e.g. collected, harvested, destroyed etc). The Wildlife Conservation Act does not deal generally with the functions and powers of the Department.

Copies of the Acts and Regulations administered are provided in separate files.

8 March 2005

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

CALM has a total operating budget of about \$163 million and a capital works program of about \$24 million, in 2004/05. Of the capital budget, \$12 million is funded by an appropriation and \$12 million is funded from the operating budget. CALM's workforce of approximately 1,300 staff (which increases in summer when casual staff are taken on to assist in wildfire suppression) provides the following services to the community from its operating budget of \$163 million:

- Nature Conservation – funded by an appropriation of \$58 million p.a. and external grants and other revenue of \$11 million p.a.;
- Sustainable Forest Management – funded by an appropriation of \$22 million p.a., a recoup from the Forest Products Commission of \$8 million p.a., and \$5million p.a. in other revenues;
- Parks and Visitor Services – funded by an appropriation of \$42 million p.a. supplemented by revenues of \$15 million p.a.; and
- Astronomical Services – funded by an appropriation of \$1 million p.a. and guided tour fees of \$0.2 million p.a.
- Performance of statutory functions by the Conservation Commission of Western Australia, funded by an appropriation of \$0.8 million.

Details of the three major outputs are provided in Section 3 of this briefing package. Astronomical Services relate to the operation of the Perth Observatory in Bickley. The Conservation Commission has its own small staff and manages its own budget.

Prescribed burning and wildfire suppression costs of approximately \$25 million p.a. are also included in the costs for each of the above outputs, and are charged between outputs based upon the values being protected. The current wildfire season has been particularly severe and supplementary funding from the Department of Treasury and Finance of approximately \$9 million is forecast to be required to meet unbudgeted wildfire costs in 2004-05. CALM's standard arrangement with Treasury is that CALM meets the first \$4.2 million of wildfire suppression costs each year, and for 2004/05 Treasury increased CALM's budget for this purpose to \$6.2 million in the mid-year review.

Overall, the Department is largely funded from the Consolidated Fund by a recurrent appropriation of \$127 million in 2004/05, although there is significant own-source revenue of \$39 million. A separate capital appropriation of \$12 million allows ongoing replacement of fire fighting equipment, upgrade of tourism roads and facilities, and purchase of land for conservation purposes.

Strategic financial issues facing the Department are illustrated by the attached 'Funding Requests - Summary' extracted from the Department's 2005/06 budget submission. Major issues include:

- the urgent need for additional resourcing in biodiversity conservation, fire management and indigenous joint management;
- the inherent conflict of interest in the Department's reliance on revenue from the Forest Products Commission; and
- the pressing requirement for capital funding for a new State Herbarium.

Subsequent to the lodgement of CALM's 2005/06 budget submission with Treasury, additional submissions have been provided in respect of:

- recovery costs for the major Yanchep and Mt Manypeaks fires early in 2005; and
- the Government's authorisation of CALM employing 40 additional workers (20 by the end of March and a further by the end of August 2005) in the three south-west forest regions for fire management, forest thinning and other conservation works.

A full copy of the 2005/06 budget submission will be provided under separate cover and a meeting with the Minister requested to provide a briefing on the budget for the purpose of the 2005/06 budget bilaterals.

8 March 2005

**EXTRACT FROM CALM BUDGET SUBMISSION 2005/06**

**FUNDING REQUESTS – SUMMARY**

<b>Reference</b>	<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>2005/06 \$'000</b>	<b>2006/07 \$'000</b>	<b>2007/08 \$'000</b>	<b>2008/09 \$'000</b>
<b>COST AND DEMAND PRESSURES</b>					
3.1	Cost and demand pressure funding to allow maintenance of service delivery	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>
<b>NEW PROPOSALS – RECURRENT</b>					
4.1	Biodiversity Conservation:				
	· Biodiversity Strategy	2,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
	· Dieback Management	500	750	1,000	1,000
	· Tuart Woodland Conservation and Management	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
	· Animal and Plant Pest Control	2,000	5,000	11,500	15,500
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>9,750</b>	<b>16,500</b>	<b>20,500</b>
4.2	Fire Management	10,445	9,235	9,955	9,955
4.3	Changed financial arrangements with the Forest Products Commission	7,500	7,900	7,900	7,900
4.4	World Heritage (Shark Bay and Purnululu)	1,250	2,100	2,800	4,000
4.5	Indigenous Joint Management	4,000	7,250	6,850	6,850
4.6	Project Approval Processes	660	1,100	1,100	1,100
<b>TOTAL- New Proposals Recurrent</b>		<b>29,355</b>	<b>37,335</b>	<b>45,105</b>	<b>50,305</b>
<b>CAPITAL WORKS</b>					
4.4	World Heritage (Shark Bay and Purnululu)	550	950	1,250	2,000
5.1	Ongoing Works				
	· Conservation Land Acquisition				220
	· Fire Fighting Fleet Replacement			714	1,859
	· Parks Improvement Program				8,000
	· Gngangara Park Development				500
	· Plant and Equipment				3,841
	· Tourism Rd Improve Program				4,000
5.2	Biodiversity Conservation Science Centre and Herbarium	11,900	23,800		
5.3	Land Purchase for the WA Conservation Reserve System	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800
5.4	Biodiversity Conservation Investment Works	500	750	1,000	1,000
5.5	Regional Parks Improvement Program	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700
5.6	Regional and Business Support Infrastructure	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
5.7	Replacement of Main Roads WA Funding for Roads	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
5.8	Rottnest Island Proposed National Park	455	350	350	350
<b>TOTAL - Capital Works</b>		<b>20,905</b>	<b>33,350</b>	<b>10,814</b>	<b>29,270</b>
<b>TABLE TOTAL</b>		<b>53,260</b>	<b>73,685</b>	<b>58,919</b>	<b>82,575</b>

## **Section 2**

# **CALM ACT STATUTORY BODIES**

- **Conservation Commission of WA**
- **Marine Parks and Reserves Authority**
- **Marine Parks and Reserves Scientific  
Advisory Committee**

## CALM ACT STATUTORY BODIES

Part III of the CALM Act creates the Conservation Commission of Western Australia and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority as the vested bodies for lands and waters.

Both the Conservation Commission and Marine Parks and Reserves Authority are Ministerial advisory bodies rather than governing bodies.

### **Conservation Commission of Western Australia**

The principal functions of the Conservation Commission are to:

- have vested in it national parks, nature reserves, State forest, timber reserves, conservation parks and other relevant lands;
- to develop policies – for the preservation of the natural environment of the State and the provision of facilities for the enjoyment of that environment by the community; for promoting the appreciation of flora and fauna and the natural environment; and to promote the purposes for which land is vested;
- advise the Minister on the development of policies for the conservation and management of biodiversity;
- consider any cancellation, change of purpose or boundary alteration in respect of vested land;
- submit proposed management plans to the Minister;
- develop guidelines for monitoring and assessing the implementation of management plans by CALM;
- set performance criteria for assessing and auditing the performance of CALM and the Forest Products Commission in carrying out and complying with management plans;
- assess the performance of CALM and the Forest Products Commission in carrying out and complying with management plans;
- advise the Minister on the application of the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management in the management of State forest and timber reserves, and forest produce throughout the State;
- advise the Minister on the production and harvesting on a sustained yield basis of forest produce throughout the State; and
- inquire into and advise the Minister on any matter on which the Minister seeks advice.

The members of the Conservation Commission are:

Dr John Bailey - Chairman  
 Pat Barblett - Deputy Chair  
 Bill Mitchell  
 Dr Jennifer Davis  
 Glen Kelly  
 Regina Flugge  
 Graeme Rundle  
 Dr Thomas Hatton  
 Dr Joanna Young

Part III of the CALM Act requires the Minister to carry out a review of the operations and effectiveness of the Conservation Commission after five years of operation. This is due in late 2005.

### **Marine Parks and Reserves Authority**

The principal functions of the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority (MPRA) are to:

- have vested in it marine reserves and relevant lands;
- develop policies to – preserve the natural marine and estuarine environments of the State; provide facilities for the enjoyment of that environment by the community; promote appreciation of marine and estuarine flora and fauna and natural marine and estuarine environments; and achieve the objectives for which waters and lands have been vested;
- consider any cancellation, change of purpose or boundary alteration in respect of vested waters and lands;
- submit proposed management plans to the Minister;
- develop guidelines for monitoring implementation of management plans by CALM and to set performance criteria for evaluating the carrying out of the management plans; and
- provide advice on matters relating to vested waters and lands.

The membership of the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority is:

Dr Barry Wilson - Chairman  
 Mr Eric Streitberg - Deputy Chairman  
 Professor Diana Walker  
 Mr Angus Horwood  
 Mr Kim Colero  
 Dr Lynnath Beckley  
 Vacant (1)

### **Marine Parks and Reserves Scientific Advisory Committee**

Part III of the CALM Act also establishes a Marine Parks and Reserves Scientific Advisory Committee to provide scientific advice to the Minister where the Minister has sought advice on matters relating to the conservation of marine reserves, marine and estuarine flora and fauna, and the marine environment. The principal function of the body is to provide scientific advice to the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority.



**Review**

During 2003 an independent review of the three CALM Act statutory bodies was carried out by Mr Alex Errington. Following Cabinet consideration of the review, the Government announced in August 2003 that it accepted the recommendation to disband the Marine Parks and Reserves Scientific Advisory Committee. Amendments are required to the CALM Act to abolish the Committee.

The Government's Environment Policy commitment to create a new Biodiversity Commission is the subject of separate advice in Section 6 of these briefing papers.

8 March 2005

## **Section 3**

# **MAJOR OUTPUTS**

- **Nature Conservation**
- **Parks and Visitor Services**
- **Sustainable Forest Management**

# **Nature Conservation Output and Division**

## NATURE CONSERVATION OUTPUT AND DIVISION

### NATURE CONSERVATION OUTPUT

The nature conservation output is defined as *“the development and implementation of programs for flora and fauna conservation, for threatened species and ecological communities and for commercially exploited species according to the principles of ecological sustainability; the acquisition, conservation and protection of representative ecosystems; and encouraging public awareness, understanding and support for nature conservation”*.

The output seeks to enhance the conservation of the State’s biodiversity (the variety of life forms; the different plants, animals and micro-organisms; the genes they contain and the ecosystems they form). The delivery of nature conservation outcomes has five strategic elements:

#### **1. Establishment of a comprehensive, adequate and representative terrestrial and marine conservation reserve system**

The establishment and management of a comprehensive, adequate and representative (CAR) terrestrial and marine conservation reserve system is a cornerstone for biodiversity conservation while also providing for nature-based recreation and tourism. This involves the identification and reservation of areas through biological survey, planning and consultative processes. In respect of the terrestrial system, it involves both the changing of the status of Crown lands and the purchase of freehold and pastoral leasehold lands.

Notwithstanding recent advances in both the terrestrial and marine conservation reserve systems in WA, they remain short of meeting CAR criteria.

The State needs to have good information on biodiversity and its patterning in order to guide the establishment of a CAR reserve system. The State’s terrestrial biological survey program, which is run by CALM, commenced in the 1970s and comprises intensive sampling across a wide range of regions to determine biodiversity patterns at local, regional (bioregional) and Statewide scales. Areas covered to date by broadscale and systematic survey include the Eastern Goldfields, Nullarbor, Kimberley rainforests, Swan Coastal Plain, southern Carnarvon Basin, south-west agricultural zone (Wheatbelt) and Pilbara bioregion (currently underway), with many smaller projects concentrating on specific areas of interest. This represents around 25-30 per cent coverage of the State’s terrestrial area. However, the coverage in terms of plant and animal groups included in the surveys has been selective in the past, and the comprehensiveness of the surveys has evolved over time. Therefore, there remain significant biodiversity knowledge gaps in areas that have already been broadly surveyed. It is planned that these gaps will be filled systematically in the future.

Many areas that are prospective for minerals or are the subject of current mining proposals also have important biodiversity values. Proper assessment of these values can only be made on the basis of broadscale surveys, as these provide both site specific and regional context information essential for Environmental Protection Authority assessments. This is one of the primary reasons why CALM's current major regional biological survey effort is in the Pilbara, and also why CALM has recently committed to a regional floristic survey of ironstone formations in the Yilgarn. Both these surveys have been embarked upon through reallocation of CALM funds rather than new funding from the Government (\$12.5 million for the Pilbara, and \$0.68 million for the Yilgarn).

## **2. Effective Management of the Conservation Reserve system**

The management of the terrestrial and marine conservation reserve system comprises two components:

1. Planning for management – under the CALM Act, CALM prepares management plans for parks and reserves on behalf of the Conservation Commission and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority. Management plans are prepared in consultation with the community, and they identify and guide long-term management directions and strategies.
2. Implementation – the implementation of management actions is undertaken by CALM in accordance with management plans. For parks and reserves that do not have prescribed management plans, management is undertaken based on the tenure of the land (e.g. national park, nature reserve, conservation park), and the management issues relevant to that particular area.

Key areas of management include:

- Feral animal control

Feral animals are a major threat to biodiversity values, natural landscapes and neighbouring pastoral and agricultural interests. A wide range of pests is involved. Key activities include:

- CALM's Western Shield program, which involves baiting with 1080 across 3.5 million hectares mostly in the south-west, to control feral predators (principally foxes but also cats) and recover native fauna, particularly threatened species. The program is based on extensive CALM research. It has been successful in removing three mammal species from the threatened species list, and also improving the status of other species and ecosystems. However the program requires further funding to maintain its effectiveness and hopefully expand.
- Research and operational trials to control feral cats, which are the major impediment to native fauna recovery in the semi-arid and arid rangelands.
- Control of goats and other feral herbivores in the rangelands.
- Developing and implementing a program to deal with the impending arrival of cane toads in the Kimberley.

- Increasing focus on the growing feral pig problem in the south-west.
- Dealing with wild dog issues on a “good neighbour” basis in terms of losses to livestock production.

It is widely recognised that feral animal control on CALM-managed lands is seriously under resourced.

- Weed control

Weeds are also a major threat to biodiversity and landscape values, and to neighbouring primary producers.

In 1999 CALM developed the ‘Environmental Weed Strategy for WA’, which now guides its weed management activities. The strategy identified 1,350 weeds considered to be of environmental concern. These weeds were classified as high, moderate, mild or low priority based on their invasiveness, distribution and environmental impacts. Thirty four of the 1,350 ‘environmental weeds’ were rated as high priority.

CALM is also party to the State Weed Strategy which promotes an integrated approach across weeds of environmental and agricultural significance.

It is widely recognised that weed control on CALM-managed lands is seriously under resourced.

- Dieback

Dieback caused by the root-rot fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi* is one of the most significant threats to biodiversity in the south-west, and has been listed as a key threatening process under the Commonwealth’s *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Activities conducted by CALM for dieback management include the detection and mapping of infested areas, assessment of the threat to biodiversity, analysis of the risk of spread, protective quarantine management of uninfested areas and, application of phosphite to protect susceptible threatened flora.

- Fire management

Fire management is a major program for the Nature Conservation Output. Fire management activities include both the suppression of wildfire and arson fires that threaten community and biodiversity values and the active use of fire as a means of maintaining and recovering biodiversity by ensuring that the diversity of burning regimes necessary for plant germination, reproduction and habitat maintenance is delivered.

### 3. Off-reserve conservation and linking this with the reserve system

It is important that ecological processes and biodiversity are conserved across both the conservation reserve system and other lands and waters. Promotion of landscape scale conservation, which integrates both on and off-reserve conservation, is needed to address key threatening processes and recover biodiversity at a range of scales.

Used in conjunction with regulatory controls, the use of biodiversity incentive programs, whereby landholders are provided with technical support, training or financial assistance to maintain and/or manage natural habitats on their properties is a valuable tool in conserving biodiversity and meeting sustainability goals. A range of incentive programs is offered to landholders in Western Australia, through a range of Government and non-government providers. Programs offered by the State Government are principally delivered through CALM and include:

- Land for Wildlife

This is a voluntary, non-binding program that recognises, advises and assists landowners who wish to manage some or all of their land for biodiversity conservation. At 11 January 2005, a total of 1,342 properties had applied to join Land for Wildlife. Of these, 1,169 have been assessed, while 173 are awaiting assessment. Properties that have been fully registered with Land for Wildlife include 231,846 ha of land whose primary management purpose is now nature conservation.

- Voluntary Nature Conservation Covenant Program

This involves landowners voluntarily entering into covenants which provide legal protection for conservation values on their land, and the program involves assistance with stewardship from CALM. At 31 January 2005, land from a total of 46 properties (on 57 land titles) covering 3,593 ha had been covenanted under this program. Covenants are currently being negotiated for a further 38 properties, covering 6,056 ha.

- Bushland Benefits

This new program is designed to help private landholders in the south-west to meet the initial management costs of bushland that is under voluntary protection. Unlike most other funding schemes, landholders are invited to submit a tender nominating the management activities they are willing to undertake to manage conservation assets on their land and how much money they will need to undertake that work. The program has one-off funding from the State Government of \$1 million. Ongoing funding will be pursued from a combination of State and Commonwealth sources, including the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the Natural Heritage Trust.

- Biodiversity Adjustment Scheme

The State Government has provided one-off funding of \$1 million for CALM to purchase areas of land that meet the requirements for addition to the formal conservation reserve system, and where the landholder has been prevented from clearing through Government regulation. Sale of the land to CALM is voluntary. The funding of \$1 million is well short of what would be required to deal with landowners who meet the eligibility criteria established under the Scheme, however negotiation of an agreed price is often difficult because landowners generally want significantly more than the valuations provided by the Valuer General's Office.

Under the State Salinity Strategy, CALM has lead responsibility for a number of programs that seek to address the significant threat that salinity poses to biodiversity values and conservation reserves in the south-west. CALM spends approximately \$8 million per annum addressing salinity through the following programs:

- Crown Reserves Program

Addresses management needs across the extensive network of Crown reserves in the south-west agricultural zone, in the face of salinity.

- Natural Diversity Recovery Catchments Program

Implements recovery actions to protect key biodiversity assets threatened by salinity. Six recovery catchments have been formally designated and works are underway with a long-term commitment on the part of CALM. The designation of additional catchments in this category is proposed.

- Wetland Monitoring Program

Involves the scientific monitoring of a set of wetlands across the agricultural zone to measure long-term trends.

- New Plant Industries Based on Local Native Plants

The objective of this program is to develop new, broadscale industries based on native plants that will substantially increased water use for recharge control, provide habitat for native species, and build more resilient regional communities. Work to date has concentrated on the development of the oil mallee industry, and on screening and trialling of other native plants.

- Biological Survey of the Agricultural Zone

CALM has completed a comprehensive survey across the agricultural zone, to document the biota and its patterning across the landscape. This will be a key contribution to policies and programs addressing salinity and natural resource management. The results of the survey have been published in a book which currently awaits a Ministerial launch.

#### **4. Recovery of threatened species, ecological communities, and conservation and sustainable use of other significant species**

The identification and recovery of threatened species and ecological communities is a key component of biodiversity conservation. In Western Australia, there are 190 taxa (species, subspecies and varieties) of fauna and 356 taxa of plants known to be threatened with extinction, as well as 66 ecological communities. Many of these are in the south-west of the State, which is internationally recognised as a “biodiversity hotspot”. There is no doubt these figures will grow significantly as the full impacts of threatening processes such as dieback, salinity, climate change, feral animals, weeds and altered fire regimes continue to be better understood.



CALM's approach to threatened species and ecological communities conservation is based on:

1. identification and listing into appropriate categories, as determined by the level of threat and knowledge of populations and their distribution;
2. development of recovery plans; and
3. implementation of management and research actions in recovery plans to enable threatened taxa and ecological communities to be de-listed, or re-listed to less threatened categories.

Changes to threatened taxa lists are undertaken annually to reflect the most up-to-date information available to the WA Threatened Species Scientific Committee.

The commercial use of biological resources contributes towards the State's economy, for example through the sustainable flora, kangaroo and crocodile industries, and helps conserve these species and their habitats through providing an economic value to them. There is a growing need to develop industries that sustainably utilise biodiversity for both commercial and conservation benefits. Commercial opportunities for the sustainable use of native plants and animals in agricultural and pastoral areas will also provide alternatives to traditional farming practices.

CALM ensures that wildlife-based activities are licensed, in accordance with the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, and conducts monitoring and investigations to ensure compliance with legislation and the licences issued.

Formal management programs are in place for the sustainable commercial harvesting of kangaroos, and saltwater and freshwater crocodiles. CALM also administers the licensing for the native flora industry in Western Australia, including seed collection, firewood collection and wildflower picking.

**5. Providing opportunities for effective community involvement in decision making and actions, as well as encouraging understanding, and support of biodiversity conservation.**

Public involvement in decision making and programs and increasing public awareness and appreciation of the full range of values and benefits of biodiversity are critical to bringing about an empathy with biodiversity and greater appreciation of the needs for its conservation.

CALM currently provides opportunities for community involvement in and understanding of biodiversity conservation via a range of means including:

- input into management plans and recovery plans, and membership of recovery teams;
- volunteer participation programs;
- education and training programs for schools, including the successful CALM Bush Rangers program;
- *Landscape* expeditions;
- publications on biodiversity conservation in WA, including *Landscape*;
- biodiversity conservation displays in shopping centres and at major events; and
- public consultation processes.

CALM also works closely with stakeholders, including State government agencies, industry, local government, research institutions, indigenous groups and community groups in undertaking programs for biodiversity conservation both on and off reserves.

## **NATURE CONSERVATION DIVISION**

The Nature Conservation Division is a central division of the Department with over 100 staff, based mainly at Kensington, but also at Woodvale, Fremantle, and Bunbury. It is responsible for coordination of the delivery of the nature conservation output and for nature conservation policy delivery and coordination, threatened species and communities programs, *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* licensing and compliance, advice on conservation impacts of development proposals into EPA and planning processes, natural resource management coordination, as well as marine park/reserve policy and planning.

Delivery of much of the Department's nature conservation output occurs through the Regional Services and Science Divisions (see Section 4 of this briefing package), in addition to the Nature Conservation Division.

The Division comprises:

### ***Nature Conservation Directorate***

Responsible for coordinating the delivery of the nature conservation output, strategic planning, policy development, management of priority projects, and management of Ministerial, Executive Director and Director correspondence.

### ***Natural Resources Branch***

Responsible for the development and coordination of CALM's natural resource management policies with a major focus on implementation of State Salinity Strategy programs for biodiversity conservation funded through the Department. As a major contribution to salinity, biodiversity conservation and regional development, the Revegetation Systems Unit of the branch works on the development of new industries based on native plants. The branch also coordinates the Department's interaction with regional natural resource management groups.

### ***Nature Protection Branch***

Sets and implements legislative compliance standards, coordinates legislative compliance functions across the Departmental outputs and the protection of CALM-managed lands and waters from invasive species (weeds and feral animals). It provides policy, strategic planning and advice for the protection of nature from unlawful activities; manages wildlife conflict (e.g. damage to primary production) and emergencies; coordinates dieback, weed and feral animal control; and evaluates mining and development proposals affecting CALM-managed lands and waters and advises on rehabilitation. The Branch also coordinates departmental advice to the EPA on development matters that may impact on biodiversity values throughout the State (CALM is the principal adviser on biodiversity matters to the EPA and Appeals Convenor).

***Marine Conservation Branch***

Provides policy, strategic and scientific advice for marine conservation and management; coordinates the establishment of the Statewide system of marine conservation reserves; provides guidance and support to Regions to improve the operational management of marine reserves; provides administrative and scientific support to the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority; and provides a focus for liaison with CALM's external clients in relation to marine conservation.

***Wildlife Branch***

Provides policy, strategic and scientific advice on wildlife conservation issues, and administers all wildlife licensing, preparation and administration of management plans for wildlife harvesting (e.g. kangaroos, wildflowers); develops and implements fauna management programs (including Western Shield); and operates off-reserve conservation programs (including the Roadside Conservation Committee, Land for Wildlife, nature conservation covenants, Bushland Benefits, Biodiversity Adjustment Scheme, wetlands conservation), and provides advice to the Department of Environment on biodiversity aspects of vegetation clearing proposals.

***Threatened Species and Communities Unit***

Responsible for coordinating the conservation of threatened species and ecological communities recovery actions, including the identification and listing of threatened taxa recovery planning, and coordination of management and research.

8 March 2005

**Parks and Visitor Services  
Output and Division**

## **PARKS AND VISITOR SERVICES OUTPUT AND DIVISION**

### **PARKS AND VISITOR SERVICES OUTPUT**

The Parks and Visitor Services Output is essentially concerned with encouraging and facilitating people to experience, enjoy and therefore appreciate and value wildlife and the natural environment and secondly, providing the opportunity for people to be meaningfully engaged and involved in maintaining biodiversity through contributing to management.

The Output has responsibility for:

- dealing with public involvement, visitation and appreciation of the natural environment on lands and waters managed by the Department;
- preparing and implementing management and recreation site development plans;
- providing, managing and maintaining appropriate access, recreation opportunities and visitor facilities;
- protecting natural areas, visitors and facilities from wildfire;
- training Departmental staff and volunteers, working with local tourist bureaux and commercial tour operators;
- involving indigenous people in park management and the provision of visitor facilities and services; and
- providing visitor information and designing and initiating educational and interpretive activity programs which enrich visitor experience and help develop greater community awareness and support for parks, natural areas, nature-based tourism and recreation services and policies.

Considerable community interest is focused on parks and reserves managed by CALM in the form of participation in planning and management activities, recreational activity and the conduct of commercial tourism.

### **Management Planning**

All parks and reserves are managed according to a management plan developed by CALM for the Conservation Commission or the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority, and approved by the Minister. Plans are developed after considerable consultation with stakeholders and the community. Developments in parks are guided by management plans. There is an

increasing desire for indigenous traditional owners to be engaged in the planning process and helping guide plan outcomes.

### **Acquisition and Administration of Protected Areas**

Considerable work is undertaken to acquire land that is required to reflect the State's priorities for achieving a comprehensive, adequate and representative (CAR) reserve system. On acquired lands management planning processes are initiated and protective processes are put in place to ensure that activities undertaken are managed sustainably. Leases and licences are put in place to guide and control commercial activities and ensure that visitor requirements are met. These commercial partnerships are developed to ensure that along with entrance fee revenue, resources are available to continue to manage areas to both protect them and meet visitor expectations.

### **Park Presentation and Resource Protection**

To ensure that there are high quality services and facilities which operate at international best practice, guidelines and standards are established and maintained. A specialist group of landscape architects is responsible for setting and maintaining standards of facilities that meet the needs of local recreators and national and international tourists.

The capital expenditure on developing new facilities, such as a visitor centre for the Pinnacles in Nambung National Park, redeveloping facilities such as the airstrip into Purnululu National Park and maintaining the 1,100 recreation sites across the State and the 30,000 kilometres network of roads and tracks on CALM managed land will be \$17 million in the 2004/05 financial year. The Gallop Government has allocated \$56 million in capital expenditure for such facilities over the four years commencing 2004/05.

Visitor Risk Management standards have been set in terms of risk assessment and mitigation, with contingency plans in place to deal with natural disasters and other risks. A comprehensive social research program has been developed and undertaken in partnership with Western Australian universities and the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism. There is extensive staff training in the planning, management and design of both facilities and services. In the year 2003/04 there were nearly 11 million visits to CALM managed areas. Surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction with the experiences of visitors.

As indicated, commercial tourism activities are focussed on CALM managed parks and reserves. There are approximately 370 licensed tour operators and 20 tourism leases including caravan parks, safari camps and campgrounds. There are a further 42 recreational leases to groups such as yachting, rowing and shooting clubs. CALM-managed parks and reserves are central to the marketing material used to promote Western Australia for tourism.

### **Visitor Communication and Management**

Specialist effort is directed towards establishing guidelines and standards for signage information and interpretive activities. A range of media is used, including the web, brochures, manuals, books, CDs, videos etc which encourage people to enjoy natural areas and nature with safety and security. Visitor experiences are enriched through this interpretive information delivered from information panels, information shelters and visitor centres. Training is provided to tour operators, and their operations are facilitated through

accreditation programs. Numerous guided and educational programs are conducted across the State. A recent initiative to assist in promoting understanding of the benefits to the community of parks and vice versa was launched in October 2004, and is known as the "*Healthy Parks Healthy People*" program.

### **Community Involvement**

The community is encouraged to engage in volunteer and conservation efforts. There are some 6,100 volunteers registered on CALM's database. These volunteer activities cover a wide range of activity including wildlife caring, campground hosting, guiding, rehabilitation of vegetation, Herbarium collections, wildfire suppression and visitor information. The community also engages widely in planning activities for general issues such as management plans or more specifically related to fire management programs or proposed site developments. Friends groups have been developed such as the Bibbulmun Track Foundation and the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation and for individual parks and reserves. The Department has entered into a wide range of partnerships with community groups and with Government agencies and uses memoranda of understanding in some instances to define those relationships.

### **Liaising and Working with Indigenous People**

There has been significant progress in providing for meaningful involvement of indigenous people in the management of CALM-managed areas. A significant commitment has been made to both training and employment outcomes. A specialist Indigenous Heritage Unit has developed interpretive and education programs outlining indigenous culture on CALM areas and trained other groups in developing those services. Significant effort is directed to liaising with indigenous people and facilitating participation in planning and management activities. A Cross Cultural Awareness program is being delivered across all CALM work centres to increase the knowledge, understanding and awareness of indigenous issues and approaches to indigenous engagement. Several Park Councils have been established and it is currently proposed to extend the application of the models variously developed at Purnululu, Karijini, Millstream-Chichester and Cape Range National Parks.

CALM's Indigenous employment and training initiative known as MATES (Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme) won the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Sector in 2003.

## **PARKS AND VISITOR SERVICES DIVISION**

The delivery of the output is via Regional Services Division, with its capacity to deliver outcomes across the State, and the centralised Parks and Visitor Services Division, which has specialised skills and provides leadership and direction to regional delivery.

The Parks and Visitor Services Division has over 75 permanent and contract staff based at Kensington, Crawley and Fremantle with a small number of staff located in regional offices. The delivery of the Parks and Visitor Services Output is coordinated by the Parks and Visitor Services Division.

The Division comprises:

***Parks and Visitor Services Directorate***

Responsible for coordinating the delivery of the output, strategic planning and policy development.

***Management Planning Unit***

Coordinates the preparation of statutory management plans for lands vested in the Conservation Commission. It maintains an up-to-date register of planning priorities in consultation with other Departmental stakeholders. That register is reviewed annually by the Corporate Executive and the Conservation Commission.

(Note that for marine parks and reserves, the management planning function is carried out by CALM's Marine Conservation Branch in Nature Conservation Division.)

***Community Involvement Unit***

Develops and encourages public participation by providing community access to volunteer projects, advisory committees and friends of parks groups, for the better understanding of management issues.

***Recreation and Landscape Unit***

This team of landscape architects/designers and draftpersons provides advice and services to the Department in the areas of recreation planning and design, visual landscape management and design of small structures.

***Regional Parks Unit***

Responsible for the management of lands within regional parks in the Perth metropolitan area. There are 11 regional parks which include a variety of lands - those vested in the Conservation Commission, freehold land owned by the Western Australian Planning Commission, and a mix of tenures vested in local authorities and other State Government agencies. The unit is responsible for coordinating the management of regional parks which involves preparing management plans for each of the parks and ensuring an integrated management approach to works within the parks. The area of regional parks is about 15,000 hectares and they attract in excess of 1.3 million visits per annum.

***Tourism and Marketing Unit***

Administers the commercial operations licences granted for commercial activities on lands and waters managed by the Department, develops policy in respect to licensing, and conducts expressions of interests for leases and licences for restricted commercial opportunities. There are some 20 commercial tourism leases, about 370 tourism licences and 42 recreational leases. The unit also plans and implements generic marketing of CALM-managed areas and specific commercial products (e.g. national park passes), provides marketing and business planning advice Statewide, and liaises with external stakeholders relating to CALM activities.

***Property and Policy Unit***

Is involved in the development of policy and advice including research, development and monitoring of policies for park management, recreation and commercial tourism projects. It also develops and coordinates policy in relation to visitor fees on CALM lands, prepares, monitors and administers leases for a range of purposes including commercial



uses, and also manages, administers and liaises with the industry for apiary site permits on all Crown lands.

***Interpretation and Visitor Information Services***

Initiates and develops innovative interpretive products and services for the Department which include guided experiences, walks, talks, drama, presentations, participation, media displays, exhibits, signs etc, to enrich visitor experiences.

***Tracks and Trails Unit***

Coordinates the management and maintenance of the Bibbulmun Track and the Munda Biddi Trail across several of the Department's Districts and Regions. It also liaises with all track stakeholders and activity groups and facilitates communication between them and the Department to ensure expectations are met.

***Land and External Funding Unit***

Acquires lands for addition to the CALM conservation estate, provides advice to the Conservation Commission on matters affecting the conservation estate and records Departmental land proposals. It also is responsible for coordinating the Department's external funding program through grant programs, sponsorship and partnerships both corporate and private.

***Indigenous Heritage Unit***

Raises awareness about management and protection of indigenous cultural heritage, provides a central point of advice for CALM staff regarding Aboriginal involvement in all aspects of management of the CALM estate and conducts cultural heritage education programs.

***Research and Information Management Unit***

Provides strategic direction regarding visitor usage, monitoring and information. It manages, promotes and provides training in the use of the Recreation and Tourism Information System (RATIS) to Departmental staff and facilitates the Nature Based Recreation and Tourism Research program. The unit also coordinates and manages the Department's VISTAT program, including visitor usage, data collection and visitor surveys.

***Administration and Finance Unit***

Responsible for the Statewide financial coordination and monitoring of the overall delivery of the Parks and Visitor Services Output. This includes resource management, monitoring and reporting on the Division's financial status and provides strategic advice on operation management of the Division.

***Output Coordinator Unit***

On behalf of the Director, the unit coordinates and monitors the overall delivery of the Parks and Visitor Services Output through the Output Purchaser Provider model and the development of Service Provision Agreements with the Department's Divisions.

# **Sustainable Forest Management Output and Division**

## SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT OUTPUT AND DIVISION

### SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT OUTPUT

The Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Output is concerned with the sustainable management of State forest and timber reserves for conservation, recreation, timber production and water catchment protection.

Delivery of the output is based around five themes:

#### **Implementation of approved forest management plans and Government policy**

The management of forests is required by the CALM Act to be in accordance with the approved management plan. The current approved management plan for the three forest regions of the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) is the *Forest Management Plan 2004-2013* (FMP), which commenced on 1 January 2004. CALM developed the FMP for the Conservation Commission. The FMP incorporates all elements of the *Protecting our old-growth forests* policy that required formalising in a management plan.

CALM is responsible for the implementation of the FMP and is required, with the Forest Products Commission (FPC), to comply with its requirements.

Effective implementation of the FMP, and the new measures it contains, requires the following major tasks to be progressed:

- refinement of the systems in place for reviewing and evaluating the potential impacts of operations proposed for State forest and timber reserves to ensure they comply with the FMP and relevant policies. This is accomplished through checklists and approval processes;
- revision and updating of the existing management guidelines, such as the silvicultural guidelines for jarrah, karri and wandoo, to incorporate the new requirements of the FMP;
- development of the suite of new management guidelines required by the FMP. A number of the key new guidelines proposed by the FMP are required to be developed with public consultation, be submitted to the Conservation Commission for advice and approved by the Minister for the Environment. It is expected that at least two such guidelines will be presented for approval in 2005. These are the *Guidelines for the Management of Informal Reserves* and *Guidelines for the Selection and Management of Fauna Habitat Zones*;
- revision of the system for monitoring and auditing the compliance of operations with the FMP. The main disturbance activity that requires monitoring and audit is timber harvesting in native forest conducted by the contractors of the FPC. Other activities that operate on State forest and timber reserves are also monitored; and

- development and implementation of the 33 key performance indicators in the FMP designed to measure the success of the plan in meeting its objectives and the progress in implementing its actions.

The Conservation Commission has a statutory role in auditing the performance of CALM and the FPC in their implementation and carrying out of the FMP.

### **Inventory and assessment of resources**

Good forest management is dependent on knowledge of the type, quantity and spatial distribution of forest resources. A specialist group maintains and enhances databases of a wide range of datasets for the south-west native forests and plantations, including spatially based records of past management activities.

The primary forest resource database is called the Forest Management Information System (FMIS). It holds many hundreds of different datasets, however, there are a dozen or so key ones such as forest type and structure, location and extent of old-growth forest, timber harvest history and the location of informal reserves, that are important for day to day management.

Datasets related to the commercial management of timber, such as standing timber volume and periodic growth measurements, are maintained and enhanced on a cost recovery basis for the FPC.

### **Maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and other values**

The CALM Act requires that the purposes for reservation of State forest and timber reserves be prescribed in the FMP. Conservation, recreation and water catchment protection are prescribed as a purpose for reservation for all areas of State forest and timber reserves. Other values such as apiary, wildflower harvesting and basic raw materials are not prescribed in the CALM Act but are catered for in the FMP.

Biodiversity conservation is achieved on State forest and timber reserves available for timber production through the establishment of a network of informal reserves from which timber production is excluded to protect high value habitats and measures in guidelines that mitigate the adverse effects of harvesting, such as the retention of habitat trees.

The output also funds weed, feral animal and disease control on State forest and timber reserves.

Recreation and water catchment protection are achieved through actions in the FMP and guidelines that prescribe operational practices to maintain the quality and quantity of water and for recreation, the maintenance of viewsheds and avoiding conflict between tourist traffic and forest management traffic.

### **Provision for the harvesting and regeneration of forest products**

CALM is responsible for calculating the sustained yields for timber that are included in the FMP. The FPC is responsible for the harvesting and sale of timber from State forest and timber reserves in accordance with the requirements of the FMP. These requirements include silvicultural guidelines that ensure that where appropriate harvesting is done in a manner that provides for regeneration.

Because timber inventory and other spatial information necessary to plan timber harvesting is held by CALM, indicative harvest plans for each year are produced by CALM for the FPC on a fee for service basis.

The FPC is responsible for taking the indicative harvest plan prepared by CALM for them, undertaking the public consultation and then completing the detailed coupe level planning. CALM evaluates the coupe level harvest proposal to ensure it meets the requirements of the FMP and other CALM policies. Once approval is given by CALM to commence harvesting, the FPC takes responsibility for the harvest area until they have completed any post-harvest silvicultural work, such as regeneration treatment, then responsibility for the area is handed back to CALM.

### **Partnerships**

Liaison with key stakeholders in Government, industry and the community with respect to implementation of actions in the FMP is a priority. In particular, the voluntary conservation movement has a strong interest in the implementation of Fauna Habitat Zones and CALM participates in briefings, field trips and discussions with conservation groups, often jointly with the Conservation Commission.

## **SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT DIVISION**

The Sustainable Forest Management Division is responsible for the coordination of implementation of the FMP, creating the systems and structures to deliver the output and policy development. Staff from the Division are in two branches that have officers in Kensington, Bunbury and Manjimup, which are also the headquarters of CALM's three regions in the south-west. Much of the delivery of the output occurs through staff in the Regional Services Division who are based in six districts in the three forest regions, and who monitor the performance of timber harvesting contractors employed by the FPC.

### ***Sustainable Forest Management Directorate***

Responsible for coordinating the delivery of the output, strategic planning, policy development and Ministerial liaison and correspondence.

### ***Policy and Practices Branch***

Responsible for the development of the systems to implement the requirements of the FMP and monitor implementation progress. Coordinates the development of the suite of management guidelines required by the FMP and undertakes projects for sustainable forest management.

***Forest Management Branch***

Responsible for:

- the maintenance, enhancement, analysis and provision of information from datasets important for the management of the south-west forests;
- on behalf of the FPC, planning to integrate timber harvesting with fire protection, nature conservation and recreation;
- initiation and enhancement of computer based systems for growth modelling and yield scheduling; and
- the mapping of the occurrence of dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) on land in which disturbance activities are proposed.

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# **SELECTED BACKGROUND AND ISSUES PAPERS**

## **1. Departmental Programs/Activities**

- **Service Delivery in Regional Areas**
- **Science Division**
- **Perth Observatory**
- **Fire Management**
- **EcoEducation Program**
- **Publications**

## **2. Issues**

- **Biodiversity Conservation Bill**
- **Biodiversity Conservation Strategy**
- **Dieback**
- **Cane Toads**
- **Current Status of Proposals for New Marine Parks**
- **Bioprospecting**
- **Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**
- **Revegetation and Carbon Sinks**
- **Forest Management Arrangements**
- **Timber Harvesting in Native Forests**
- **Monitoring the Implementation and Carrying Out of the Forest Management Plan**
- **Sawlog Supply in Wet Soil Conditions in Winter and Spring 2005**
- **Access to Firewood by the Public**
- **Indigenous Affairs**
- **Proposed Ningaloo/Cape Range World Heritage Nomination**

## **3. National Ministerial Councils**

## **4. Upcoming Media and Community Opportunities**

# **Departmental Programs/Activities**



# REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

- Regions and Districts
- Fire Management Services Branch
- Director's office
  - Advisor
  - Project Officer x 2
  - Personal Assistant

# **REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION**

## **Regions and Districts – Resources (FTE's)**

- **Staff**

- 99 admin and management

- 252 field officers

- 11 wildlife officers

- 89 rangers

- 1 mobile ranger

- 238 wages staff (permanent)

- 51 wages staff (seasonal)

- Total = 690 (permanent)

- 741 (permanent and seasonal)

- **Budget**

- \$65 million

- **29 cost centres**

## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **SERVICE DELIVERY IN REGIONAL AREAS**

The Regional Services Division is one of seven Divisions in CALM. The Division's activities are spread throughout Western Australia with regional headquarters located at Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Karratha, Kensington, Kununurra, Manjimup and Narrogin. District headquarters are located at Broome, Busselton, Collie, Denham, Esperance, Exmouth, Jurien Bay, Katanning, Merredin, Mundaring, Narrogin, Pemberton, Walpole and Wanneroo. Work centres are located at Harvey, Jarrahdale, Dwellingup, Fremantle, Kirup, Margaret River, Nannup, Northcliffe, Ravensthorpe and Manjimup.

The attached table and charts provide further detail on the structure and composition of CALM's region and district resources.

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### Staff resources

Details of staff occupying positions within Regional Services Division as at 31/1/05 are given in the following table:

Region/Branch	FTE *				
	Wages Staff	Rangers	Wildlife Officers	Other Salaried Staff	Total
Kimberley	4	11	2	18	35
Pilbara	10.8	9	1	19	39.8
Midwest	10	7	2	49.4	68.4
Goldfields	4	0	1	8.8	13.8
Wheatbelt	7	0	2	30	39
Swan	59.8	25	0	74.6	159.4
South West	67.2	11	1	56	135.2
Warren	67.6	11	1	42.8	122.4
South Coast	4	14	1	25.5	44.5
Fire Management Services	4	0	0	23.8	27.8
Crawley (incl. mobile rangers)	0	1	0	5	6
<b>Total</b>	238.4	89.0	11	352.9	690.3

\* Notes:

- Seasonal contracts (<12 months) not included.
- Indigenous Trainees are wages staff.
  - Ranger's Assistants are included under Rangers

# REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

## Regions and Districts

### 9 Regions

- Kimberley
- Pilbara
- Midwest
- Goldfields
- Wheatbelt
- South Coast
- Warren
- South West
- Swan

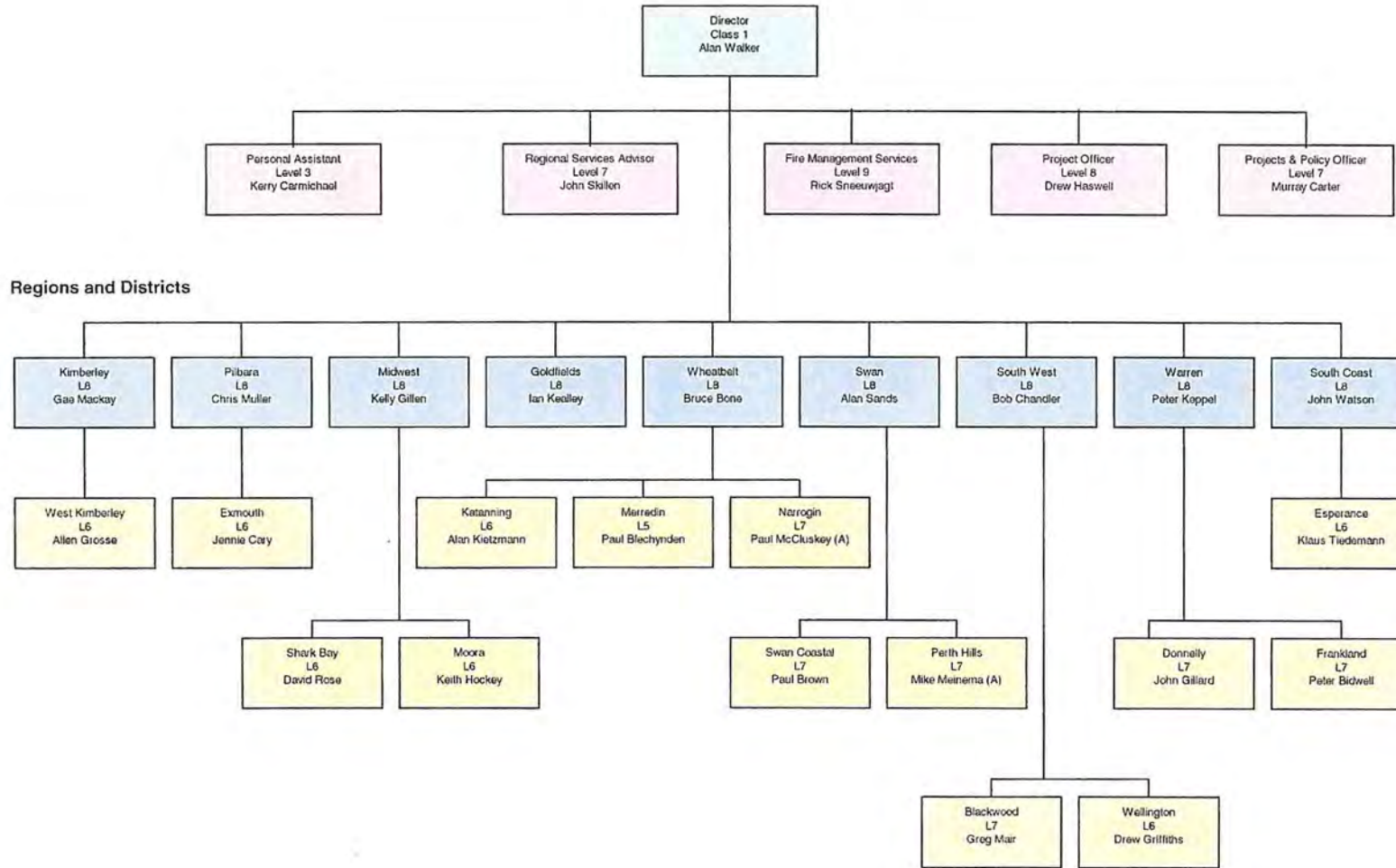
### 14 Districts

- West Kimberley
- Exmouth
- Moora, Shark Bay
- Merredin, Katanning , Narrogin
- Esperance
- Frankland, Donnelly
- Blackwood, Wellington
- Perth Hills, Swan Coastal

## **REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION**

- **Fire Management Services Branch**  
17 staff at Kensington and Bunbury  
Budget: \$2.3 million
- **Director's Office**  
4 staff at Crawley  
1 staff at Kensington  
1 Mobile Ranger  
Budget: \$790,000

## REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION









## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **SCIENCE DIVISION**

The Science Division of CALM, in partnership with other agencies and institutions, provides up-to-date and scientifically sound information to uphold effective conservation of biodiversity and sustainable natural resource management in Western Australia.

To achieve this, Science Division has the following broad objectives:

- To provide a scientifically objective and independent source of reliable knowledge and understanding of the State's biota for establishing a comprehensive, adequate and representative (CAR) reserve system, for conserving species and ecological communities, for managing the public lands and waters entrusted to CALM, and for carrying out CALM's other legislative responsibilities.
- To ensure that Science Division is responsive to the needs of policy makers and output purchasers in CALM by bringing science to bear on the solution of the State's most pressing problems, including threatening processes, relating to conservation and land management.
- To advise on sustainable resource development opportunities and to promote the conservation of biological resources through their sustainable utilization.
- To communicate and transfer to managers knowledge, information and other insights obtained through scientific investigation in Western Australia and elsewhere.
- To attain a worldwide reputation for excellence in science by publishing knowledge obtained through scientific research in the premier national and international scientific journals and through electronic means.
- To contribute, as an integrated part of CALM, to meeting the need for knowledge on conservation and land management matters by the public of Western Australia.

These objectives are delivered through the following thematic research programs:

- **Biogeography:** Focuses on documenting and understanding the patterning of Western Australia's biodiversity through biological survey. This information assists the establishment of a CAR conservation reserve system and informs resource development decision makers. Recently completed a biological survey of the wheatbelt region and a major biological survey of the Pilbara Bioregion is underway.

- Fauna Conservation: Focuses on the conservation of threatened fauna species by understanding their ecology, biology and threatening processes. Significant research projects include techniques to control introduced predators (foxes and feral cats), threatened fauna translocations and research aimed at saving Gilbert's Potoroo, Australia's rarest mammal.
- Flora Conservation: Focuses on the conservation of threatened flora species by understanding their ecology, biology and threatening processes including salinity, altered fire regimes, weeds and diseases. Significant research projects include impacts and control of dieback disease (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*), threatened flora translocations and the establishment of a threatened flora seed bank.
- Landscape Conservation: Focuses on the conservation biology of communities, ecosystems and landscapes. Significant research projects include wetlands monitoring, understanding the effects of fire regimes on biodiversity and understanding and monitoring the effects of fire and logging on forests and associated ecosystems.
- Perth Herbarium: Maintains the State's plant collections, undertakes taxonomic research to underpin flora conservation, develops accessible flora information systems.
- Science Applications: Develops information management systems to facilitate warehousing and distribution of information and knowledge about the State's biodiversity.

The Perth Observatory, which is part of CALM's Science Division, is covered by a separate briefing paper.

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## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### PERTH OBSERVATORY

CALM is responsible for the Perth Observatory.

Astronomy in Western Australia is centred on the Perth Observatory, which has provided international-standard research, education and information services for over 100 years. Furthermore, Perth Observatory is Australia's oldest continuously operating observatory and its sole remaining fully-functional State observatory. In recognition of its history, cultural significance and ongoing activities it is now on the State Heritage Register.

The Observatory's mission is:

*To meet the demand for general and specialised up-to-date astronomical information and services from the public, business and educational community while furthering scientific research in astronomy in conjunction with other astronomy institutions and universities.*

Strategic planning has elaborated three core functions to be performed by Perth Observatory in order for it to best serve the state, and capitalise on its inherent and/or inherited strengths. These functions are:

- Astronomical Outreach and Education – outputs: lectures, talks, star viewing etc;
- Astronomical Information Services – outputs: information to mass media, information kits, expert legal advice concerning sunrise and set etc; and
- Astronomical Research – outputs: scientific publications, software and instruments.

Currently, the Observatory has 10 FTEs and a budget (salaries + operational cash) of \$740,000.

Current issues include:

- Ongoing demand for Observatory services – this will probably increase given that the Square Kilometre Array, the world's largest radio telescope, may be built in mid-west WA.
- Limited operational budget is impacting safety, maintenance, service provision and maintenance of significant international research and education partnerships.

An Internet telescope will soon be commissioned. This is a partnership with universities in the USA, and Telstra is providing the Internet link. WA and US students will have access to these telescopes, and others world-wide. Observatory staff will train WA students in the system's operation and thus involve them in physical science through the engaging science of astronomy.

8 March 2005

## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **FIRE MANAGEMENT**

#### **Departmental responsibility**

CALM has responsibility for managing nearly 24 million hectares of national parks, nature reserves, State forest and other lands (almost 10% of the State's land area). The Department is also responsible for conserving the State's biodiversity. As part of meeting these responsibilities the Department undertakes an active fire management program involving fire preparedness and fire prevention operations; the application of fire under prescribed conditions; and the suppression of wildfires on or near lands managed by the Department.

CALM has a lead role in responding to and suppressing fires on Department-managed lands in the south-west forest regions, and is supported by officers of the Forest Products Commission (FPC) and the bushfire brigades of the Local Government Authorities. In all other parts of Western Australia, the primary responsibility for fire suppression rests with the bushfire brigades. In these regions the Department's forces provide operational support where fires are burning on or threatening Department-managed lands. The Fire and Emergency Services Authority (FESA) has the role of providing technical and operational support to Local Governments for fire management on all other lands.

On 1 July 2003, responsibility for coordinating fire prevention programs on 84 million hectares of unallocated Crown land and unmanaged reserves was transferred to CALM from the (former) Department of Land Administration. The fire suppression responsibility on these lands remains with the Local Government Authorities through the volunteer bushfire brigades.

#### **Causes of fire**

Of the total of 462 wildfires that affected lands managed by the Department throughout the State during 2003/04, the main causes of ignition were lightning strikes (11%) and deliberate lighting (52%). Other causes included accidental (8%), escapes (10%) and unknown (13%). Escapes from Departmental burns represented 3% of all wildfire numbers.

Arson caused fires are more prevalent in near urban areas and consequently are far more likely to result in significant damage to property and risks to human life. More active fire management on natural lands near urban areas will reduce the likelihood of adverse consequences from arson.

There was a dramatic reduction in the number of arson fires particularly in the Gnangara area as a result of a concentrated fire prevention program involving Police and local authorities. Despite this, there has been an increasing trend in arson such that there has been an increase of about 50% in arson caused fires over a six year period.

## **Bushfire hazards and prescribed burning**

The Department's prescribed burning program in the south-west of Western Australia has been designed to meet a number of objectives, including the protection and maintenance of biodiversity values and the protection of community values from the impact of severe wildfires.

Prescribed burns that are aimed at providing protection to natural values and community assets are identified through a risk assessment model called the Wildfire Threat Analysis which considers four risk components: the location and fire vulnerability of the full range of values; the ignition potential; the fire behaviour potential; and the fire suppression capacity. Values such as rural and residential property, threatened ecological communities and species, recreation sites and plantations are given highest priority for protection measures including prescribed burning.

A graph showing the area of prescribed burning and wildfires from 1960/61 to 2003/04 in CALM's three south-west forest regions is attached.

The increase in the areas of heavy fuels that has resulted from the decline in the achievement of the prescribed burning program in the period from 1996/97 to 2002/03 will continue to represent a serious hazard for several years unless an enhanced annual burn program up to about 230,000 hectares is achieved. This will require a combination of favourable seasonal conditions (resulting in higher numbers of suitable burning days) and additional resources (extra burning crews and funding for aircraft and equipment). Increased community tolerance of occasional smoke events and wide support for the prescribed burning strategy will also assist the Department to achieve the program.

Although the 2003-2004 fire season in the southern half of WA was generally drier than the long-term mean, CALM took advantage of favourable conditions to undertake additional prescribed burning in the south-west karri and jarrah forests. The large autumn burn program that was achieved in the forest regions (107,832 ha) meant that the total area for the full year of 192,119 ha was only slightly below the nominal annual target of 200,000 ha.

## **Resources needed for fire management**

CALM seeks to maintain adequate numbers of trained personnel and other fire suppression resources needed to achieve the annual burning program and to meet the Department's fire suppression capability needs on and near to Department-managed lands in the south-west. The level of fire fighting resources (both personnel and equipment) is defined in the Fire Cover Model that was implemented in 1996.

In determining the standards for the Fire Cover Model in the south-west, nine fire response cells have been identified. In past years resources located within these cells have given an adequate level of suppression coverage over the areas of highest concentration of values and ignition potential. The fire response cells determine the number of fire crews and tankers required to be able to provide a first attack capability supported by resources from adjoining Departmental work centres. The Department's total fire crew numbers are bolstered by the addition of approximately 20 seasonal firefighters who form into "burning crews" during the spring and autumn months to assist with the prescribed burning operations.

Resources of plant and equipment are also needed to implement fire prevention and fire suppression programs. Maintenance of access roads and bridges for prescribed burning and fire suppression is a critical factor. Road and bridge maintenance work has declined considerably in recent years due to a lack of funds.

The State Government provided an additional \$3 million for CALM's fire management budget in 2003/04 to improve the Department's capacity to respond to wildfires and to complete programmed prescribed burns in the south-west. The additional funds were used to appoint 38 seasonal fire crew members in the south-west forest regions, as well as at Kalbarri, Jurien, Albany and Esperance.

### **Fire detection**

The Department provides an aerial surveillance system in the south-west regions which is based on a combination of lookout towers and single-engine aircraft (American Scout). There are 13 lookout towers throughout the south-west, which are staffed by dedicated towerpersons from November to April each year. The towers are augmented by a fleet of eight aircraft flying six pre-determined circuits at schedules that vary according to the fire danger levels or fire activity. The aircraft are flown by three permanent senior pilots, and eight seasonal pilots.

During the 2003/04 fire season the Department's aircraft flew a total 2,977 hours for aerial surveillance and wildfire intelligence and 95 hours in support of water bombing operations.

### **Staff training**

CALM has an intense fire training schedule. Over the two years from 2002/03 to 2003/04, a total of 53 fire training courses involving 1,072 participants were conducted by the Department's Fire Management Services training staff covering the following: Incident Control System; Advanced Incident Leadership; Logistics Management; Incident Planning; Prescribed Burning; Fire Management; Advanced Fire Fighter; Sector/Divisional Commander; Management Support; Resources Unit Management; Situation Unit Management; Basic Fire Fighter; Pilot training; Air Attack Supervisors; and Water Bombing Support. Fire courses were also conducted for new Departmental field staff recruits and the Department's Bush Ranger cadets.

District staff conducted training sessions for Departmental fire crews, contractors, bulldozer operators and volunteer bushfire brigade members.

The Department developed and presented a national level leadership program for high-level fire leaders titled "Advanced Incident Leadership Program". This one week residential course involved presenters from the USA, WA universities and senior Departmental staff, and drew participants from FESA and from fire management agencies throughout Australia.

### **Smoke management**

The proximity of CALM-managed land in the south-west to residential areas necessitates the implementation of smoke management guidelines for prescribed burning. CALM has applied a Smoke Management Decision Model in consultation with other agencies since 1994. The reliability and performance of the smoke trajectory model and the decision model have

improved markedly in recent years. There have been relatively few instances of excessive haze or smoke from prescribed burning because of these improvements.

The planning process to avoid smoke accumulation in Perth and other residential areas does reduce the number of suitable burning days for prescribed burns. In particular this applies to burns located immediately south and east of those areas. CALM is developing a communications plan for the 2005 autumn burning program that will include the creation of a greater expectation within the community for occasional smoke haze from prescribed burns that adjoin urban areas.

During the 2003/04 prescribed burning season the issue of smoke causing a detrimental impact on the quality of wine grapes arose for the first time. To date it has not been proven that smoke from prescribed burning has caused a loss of quality in wine. Several vignerons have expressed concern about CALM undertaking burns adjoining their vineyards. Two vineyard owners have subsequently initiated court action claiming negligence by CALM in carrying out prescribed burns in 2003/04. These actions will be defended by CALM in line with advice from the State Solicitor's Office.

CALM aims to avoid smoke problems near adjoining vineyards by burning under conditions that will blow the smoke away from the property on the day of the burn. It is very difficult to prevent residual (lighter) smoke from blowing across the adjoining property periodically on subsequent days.

### **Current fire season**

The program of prescribed burning in 2004/05 has proceeded favourably with 137,000 hectares achieved during the spring and summer months. A program has been set for 60,000-80,000 hectares in autumn and with favourable weather the nominal annual target of 200,000 hectares should be met or modestly exceeded.

During the 2004/05 year up to 18 February 2005, CALM has attended 280 wildfires in its three south-west forest regions. These fires have burnt 43,700 hectares, including 39,700 hectares of CALM-managed land. Two of the largest fires at Perth hills (27,000 hectares) and at Yanchep caused significant damage to assets and threatened homes and lives. A large fire at Mt Manypeaks near Albany burnt important habitat of the endangered Noisy Scrub-bird and other threatened birds. In December 2004 CALM fought eight large fires in nature reserves and national parks around Esperance.

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**Prescribed Burn and Wildfire Areas for 1960-2004**

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### PUBLICATIONS

The Department produces a wide range of publications for external audiences, to develop awareness and appreciation of the biological and physical diversity natural to Western Australia, and promote community involvement in and support for its protection, conservation and restoration. CALM also produces publications for staff to promote a well-informed and motivated workforce. Publications produced each year are listed in CALM's Annual Report (pages 121-123 in the 2003-2004 report) and include:

- national park and wildlife brochures;
- management plans;
- *Conservation News*, the monthly staff newsletter;
- special project newsletters;
- technical reports;
- LANDSCOPE magazine;
- saleable books promoting conservation; and
- the Arbor Day poster for schools.

Key publications are described in further detail below. Given the increasing prevalence of publishing on the Internet, this list includes CALM's NatureBase website.

**Conservation News** is published monthly and distributed to all CALM staff and volunteers, and to a targeted audience outside CALM to inform key stakeholders of the Department's activities.

**LANDSCOPE** is a quarterly magazine concerning CALM's mission and activities. The magazine is sold through subscriptions here and overseas, and retail outlets in Western Australia, to meet its production, distribution and marketing costs. LANDSCOPE has won awards for its production and content and has been produced continuously for 20 years.

**NatureBase** was developed in 1996 with 64 pages. Today the site has the equivalent of 2,500 A4 pages of general information plus all the reports, management plans and annual reports published electronically. More than 50,000 hits a day were recorded to the site last year. A major upgrade of the site, including a new navigation system and faster Internet connection, is currently being developed.

**CALMweb** is the Department's intranet site and has more than eight times the amount of data on NatureBase, including information, key forms and documents, reports, databases and discussion areas.

**CALM books** are targeted publications sold in outlets around the State, including CALM offices and online through the NatureBase bookshop. The revenue raised from these books is reinvested in other publications. Recent titles include *Threatened animals of Western Australia*; *Life along land's edge: Wildlife on the shores of Roebuck Bay, Broome* and the popular Bush Book series. There are now more than 20 titles in this series of pocket-sized guide books, with more than 260,000 copies sold between January 1996 and January 2005.

Science Division and other staff also produced a wide range of papers that are published in scientific journals, books and conference proceedings.

8 March 2005

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### ECOEDUCATION PROGRAM

CALM uses a variety of approaches to assist the wider community to understand and value Western Australia's biodiversity and natural areas and to participate appropriately in their conservation and protection. These approaches include:

- interpretation, or designing and providing enriching experiences for visitors to parks and other natural areas managed by the Department;
- nature-based activity programs, such as *Nearer to Nature*, which aim to increase the community's environmental awareness, knowledge and skills through enjoyable activities in natural areas such as national, marine and regional parks; and
- EcoEducation programs for youth throughout primary and secondary schooling.

CALM's Corporate Plan (2002-2005) outlines the Strategic Directions, Objectives and Strategies to achieve the Department's Mission – *In partnership with the community, we conserve Western Australia's biodiversity, and manage the lands and waters entrusted to us, for their intrinsic values and for the appreciation and benefit of present and future generations.*

The third of the Department's four strategic directions outlined in the Corporate Plan is to 'maintain community and support'. The objective of this strategic direction is – *To develop community awareness and appreciation of the State's rich diversity of native plants, animals and natural ecosystems, and its unique landscapes, and promote community involvement in and support for their protection, conservation and restoration.*

A key strategy to achieve this objective is to increase opportunities for youth to learn about and gain hands-on experience with conservation issues.

Long-term issues need long-term strategies and this is especially true of the issues that CALM deals with. One of the most effective long-term strategies in this regard is to ensure the education of Western Australian school children adequately addresses WA's significant conservation and land management issues.

The Department's EcoEducation programs are the responsibility of a specialist unit within the Department's Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs Division. This unit is responsible for CALM Bush Rangers and several other key programs and activities aimed specifically at primary and secondary school students and teachers. As well, there is a range of education services and resource packs. There also is range of activities for tertiary students, mainly focusing on nature-based tourism research projects and coordinated by the Department's Parks and Visitor Services Division.

## **EcoEducation Objectives**

The program's objectives can be summarised as follows:

- to develop school community awareness and appreciation of the biological and physical diversity of the natural environment and of the need for a range of management procedures for conservation;
- to provide the school community including students with opportunities to learn about and gain hands-on experience with conservation issues;
- to promote school community and student involvement in and support for nature conservation;
- to provide resources and experiences that will assist students to understand that they are part of nature and dependent on the many resources of the natural environment for their daily needs;
- to develop school community awareness and appreciation of traditional Aboriginal culture, including technological, sociological and ideological aspects and its link to the Department's approach to conserving biodiversity; and
- to give members of the school community and students personal experiences that will bring about changes to attitudes that prompt changes in habits and lifestyle in relation to their use of resources.

Individual EcoEducation programs also have specific objectives related to conservation issues they are dealing with.

The CALM Bush Ranger program, which operates as part of the Government's Cadets WA program, also is designed to foster competence in life skills such as teamwork and leadership and it has a conservation community service objective.

## **Participation**

More than 30,000 students, parents and teachers participate in the CALM's EcoEducation program each year. In 2005, there are more than 1,150 CALM Bush Rangers in 36 high schools throughout the State, and they will spend more than 200,000 volunteer hours during the year on the study of nature conservation and on community conservation projects.

8 March 2005

# Issues

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION BILL

CALM is responsible for assisting the Minister in the administration of the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* which is the principal Act providing for the conservation and protection of wildlife (fauna and flora) throughout the whole of the State, in conjunction with the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*.

The Wildlife Conservation Act is outmoded and needs to be replaced by modern legislation that provides for the conservation of the State's biological diversity (biodiversity).

Under previous Governments progress was made towards the preparation of a Biodiversity Conservation Bill which would repeal and replace the Wildlife Conservation Act:

- in November 1992 a draft Wildlife Conservation Bill was released as a green paper for public comment;
- in May 1999 Cabinet approved preparation of a Biodiversity Conservation Bill and drafting instructions were provided to the Parliamentary Counsel's Office but a Bill was not produced during the term of the then Government because it did not receive a high enough drafting priority;
- in 2001 the Labor party *Environment* election policy made a commitment to introduce biodiversity conservation legislation as a priority;
- in December 2002, a consultation paper, *A Biodiversity Conservation Act for Western Australia*, was released for public comment;
- in June 2004 the Minister wrote to her Ministerial colleagues about the election commitment to introduce biodiversity conservation legislation as a priority, and an advanced draft set of drafting instructions for the preparation of a Biodiversity Conservation Bill was sent on a confidential basis to the CEOs of 50 agencies for comment;
- lack of response and negative responses to the drafting instructions from key agencies adversely impacted on the target of submitting the drafting instructions by the end of July 2004 for Cabinet approval to draft a Bill, and similarly, prevented drafting being progressed in 2004;
- in December 2004, a discussion paper, *Towards a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Western Australia*, was released for public comment (one of the output targets raised in this paper is proclamation of a Biodiversity Conservation Act by 2006).

Passage of the proposed Biodiversity Conservation Bill will enable:

- the State to meet commitments made as a signatory to the *National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity* (1996);
- accreditation of the State's legal measures available for the conservation of biodiversity to be considered against the provisions of the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*;
- protection of native species at three levels – general protection, special protection and protection of threatened species because they are critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable;
- protection of threatened ecological communities because they are critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable;
- reparation, by offenders, of critical habitat of threatened species or threatened ecological communities damaged during the commission of offences;
- key threatening processes to the survival of native species and ecological communities to be identified and listed so that they can be addressed;
- the Threatened Species and Communities Scientific Committee to be established to advise the Minister on listings (to replace two similar informal bodies);
- biodiversity management programs to be formally provided for and for bioregional plans to be introduced;
- conservation orders to be made to prevent imminent loss of or damage to listed threatened species or ecological communities as well species, ecological communities and critical habitat if a key threatening process will alter their status to threatened, if existing biodiversity conservation measures are failing;
- off-reserve biodiversity conservation to be enhanced through measures such as biodiversity conservation agreements; biodiversity conservation commitments; bilateral agreements and nature conservation covenants;
- biological threats to be addressed, including environmental pests and weeds;
- wildlife officers to carry out their enforcement duties with a comprehensive suite of appropriate powers, complemented by significant deterrent penalties, for example in relation to trafficking in native species.

8 March 2005



## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGY**

In its February 2001 election commitments on the environment, the Government made two key biodiversity conservation commitments:

- “introduce biodiversity conservation legislation as a priority”, and
- “develop and implement a biodiversity strategy”.

In its 2005 environment policy the Government renewed its commitments as:

- “Continue to consult on, develop and implement a Biodiversity Conservation Act and a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy as a priority”.

The development of a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy is an important initiative and is intended to provide a whole of State framework for ensuring the State’s world renowned and unique biodiversity conservation values are protected (Australia’s only internationally recognised terrestrial biodiversity hotspot is the south-west of WA).

It is envisaged that a biodiversity conservation strategy for Western Australia will:

- provide a common vision and goal for biodiversity conservation and use in WA;
- provide an overarching framework to target and accelerate conservation action across the community and government;
- identify and clarify responsibilities across the community and government;
- build a business case for funding conservation activities; and
- meet and augment national obligations.

An initial consultation paper “Towards a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Western Australia” was launched by the Minister for the Environment on 11 December 2004 for consultation closing on 15 April 2005. This paper proposed a number of strategic directions and initiatives on which the public was invited to comment and make submissions. The basis of the paper is that biodiversity underpins sustainability, and the quality of life of present and future generations of Western Australians depends on our ability to effectively manage biodiversity.

After consideration and analysis of comments, a formal draft biodiversity conservation strategy will be developed through a structured and participatory process. The final process for this will be decided through discussions with key stakeholders, and put forward for endorsement by the Government.

8 March 2005

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### MANAGEMENT OF DIEBACK

#### Background

The fungal pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi* was introduced to WA in the early 1900's and destroys a wide range of Western Australian native plants and threatens ecological communities and their dependent fauna in the 400mm+ rainfall areas of the southwest, from Kalbarri to Cape Arid.

The key management strategy is to identify uninfested areas and minimise the transfer of the pathogen into them through vehicles, soils, waters and walkers.

Protection of key flora habitat adjacent to infected areas is possible on a limited scale through repeated applications of the chemical phosphite.

The Dieback Consultative Committee was created in 1998 by the then Minister for the Environment to advise on the matter of disease caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi* in WA's native vegetation. It includes representatives from across the community, agencies, industry and tertiary institutions and advises the Minister on dieback issues. Administrative support for the DCC is provided by CALM. The Dieback Working Group is a community group mainly involved in raising awareness of dieback, in undertaking dieback surveys and in some protection of remnant vegetation from dieback in the greater metropolitan area. It has received considerable funding through the Natural Heritage Trust.

#### Current status

A whole of government framework is being implemented for the management and control of dieback, which threatens vast areas of the southwest, an internationally renowned biodiversity hotspot. This was launched on 6 March 2004 along with the draft replacement CALM policy on dieback management and draft best practice *Phytophthora* management guidelines for CALM-managed lands.

Key elements of the framework are: the formation of an action oriented Dieback Response Group; development of a dieback atlas for WA; preparation of guidelines for non-CALM land tenures such as private and local government land; preparation of a generic dieback risk assessment methodology for broad community use; an action plan specifically to tackle the dieback threat to Fitzgerald River National Park; and a whole of government policy on dieback management.

The Dieback Response Group is chaired by CALM and involves the chair of the Dieback Consultative Committee, Murdoch University's Centre for Phytophthora Science and Management, the Dieback Working Group, the Department of Environment and the

Conservation Commission of WA. This Group commenced in August 2004 and is progressing the implementation of the framework, including the first draft of the dieback atlas.

CALM and the community, through the Natural Heritage Trust funded Dieback Working Group, are applying the chemical phosphite to protect critically endangered flora, threatened ecological communities, the habitat of threatened native fauna and remnant bush.

CALM has an active program for the detection, diagnosis and mapping of the occurrence of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* on lands that it manages.

CALM is progressively preparing disease management plans, based on programs of rigorous hygiene, for all uninfested areas. Standard protocols apply in vulnerable areas.

An annual phosphite-spraying program is being undertaken at 24 sites in the southwest and covering more than 150 hectares to protect 15 critically endangered species of native flora and two threatened ecological communities.

An active research program is in place including the collection and storage of germplasm of threatened flora and programs for their germination and translocation and projects aimed at the refinement of the use of phosphite.

Community liaison, input and awareness raising are provided for via the activities of the DCC, the community based Dieback Working Group, the Murdoch University Centre for Phytophthora Science and Management and a joint World Wide Fund for Nature – DCC project investigating dieback impacts on fauna as a result of habitat alteration.

There is no quick fix for dieback. The Dieback Response Group is actively encouraging and pursuing opportunities for further dieback awareness raising, as well as protective strategies for native vegetation and targeted research aimed at better means of reducing the spread of the disease and ultimately control and eradication.

8 March 2005

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### CANE TOADS

On 11 December 2004 the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Minister for the Environment announced the allocation of \$600,000 to the Department of Agriculture for the management of cane toads, in response to a special budget bid from CALM. This followed an offer from Senator Ian Campbell, Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Heritage, to match any State funding for cane toad initiatives.

Cane toads have been confirmed to be within 300 km of the WA border and are likely to reach WA under their current rate of spread within three years. There is a very real risk of earlier establishment as several toads have been located in freight and vehicles over recent years, including one found at a caravan park in Kununurra in late 2004.

The Department of Agriculture, CALM and the Agriculture Protection Board (APB) are implementing an initiative which addresses four key areas: quarantine and surveillance; biodiversity asset identification and protection; research and development; and public awareness and/or education. Specifically this will include:

- strengthening of the Western Australian/Northern Territory border quarantine arrangements to prevent 'hitch hiking' toads entering the State, with an extended public awareness program targeting interstate travellers;
- creation of a new group specifically to search areas along the border and in the Northern Territory (with Northern Territory Government approval) to give advance warning of toad populations and allow for targeted local control, including investigations into the use of automated cane toad detectors and special fencing in areas where they are most likely to spread naturally;
- targeted community awareness and consultation programs on how to deal with cane toads and to inspire and encourage direct community action to prevent new outbreaks establishing;
- targeted surveys to identify key biodiversity assets under threat from toads, and management strategies to best protect them (including possible establishment of 'at risk' native animals on offshore islands);
- targeted research into new methodologies to slow the progress of cane toads and to prevent human assisted transfer of cane toads into WA and to eradicate any accidental introductions, building on interstate experience;
- targeted calls for innovative control strategies; and
- other specific actions identified through community input.

The cane toad initiative is managed through an interdepartmental group consisting of the Department of Agriculture, CALM, the APB and the Commonwealth (if they supply funding). A State Cane Toad Management Advisory Committee, with broad stakeholder membership, is also being formed and will develop a State Cane Toad Strategy.

## **Funding**

The \$600,000 is required to be expended by 20 June 2005 and new appropriations have not been allocated for 2005/06, 06/07 and 07/08, but CALM has sought funds in its budget submission.

## **Cane Toad Fence/Barrier**

There have been public calls, reported in the media, for a barrier fence to be constructed in the Northern Territory to stop the spread of cane toads into Western Australia. These calls are likely to continue because of the immediate appeal of a single action perceived by some as resolving the toad threat. A single barrier fence to stop the cane toad is unlikely to succeed because there is no guarantee that the massive resources required to construct, maintain and patrol the fence would stop the spread of the toad, which can spread as tadpoles in waterways, as well as through the marine environment (the scientific name *Bufo marinus*, relates to its ability to survive in salt water).

## **Progress**

- The State Management Committee is operating and staff of the Department of Agriculture and CALM have been redirected to cane toad roles. The Kimberley Cane Toad Working Group has been formed, comprising representatives of local government authorities, CALM, Agriculture, industry groups (eco-tourism, conservation groups) and local indigenous groups. It is focusing on local issues and has no management role.
- Standard trapping, handling and survey protocols have been implemented and several joint surveys have been undertaken with NT Parks and Wildlife staff to investigate reports of cane toad populations near the WA border.
- Discussions have been held with the Commonwealth and NT Governments in relation to joint operations and with the Commonwealth in terms of matching current State funding.
- Some initial biodiversity surveys have been supported and a biodiversity coordinator appointed to finalise plans for targeted surveys of the Kimberley region to identify key assets at risk and strategies for protecting these, including possible use of island refuges.
- Border checking of vehicles has intensified and new cane toad awareness pamphlets produced, along with other information material.
- An internet information site and cane toad hotline are to be launched in the near future.
- Strategies for fencing around key possible invasion sites such as caravan parks, camping areas, transport depots and service stations are being developed along with control and eradication plans for these areas (involving trials in the NT) and on the use of fencing to protect key biodiversity assets.
- While the Commonwealth is yet to officially endorse the State proposals and match the current \$600,000 State funding, it is hoped that they will do so by mid April 2005. Discussions have already been held on what key aspects of the current program the Commonwealth may be most likely to fund.

Staff from the Department of Agriculture and CALM will be present at the Kununurra Community Cane Toad Educational Forum that is scheduled for 19 and 20 March 2005 and being organised by a local adventure tourism company (Kimberley Specialists).

8 March 2005

## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **CURRENT STATUS OF PROPOSALS FOR NEW MARINE PARKS**

#### **Background**

The Government has committed to work with the community to finalize marine conservation reserve proposals at Geographe Bay / Leeuwin-Naturaliste / Hardy Inlet; Dampier Archipelago / Cape Preston; and Walpole / Nornalup. The Government has also committed to work with the community, through the regional marine planning process, to create a new marine conservation reserve at the Recherche Archipelago.

#### **1. Proposed Geographe Bay / Leeuwin-Naturaliste / Hardy Inlet Marine Park**

##### *Current Status*

The Marine Parks and Reserves Authority (MPRA) have provided their formal advice to the Minister and have recommended that the Minister seek the necessary Ministerial approvals to release the indicative management plan for formal public comment.

##### *Next Steps*

The next step involves the Minister seeking the approval of the Minister for State Development and Minister for Fisheries for the release for formal public comment. The major impediment to obtaining this approval is the matter of potential compensation for commercial fishing. It is CALM's view that the impact on commercial fishers and the potential compensation of the creation of the proposal should be assessed during the public submission period. However there is likely to be pressure to address these issues before the plan is released for public comment. It is likely therefore that there will be a need for further discussions with the fisheries portfolio to resolve a way forward on this proposal.

#### **2. Proposed Dampier Archipelago/Cape Preston Marine Conservation Reserves**

##### *Current Status*

The indicative management plan was released for public comment in January 2005. The public submission period closes on 10 May 2005.

##### *Next Steps*

CALM is currently responding to community discussion of issues associated with the indicative management plan that has been released for public comment. There are a number of issues that have caused concern, particularly in relation to changes that were made to the draft indicative management plan prepared by the advisory committee and supported by the MPRA. In particular the proposed reduction in sanctuary zones and the decision to exclude

commercial fishing from parts of the proposed marine park have caused concern particularly as these changes were made without consultation other than with some local recreational fishing interests.

When the public submission period closes CALM will review the submissions received. It is likely that there will be some significant issues that will need to be resolved prior to MPRA consideration and Ministerial concurrence. Further consideration will need to be given to mechanisms to address these issues, such as the re-formation of the advisory committee allow further consultation with stakeholders before further advice is provided.

### **3. Proposed Walpole/Nornalup Inlets Marine Park**

#### ***Current Status***

The Walpole/Nornalup inlets Focus Group has endorsed a draft indicative management plan for the proposed marine park. The group were not, however, supportive of progressing this plan to the MPRA until the two commercial tourism operators who conduct operations on the inlets have had the opportunity to put their concerns to the Minister for the Environment. These operators sought a meeting late last year to raise concerns about aspects of CALM's licensing system (e.g. the maximum term of licences). A meeting was not convenient for the Minister at that time and the offer was made that the Minister's senior adviser meet with them. The operators declined this offer and maintained the view that needed to meet personally with the Minister.

#### ***Next Steps***

The draft management plan is well supported by the local community and stakeholders. The hurdle at this point in time is to demonstrate to the community that the concerns of local commercial tour operators have been 'reasonably' considered and have been treated fairly. Whilst there are some local people who think that the operators are being unreasonable in their demands, there is still significant local support for them and hence this needs to be handled carefully to ensure that the community support that has been developed is maintained.

Once we can adequately demonstrate that the concerns have been reasonably considered, CALM believes that the Focus Group will support the proposal progressing to the MPRA. The MPRA will then provide their advice to the Minister and, following approval of the Minister for State Development and Minister for Fisheries, the indicative management plan can be released for formal public comment.

### **4. Proposed Recherche Archipelago marine conservation reserve**

#### ***Current Status***

The MPRA have previously ranked the Recherche Archipelago area as a high priority for consideration as a marine conservation reserve and they have provided advice to the Minister to this effect. Government has noted this advice but, until the recent environment policy announcement, the Recherche has not been a stated Government priority area for consideration. CALM has therefore not engaged formally in planning and consultation activities to establish a marine conservation reserve in the area. Notwithstanding this, in recognition of the likely future consideration of this area, CALM has been successful in

securing external funds to prepare key ecological information layers. CALM has also provided information and support to local community groups who are keen to see the proposal progressed, as well as financial and in-kind support to research undertaken by tertiary institutions in the Archipelago. These activities have been primarily to support the gathering of the required ecological and social information to support a future planning process, and to raising community awareness of the process to establish reserves and the options for reservation. The aim of this assistance was to set the foundation for any future planning process.

### *Next Steps*

The first steps in considering a proposed marine conservation reserve in the Recherche would be the completion of resource assessment of the area to provide the social and ecological information to support a planning process. Whilst considerable information has been collated by community groups, tertiary institutions and CALM, these data would need to be assessed, and any information gaps addressed. A community consultation process would need to be developed. The links and relationship to any future regional marine planning process on the south coast would be an important consideration.

It should be noted that there is a high degree of local community support and ownership of the development of a marine conservation reserve in the area. In developing plans for the consideration of this area it will be important to acknowledge the considerable community efforts to date, and to closely involve these groups so as to maintain this strong community involvement and support.

8 March 2005



## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### BIOPROSPECTING

#### Background

Bioprospecting, or biodiscovery, is the term used to describe the process of searching for and developing naturally occurring organic chemical compounds that have medicinal, horticultural or veterinary purposes. The chemicals may be used in the form they occur naturally, they may be reformed to some extent, parts of them may be combined with other chemicals or concepts or possibilities may be identified that are then applied to other chemicals.

Bioprospecting may be carried out as a more-or-less random basis, in which samples of chemicals are collected and tested for varying types of bioactivity. A more focussed approach involves identifying an organism having a particular characteristic and determining the chemical which underpins that characteristic.

Bioprospecting holds a potential for significant financial returns to parties having the rights to chemical compounds which offer beneficial results and which reach market acceptance. However, considerable research over long periods is normally required for this type of outcome to occur, and the statistical chance of it occurring is relatively low. Western Australia offers a good opportunity for bioprospecting interests because of the State's very rich biodiversity and high degrees of endemism, and the range of climatic and other conditions experienced by plants and animals here.

#### Main issues

- CALM Legislation and Policy

One of CALM's statutory functions is to "promote and encourage the use (including use or development on a commercial basis) of flora for therapeutic and scientific purposes" (sections 33(1)(ca) and 34A of the CALM Act). Flora is defined as "any plant (including wildflower, palm, shrub, tree, fern, creeper or vine) ... and includes any part of flora and all seeds and spores thereof" (section 6(1) of the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*). 'Protected' flora, under the Wildlife Conservation Act, includes all Western Australian Spermatophyta (flowering plants, conifers and cycads), Pteridophyta (ferns and fern allies), Bryophyta (mosses and liverworts) and Thallophyta (algae, fungi and lichens). Flora therefore does not include many biota that could offer interesting or useful chemicals, such as bacteria and invertebrates.

CALM has developed an internal policy on bioprospecting and a protocol on decisions relating to collecting biota on lands managed by CALM. CALM is developing a model bioprospecting licence (contract) to simplify and reduce the costs to the Department and commercial and research parties of forming bioprospecting licences. Bioprospecting licences provide a degree of certainty to the licensee that they will have legal access to

flora for bioprospecting purposes to help protect their future patent or other claims on chemicals they discover. Bioprospecting licences protect the rights of the State through CALM to a share of financial and other benefits generated by research and chemical discoveries from WA flora. CALM currently takes the position that wherever a commercial outcome might result from research having the form of bioprospecting using biota for which CALM has management responsibility, the party seeking access to the biota should enter a bioprospecting agreement with the Department.

- Government Policy

There is no Western Australian whole-of-government policy on bioprospecting. As a result, while the approaches taken for terrestrial biota (managed by CALM) and marine biota (managed by Fisheries) are informally coordinated, they are not necessarily congruent. Similarly, there is no formally coordinated approach to the development of a Western Australian response to national or Commonwealth policy on bioprospecting and biodiscovery or to Commonwealth negotiations on international agreements concerned with this matter. This lack of coordination can complicate private sector bioprospecting activity in Western Australia and reduce the State's capacity to identify and secure its preferred outcomes in national and international fora.

- Licence agreements

Under a 15-year licence agreement with BioProspect Pty Ltd, signed in November 1999, CALM supplies flora extracts and samples to the company for bioprospecting purposes. BioProspect's business strategy is to operate as a discoverer of bioactive chemicals which it licences to other companies for further research and development. CALM receives full payment for the costs it incurs to collect flora samples and a 10% royalty on all licence fees received by BioProspect.

Proteomics International Pty Ltd has discussed gaining a bioprospecting licence, but the Department has been unable to finalise licence conditions with the company.

- Indigenous knowledge of WA flora

Aboriginal communities have traditionally used WA flora for a variety of purposes, but this use is not the basis of any of the samples collected by CALM. While some information has been published on Aboriginal use of plants, much of it refers to common plant names that cannot be identified with any certainty. Knowledge of indigenous use of flora is being lost with the death of elders holding this knowledge.

## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY IMPACTS**

#### **Background**

Global climate change or the greenhouse effect are terms used to describe changes to atmospheric circulation and climate patterns resulting from changes to the composition of the atmosphere caused by human activities, especially fossil fuel use, land clearing and agriculture and some industrial processes. The most important greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and CFCs (chlorinated fluorocarbons), but particulates such as sulphates can also affect the atmosphere. International efforts to address global climate change include the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Kyoto Protocol. The European Union introduced a mandatory carbon dioxide limit and trading regime from 1 January 2005 and other nations are developing emission caps and trading systems. NSW has introduced a carbon dioxide emission limit and offset program for electricity suppliers and Western Australia has participated with other States and Territories in a national investigation of a possible emission trading system.

Under the UNFCCC nations agreed to stabilise Greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere below levels that would “prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system”. The Kyoto Protocol defines commitments by developed nations to limit or reduce their emissions through various means within the nation such as increasing energy efficiency, reducing energy use or reducing land clearing. Nations may also reduce their net emissions of greenhouse gases by increasing the sequestration of carbon dioxide in carbon sinks or gaining emission credits from other nations which have reduced their own emissions below a “business as usual” baseline. Australia has signed the Kyoto Protocol but has not ratified it.

#### **Potential Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity**

Climate models suggest that global climate change would result in less rainfall in the south west of Western Australia and higher temperatures throughout the state, especially in the Pilbara. The south west of Western Australia has already experienced a significant rainfall reduction.

Predicting the possible impacts of climate change is challenging for several reasons:

- climate changes of the type and scope predicted could affect ecological systems and organisms that are already stressed by salinity, clearing, dieback and other factors;
- our knowledge about the climate conditions preferred by Western Australian biota is limited; and

- microclimatic conditions, resulting from small topographical features, vegetation remnants, locally prevailing winds or other factors, are very important to the survival of individuals.

However, detrimental impacts on some communities and their component plants and animals can be anticipated:

- communities already at the apparent limits of their climate envelopes, such as montane communities on or near the south coast (e.g. upper levels of the Stirling Range) or on the south coast (e.g. communities at Two Peoples Bay or the Fitzgerald River National Park).
- communities or taxa having special, rare or endangered habitat requirements, such as coastal wetlands.
- taxa which are unable to disperse readily, which have long periods prior to fecundity, which have low fecundity or which are already endangered.

#### **CALM's Current Roles in Climate Change and Biodiversity**

- CALM provided executive support for the WA Greenhouse Task Force, which prepared the WA Greenhouse Strategy 2004 – 2008. This executive role is now performed by the Greenhouse Unit in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
- CALM is a contributing member of the Indian Ocean Climate Initiative, and uses information from this research for fire management, nature conservation and other purposes. Future climate scenarios are being developed in conjunction with other agencies for planning purposes.
- CALM represents biodiversity interests on the WA Greenhouse Interdepartmental Committee, the WA State of the Environment Fundamental Pressures Working Group and national committees.
- CALM is initiating a study to identify the characteristics of taxa and communities likely to be most vulnerable to climate change.

Other activities which should be progressed, but for which there is currently no or only limited funding include:

- undertake bioclimatic modeling to better determine species and community vulnerability to climate change;
- determine the risks that Greenhouse derived climate changes pose for the capacity of Western Australia's conservation reserve system to meet its role in conserving the State's biodiversity; and
- establish sites to enable monitoring of changes to species representation and community dynamics and behaviour in response to climate changes experienced in Western Australia.

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### REVEGETATION AND CARBON SINKS

#### Carbon Sinks

*Carbon sink* is a term used for carbon dioxide which has been removed from the atmosphere through plant growth and stored in some organic form, such as trees, other plants, soil microorganisms or dead plant materials. Certain carbon sinks are specifically recognised in the Kyoto Protocol as being a way for nations to reduce their net emissions of Greenhouse gases and so meet their emission limitation commitments. Allowable carbon sinks include net changes in Greenhouse gases resulting from direct human-induced land-use change and forestry activities, limited to afforestation, reforestation and deforestation since 1990 and other additional agriculture, rangeland and forestry activities. Detailed rules have been developed internationally in relation to carbon sinks. The *Carbon Rights Act 2003* provides for the rights to carbon sequestration to be registered against the relevant land.

#### The Importance of Carbon Sinks for Western Australia

Where a market exists for carbon sequestration credits, the potential value of carbon sequestered in vegetation established in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol (or the specific market) might increase the financial viability of tree plantations or other land management changes such as rangeland rehabilitation. For some tree crops, such as blue gum plantations in many high rainfall areas in the south-west or pines in many parts to the agricultural region, carbon values will increase the value of an already viable crop. In many areas, however, carbon values could enable tree crops, revegetation, soil management or rangeland rehabilitation to become viable over a much broader area than would otherwise be the case.

Establishing plantations and other vegetation can help accomplish a range of desirable social, economic and environmental objectives:

- lower water tables,
- reduce soil salinity,
- reduce erosion,
- protect biodiversity,
- increase Western Australia's forest resources, and
- generate and diversify farm and regional income.

Tree crops will act as allowable carbon sinks while growing and could provide longer term or ongoing carbon sinks where the products remain in use (e.g. furniture or construction timber) or are substitutes for current fossil fuels (e.g. bioenergy).

There are several significant issues associated with carbon sinks:

- accounting the amount of carbon sequestered can be difficult and expensive;
- there may be no markets or value for sequestered carbon;
- it may be difficult to demonstrate that carbon sequestration will be permanent or even guarantee it for a specified period in light of climate change, fire and other risks; and
- ownership of the rights to carbon sequestration must be clarified, and where rights are sold separately from the land which the sequestration occurs use of the land may be restricted for a considerable period.

### **CALM's Current Roles in Promoting Carbon Sinks and Tree Crops**

CALM has promoted carbon sequestration as a greenhouse gas emission offset:

- CALM is undertaking research into the carbon-fixing potential of specific target species to provide a basis for determining Greenhouse carbon credits from tree crops planted on agricultural land for biodiversity purposes, such as oil mallees and other indigenous species; and
- CALM advocates nationally and internationally to promote the recognition of carbon sequestration credits generated by land management activities.

Other activities which should be progressed, but for which there is currently no or only limited funding include:

- determining carbon accretion in rangeland areas which have been taken out of livestock production, destocked and managed for conservation purposes;
- determining the Greenhouse gas emission implications of fire management options for Western Australia's natural areas;
- determining the risks that Greenhouse derived climate changes pose for the capacity of Western Australia's conservation reserve system to play its part in conserving the State's biodiversity.

The Forest Products Commission is responsible for tree plantations, in which carbon sequestration is an increasingly important financial element.

8 March 2005

## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **FOREST MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

#### **Background**

The Conservation Commission is responsible for the preparation, through the agency of CALM, of management plans for land vested in it.

CALM is responsible for the management of land vested in the Conservation Commission of Western Australia. Management is required to be in accordance with a management plan where such a plan exists.

The Forest Products Commission (FPC) is responsible for the harvesting and marketing of forest products from the State's native forests and timber reserves and from Government owned or managed plantations. The FPC is also responsible for promotion of the development of the forest production requirements of the State.

#### **Forest Management Plan 2004 – 2013**

A 10-year management plan for the south-west native forests came into effect on 1 January 2004. The Forest Management Plan (FMP) covers all land, including State forest, vested in the Conservation Commission in CALM's Swan, South West and Warren Regions.

The FMP provides for the protection of forests, the provision of timber and other forest values and the improvement of forest management practices. In particular, it formalizes the end to logging in old-growth forests, the identification of a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of national parks and other conservation reserves throughout the south-west, and the adoption of management practices that are guided by the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management described in section 19(2) of the CALM Act.

The FMP improves protection for biodiversity through the establishment of additional areas where timber harvesting is excluded, including new informal reserve categories and a network of fauna habitat zones.

Key strategies from the FMP being implemented as a priority by CALM include:

- the protection of soil from heavy machinery;
- the implementation of fauna habitat zones;
- development of guidelines for the management of informal reserves, soil and water, fauna habitat zones and monitoring;
- development and implementation of an environmental management system; and
- development of a monitoring and compliance enforcement system.

On the commencement of the FMP, CALM and the FPC instituted a process of examining the ongoing implementation of the actions in the FMP with respect to each organisation's responsibilities and the working arrangements between them. The process will be ongoing for the next few years.

8 March 2005



## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### TIMBER HARVESTING IN NATIVE FORESTS

The Forest Management Plan 2004-2013 (FMP) provides for the harvesting of timber from State forest and timber reserves. The annual sustained yield of sawlog timber provided in the FMP is 131,000 m<sup>3</sup> of jarrah first and second grade sawlogs, and 54,000 m<sup>3</sup> of karri first and second grade sawlogs. As a result of harvesting first and second grade sawlogs, a further 534,000 m<sup>3</sup> of jarrah, 117,000 m<sup>3</sup> of karri and 196,000 m<sup>3</sup> of marri lower grade sawlogs and residue logs is available on an annual basis.

The Forest Products Commission (FPC) is responsible for planning and carrying out timber harvesting and selling the timber to sawmills. However, because CALM has the expertise and inventory data and growth models, the FPC contracts CALM's Sustainable Forest Management Division to undertake much of the inventory and planning for timber production on its behalf. This includes:

- inventory and modeling the growth of timber products;
- preparing the annual indicative timber harvest plan;
- undertaking the mapping of the occurrence of the plant pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (dieback) to enable timber harvesting to be undertaken in a manner that minimises the risk of spreading the pathogen; and
- preparing the maps for each area (coupe) to be harvested that show all formal and informal reserves and other areas where timber harvesting is excluded.

The FPC pays CALM for carryout out this work.

The FPC submits the annual indicative timber harvest plan to CALM for approval prior to releasing it for public consultation. CALM checks the plan to ensure it complies with the FMP and the plan is noted by the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Forestry before release to the public.

Following the public consultation, the FPC undertakes the detailed planning for each coupe and submits its proposals to CALM for approval to enter the land and harvest the timber. This includes evaluating threats to biodiversity.

All timber harvesting operations carried out by the FPC and its contractors in the State's native forests and timber reserves are required to comply with requirements set out in the FMP and its associated guidelines. The maintenance of biodiversity and other values in areas available for timber harvesting is managed through the application of appropriate forest management prescriptions under the FMP or its associated guidelines.

CALM monitors the performance of the FPC in undertaking its harvesting operations.

Following removal of all commercial timber products, the FPC is responsible for any further silvicultural treatment, such as culling unwanted trees, regeneration operations and the rehabilitation of any damaged soil.

The FPC provides the records of silvicultural treatments used to CALM. CALM maintains a database of silvicultural records and uses the information when calculating future growth and yield.

8 March 2005

## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND CARRYING OUT OF THE FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN**

#### **Background**

CALM is responsible for monitoring the performance of the Forest Products Commission (FPC), other organisations and its own staff in carrying out the actions in the Forest Management Plan 2004-2013 (FMP). CALM does this through a program of monitoring and auditing and measuring key performance indicators.

The Conservation Commission also has a statutory responsibility to audit the performance of CALM and the FPC in carrying out and complying with the FMP.

#### **Auditing**

The FMP requires that CALM, the FPC and the Conservation Commission cooperate in the development of an annual audit plan.

CALM and the FPC are required to conduct the audits they are responsible for in the plan and report the results to the Conservation Commission.

The results of audits in 2002 and 2003 by CALM on FPC timber harvesting practices were the subject of dispute between the two agencies that took considerable time to resolve. The FPC did not dispute the results of the 2004 audit.

#### **Monitoring of compliance**

CALM staff in regions and districts regularly check the performance of the FPC and its contractors to ensure they are complying with the FMP, guidelines and approvals.

Where non-compliance is identified, depending on its seriousness, CALM may deal with the non-compliance formally or informally. Formal mechanisms for dealing with non-compliance involve the issuing of a Work Improvement Notice (WIN) where restoration can be made or Management Letter (ML) where restoration is not possible. WINs or MLs may also be issued where non-compliance is identified in an audit.

#### **Key Performance Indicators**

The FMP represents a major development from previous forest management plans through the inclusion of key performance indicators (KPI). KPIs are designed to monitor the achievement of the FMP objectives and implementation of some of the actions.

The FMP contains 33 KPIs. CALM is responsible for developing protocols for each KPI, however, the responsibility for reporting may be CALM, the FPC or the Conservation Commission depending on the topic of the KPI.

The results of KPIs will be made available to the public.

### **Environmental Management System**

CALM is currently developing a formal Environmental Management System (EMS) to provide a standard, systematic framework for management and monitoring.

The FPC has an existing EMS for its harvesting and regeneration operations in native forest and plantations. CALM's EMS will cover its operations and responsibilities in respect of forest management. It is envisaged that CALM's EMS will complement the FPC's existing EMS.

8 March 2005

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### SAWLOG SUPPLY IN WET SOIL CONDITIONS IN WINTER AND SPRING 2005

#### Background

The use of heavy machinery on wet soils is known to cause damage and spread dieback disease (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*). Traditionally there has been a period in the wettest part of the year when timber harvesting is excluded from the forest to minimise these risks.

The Forest Management Plan, which commenced on 1 January 2004, introduced new requirements for timber harvesting under moist soil conditions in order to improve protection for soils. This significantly increased the period when access to the forest was prohibited or restricted.

The new requirements designate four soil damage risk periods (high, medium to high, medium and low) that were set according to the Soil Dryness Index (SDI). The SDI is an indirect estimate of soil moisture that is zero when soils are fully saturated and 2,000 when the top 200 mm of soil profile is completely dry.

For a number of reasons, the FPC was ill prepared for the new requirements and did not have a sufficient stockpile of logs established to provide a continuous supply of sawlogs to sawmills for the period during 2004 when access to the forest was restricted or prohibited.

Supply to sawmills was just able to be maintained over the winter/spring 2004 period by CALM providing special approvals, allowed for under the FMP, to the FPC to access soils which were at least risk of damage under moist conditions.

The FMP requires a review of the first year of operations of the new soil protection requirements. Quantitative and qualitative data on the impact of timber harvesting on wet soils were collected in 2004 and a number of reports produced. The contents of the reports are to be discussed at a workshop of CALM, FPC, Conservation Commission and timber industry representatives on 9 March 2005. Following the workshop CALM, in consultation with the Conservation Commission, will set the requirements for access to the forest for the wet soil period in 2005.

#### Current status

The FPC is working to develop a stockpile of sawlogs for the wet soil period of 2005 of three months supply for jarrah and four months supply for karri. These levels are the maximum they claim is possible given the structure of the industry and the current contracts for harvesting.

The review of the effectiveness of the requirements for access to the forest for timber harvesting during the 2004 wet soil period will set the requirements for 2005. The revised requirements are likely to provide access to the forest where evidence from 2004 indicates that particular soil types and harvesting techniques will ensure soil disturbance will not exceed the thresholds provided in the plan. The new requirements are expected to be set by the end of March 2005.

The combination of the stockpiles and more flexible access conditions should ensure sawlog supply is not put at risk in 2005.

8 March 2005

## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **ACCESS TO FIREWOOD BY THE PUBLIC**

#### **Background**

The public may access dry firewood by purchasing it from a retailer or collecting it themselves in the forest.

The FPC is responsible for the supply of firewood to industrial users and domestic retailers. CALM provides public firewood areas in State forest for individuals who wish to collect their own firewood.

The supply of dry firewood has been declining over time due to gradual exhaustion of the available fallen (dead) timber resource and the loss of areas in which it may be collected as a result of the transfer of substantial areas of State forest into the conservation reserve system (national parks, etc) where firewood collection is not permitted.

Access to the forest by the public to collect firewood is controlled by CALM to manage adverse environmental impacts resulting from such things as collecting in conservation reserves and the spread of dieback disease (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*).

In winter 2004 there were six public firewood collection areas in CALM's Swan Region, ten in the South West Region and thirteen in the Warren Region. Public firewood areas in the Swan Region are designated under regulation 98 of the *Forest Management Regulations 1993*, which means a permit must be purchased. Public firewood collection areas in the South West and Warren Regions have not been designated under regulation 98, therefore no licence or authorisation is needed and no charge is applied. The higher level of control in the Swan Region reflects the high level of demand from metropolitan Perth.

The Forest Management Plan, which commenced on 1 January 2004, increased the restriction on timber harvesting in west soil conditions to reduce soil damage. This restricted the supply of dry firewood to retailers over the winter/spring period resulting in retailers not having enough wood for sale.

#### **Current status**

Public firewood collection areas will be established by CALM in the three forest regions in 2005 on the same basis as 2004. This will provide ample access for those members of the public who wish to collect their own firewood.

The public who rely on purchasing firewood from retailers will be better off in 2005 than 2004 because:

- the conditions under which access to the forest for timber harvesting in wet soil conditions is permitted are in the process of review and will likely be more flexible than was the case in winter 2004; and
- the FPC has had more time to plan for the supply of firewood to domestic suppliers to better cover the period of restricted access to the forest.

8 March 2005



## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

#### **Joint Management**

Joint management of parks and reserves arises from the Government's 2001 election commitment.

In late 2004 Cabinet agreed to establish a Demonstration Park Council Program at approximately 12 parks and reserves around the State, with the final selection of parks to be the subject of agreement between the Office of Native Title and CALM.

CALM proposed a substantial increase in funding for joint management in its 2005-06 budget submission. Funding will be determined through the budget process.

Demonstration Park Councils (DPC's) will be established and operate in accordance with the provisions of the CALM Act and a proposed 'Deed of Agreement' between the Minister for the Environment and the registered native title claimants of the area.

DPC's have to be economically and administratively viable and sustainable, and have an independent performance review within three years of commencement. The Minister for the Environment will appoint all Park Councils.

#### **Education and Training**

CALM's Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme (MATES) program was introduced in 2002 to achieve 10-15% of CALM staff being Aboriginal by 2012. The program has been widely acclaimed and secured the 2003 Western Australian Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Sector and the national 2004 Diversity@work award in the category of Employment and Inclusion of Indigenous Australians.

The MATES program is a pillar of joint management and DPC's. MATES will require 40-45% of the projected total joint management expenditure over the next ten years.

#### **Legislation**

The CALM Act and the *Land Administration Act 1997* (LAA) are the two Acts that require amendments to enable a more flexible approach to resolve native title issues related to the conservation estate.

A policy discussion paper entitled 'Indigenous Ownership and Joint Management of Conservation Lands in Western Australia' (CALM Act) generated significant interest by

various stakeholder groups, e.g. the Chamber of Minerals and Energy, the Pastoralists and Graziers Association and the National Native Title Tribunal.

The DPC program is an intermediate initiative to address some of the concerns and assist the introduction and successful passage of future amendments to the CALM Act and the LAA.

### **ATSIC Bilateral Discussions**

CALM is contributing to the State Working Group (Land Tenure and Use) for bilateral agreements with the Commonwealth post ATSIC. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet is coordinating this process, which is likely to result in a significant agreement between the Commonwealth and State in relation to the delivery of services and outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA.

8 March 2005

## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER**

### **PROPOSED NINGALOO/CAPE RANGE WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION**

#### **Background**

The Government had first term policy commitments to progress World Heritage nominations of North West Cape and Ningaloo Marine Park. In March 2003 Cabinet agreed that Ningaloo – Cape Range be the State's next priority for consideration for World Heritage listing, and that the adjacent marine and terrestrial environments be considered together.

In December 2003, Cabinet resolved to establish a Consultative Committee to met with key stakeholders including Shires and industry groups.

The Consultative Committee engaged in extensive consultation with stakeholders and attended a public meeting in Exmouth. Despite the best efforts of the committee to explain otherwise, the potential implications of the proposed World Heritage listing for existing pastoral, commercial and recreational fishing, mining and petroleum exploration and production, and other activities remained a significant concern for stakeholders.

Commonwealth officials had indicated that there was an opportunity to submit a nomination by 1 February 2005 which would then be considered by the World Heritage Committee in mid-2006. To meet this target, the Western Australian Government was to complete its part of the process, carrying out the necessary consultations and preparing the draft nomination, by 1 December 2004.

On 1 December 2004 the Minister for the Environment announced that the State Government had extended the consultation process for parts of the Ningaloo Reef-North West Cape to be nominated for World Heritage listing, essentially deferring the submission of the draft nomination to the Commonwealth for a year.

#### **Current status**

The Minister's December 2004 announcement indicated continuing Government commitment to the nomination but foreshadowed a range of issues that still required resolution with stakeholders, not the least of which was the boundary of the area to be considered for nomination.

The Minister's announcement also indicated that the Government will undertake further consultation with stakeholders and the community early in 2005 and that further information would be made available to assist in that consultation.

8 March 2005

# **National Ministerial Councils**

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### NATIONAL MINISTERIAL COUNCILS

#### Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council

The Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC) was established in 2001 by agreement of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments. The NRMMC consists of the Australian/State/Territory and New Zealand government ministers responsible for primary industries, natural resources, environment and water policy. The Council results from the amalgamation and reorganisation of the previous Ministerial councils, namely the Agricultural and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ), the Australian New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC) and the Ministerial Council on Forestry, Fisheries and Aquaculture (MCFFA).

NRMMC is the peak intergovernmental forum for consultation, coordination and integration (where appropriate) of action by governments on natural resource management issues.

The agreed objective of the NRMMC is *"to promote the conservation and sustainable use of Australia's natural resources"*. Its terms of reference are:

- to develop policies and strategies for national approaches to the conservation, sustainable use and management of Australia's land, water, vegetation and biological resources;
- to oversee the development of national natural resource management programs including the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP), the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) and other agreed programs;
- to monitor and evaluate outcomes of these policies, strategies and programs;
- to promote community understanding of and engagement with the key challenges associated with the sustainable use and management of Australia's land and water, vegetation and biological resources; and
- to liaise with other Ministerial Councils and other bodies on matters relevant to the activities of Council.

The NRMMC is supported by the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee which comprises Departmental Heads of relevant Australian/State/Territory and New Zealand government agencies, including the WA Departments of CALM, Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries, and the Forest Products Commission.

### *Meetings*

Meetings of the NRMCMC are held twice a year. The next scheduled meeting is to be held in Darwin on 15 April 2005.

### **Environment Protection and Heritage Council**

The Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) was formed following changes to natural resource and environment Ministerial Councils agreed by the Council of Australia Governments (COAG) in June 2001.

EPHC was created by amalgamating the National Environment Protection Council, the environment protection components of the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC), and Heritage Ministers' Meetings.

The Council consists of the Australian, State/Territory and New Zealand Ministers with responsibilities for environment and heritage matters.

The terms of reference are:

- to promote ecologically sustainable development in all aspects of its work;
- to develop policies and strategies for national approaches to the protection of the environment and heritage of Australia and New Zealand;
- to develop standards, guidelines and protocols to address priority environment and heritage protection issues, including the development of National Environment Protection Measures;
- to devise innovative policy tools for improvement and heritage outcomes;
- to promote community understanding and participation in addressing key challenges associated with environment and heritage protection;
- to support participation of Indigenous peoples in environment and heritage protection;
- to develop agreed national approaches to emerging global and international environment and heritage issues; and
- to liaise with Ministerial Councils and other bodies on matters relevant to the activities of the Council to ensure environment and heritage protection priorities are addressed across all government sectors.

The EPHC is supported by the EPHC Standing Committee comprising Departmental heads of environment and heritage agencies. The Department of Environment has responsibility for most EPHC business, however CALM and the Heritage Council deal with natural and built heritage respectively.

*Meetings*

Meetings of the EPHC are held twice a year, normally in conjunction with NRMCMC meetings. The next scheduled meeting is to be held in Darwin on 14 April 2005.

8 March 2005

# **Upcoming Media and Community Opportunities**



## BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPER

### UPCOMING MEDIA AND COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

Interest in conservation and other aspects of CALM's activities ranks highly among the community and the media. The Department's mission – to conserve the nature of WA in partnership with the community – is far-reaching and its operations impact upon, and are impacted upon by, virtually everyone in the State.

CALM has implemented several broad strategies that provide a framework for the communication, eco-education and public relations activities of the Department. These are:

- create awareness, appreciation and motivation for conservation;
- advocate for conservation;
- create partnerships and alliances for conservation; and
- encourage appropriate public participation and involvement.

CALM's communication, eco-education and public relations activities provide many opportunities for the Minister to be involved, throughout the State.

Among upcoming media and community opportunities for the Minister are the following (suggested timing is indicative):

- March – Purchase of five freehold blocks within D'Entrecasteaux National Park, as promised in the Government's Environment Policy (subject to provision of \$1.99 million from Treasury);
- March – Inspection of recovery actions following the Perth Hills fire (January 2005); and announcement of CALM's autumn 2005 prescribed burning program as well as the Government's initiative to employ an additional 20 workers by the end of March (and a further 20 by August) for fire management, forest thinning (to improve runoff for water supply) and conservation works;
- April-May – Launch of SEARCH project findings – a major CALM-Natural Heritage Trust study of native plants with potential for commercial development and integration into sustainable farming systems and landcare activities, particularly salinity control measures;
- April-May – Opening of new facilities in national parks including Stirling Range (Bluff Knoll complex), and several parks in the south-west forests;
- April-May – Launch of the book *A biodiversity survey of the Western Australian agricultural zone*, which presents the results of a major biological survey program and is a significant contribution to salinity and natural resource management at the State and national scales;

- March/June – Release of draft and final management plans for conservation reserves including conservation parks, national parks, nature reserves and marine parks.

8 March 2005

## **Section 5**

# **KEY TRENDS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

## KEY TRENDS FOR CALM

The following set of graphs provides useful illustration of some trends in respect of CALM:

**1. Area Managed**

Shows the total area of lands and waters managed by CALM, including lands purchased for conservation but not yet reserved. Does not include unallocated Crown land and unmanaged reserves where CALM carries out limited on-ground management roles.

**2. FTE Numbers**

Shows average FTE numbers in each year. The series break is due to the formation of the Forest Products Commission on 16 November 2000, which transfer of staff to the Commission.

**3. Visitation**

Shows both numbers of visitors and licenced tour operators in CALM-managed parks and reserves.

**4. Recreation and Tourism Revenue**

Shows revenue from entry and user fees for national parks and other reserves.

**5. Capital Expenditure on Parks and Visitor Services**

Shows capital expenditure on parks and visitor facilities and roads.

**6. Prescribed Burn and Wildfire Areas**

Shows the area of prescribed burning as well as the area burnt by wildfires in CALM's three south-west forest regions from 1960 to 2004.

**7. Wildfire Suppression Expenditure**

Excludes normal time salary costs.

**8. Conservation Land Purchases**

Includes State and Commonwealth funds expended by CALM to purchase land for national parks, nature reserves and conservation parks.

**9. External Funds Revenue**

This graph shows trends in external revenue.

The light blue column shows revenue from the Forest Products Commission. The figures provided are not directly comparable between financial years because (1) the payments for 2000/2001 were for a part year only and included some transactions relating to the transfer of assets and liabilities when the FPC was formed, and (2) there were changes in financial arrangements for 2002/2003 with the Consolidated Fund providing \$10.6 million for expenditure met the previous year by the FPC.

The red column shows external revenue from recoupable works other than the FPC. The decline in recoupable works since 2000 is due in part to CALM no longer doing some sharefarm agency recoupable work that was part of the work of the forest business units before the formation of the FPC.

The dark blue column shows revenue from specific purpose grants. The decline in recent years is largely attributable to a decline in Commonwealth funding for conservation projects, as the Commonwealth's preferred delivery model is to provide funding primarily through regional natural resource management groups under the Natural Heritage Trust.

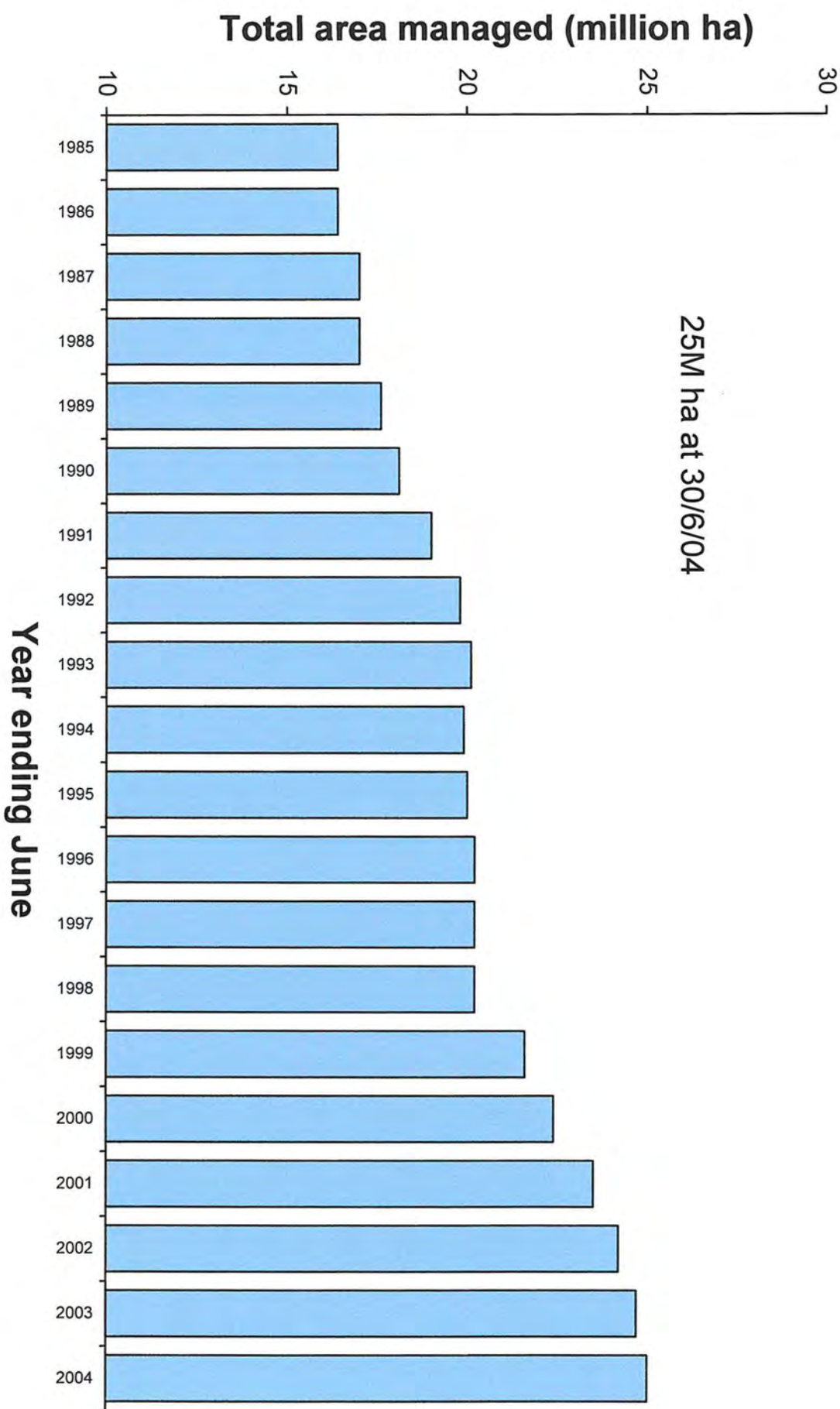
The green column shows revenue to the Nature Conservation and National Parks Trust Account, consisting primarily of flora licence fees and royalties.

8 March 2005



# AREA MANAGED

25M ha at 30/6/04



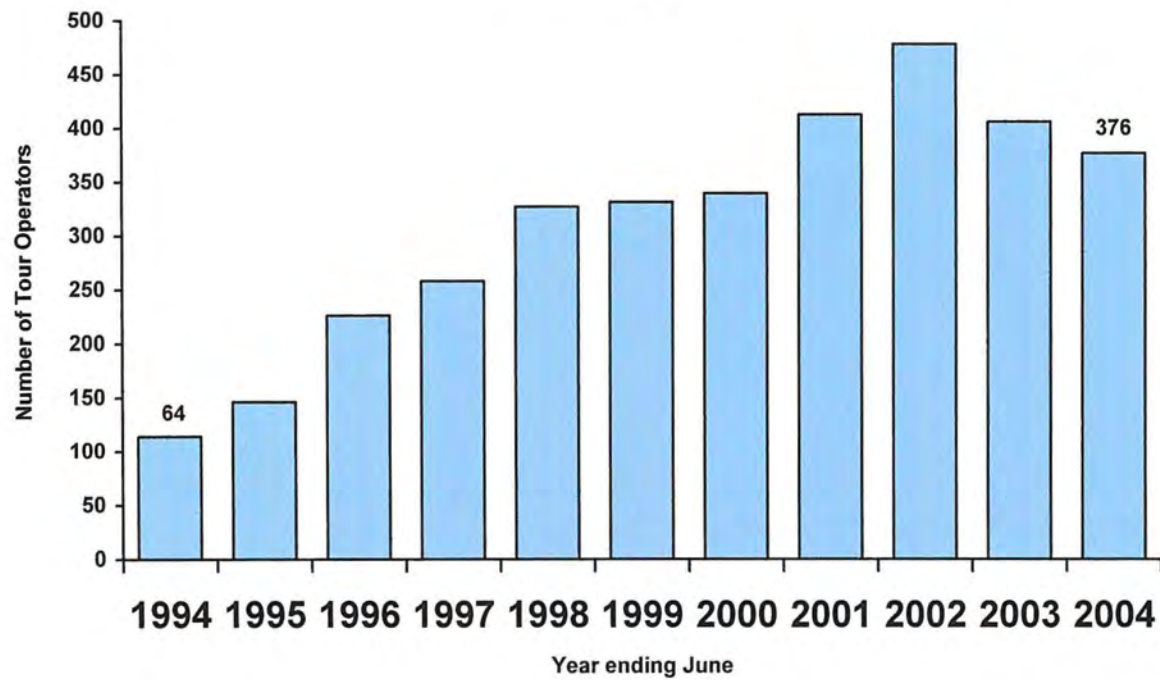
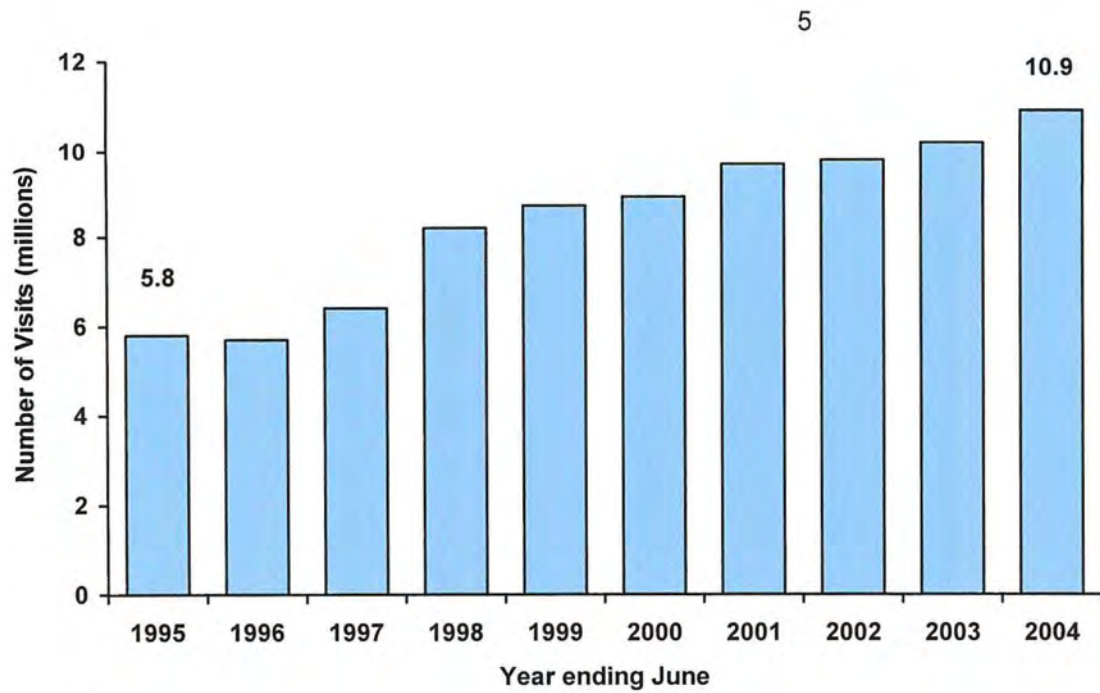




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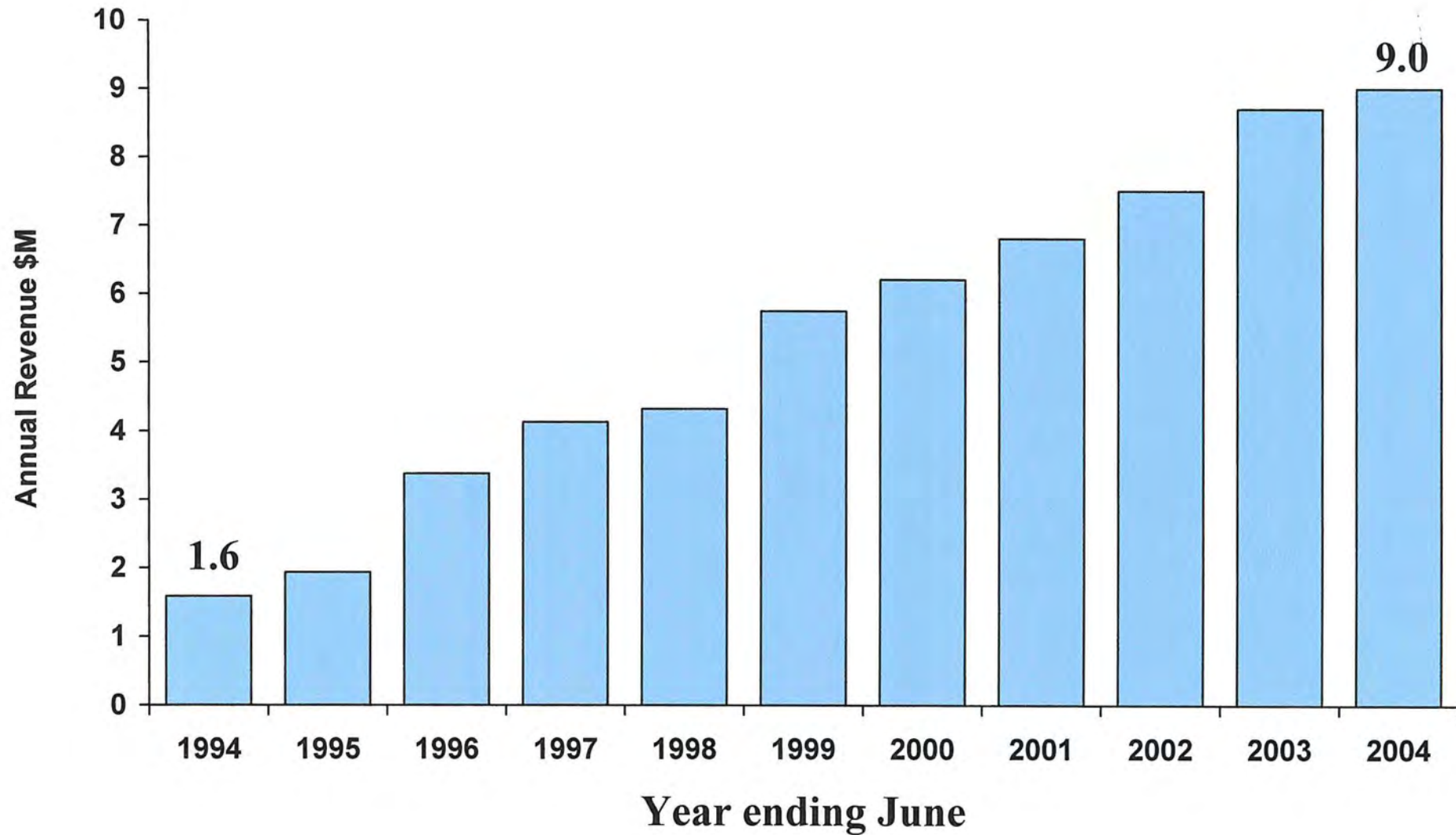
FTE NUMBERS  
1991 TO 2004







# Recreation and Tourism Revenue





GRAPH

Prescribed Burn and Wildfire Areas for 1960-2004

GRAPH

Wildfire Suppression Expenditure



GRAPH

**Conservation Land Purchases**

**Graph**

**External Funds Revenue**

## **Section 6**

# **GOVERNMENT POLICY COMMITMENTS**

# Government Policy Commitments

This briefing paper quotes relevant extracts from the Government's election policies, and for each commitment involving or affecting CALM, initial comments are provided. More detailed follow-up will be required in many cases.

## ***Labor's plan for our Environment***

### **Environmental education**

The Gallop Government has launched the Western Australian Environmental Education Strategy, which will support environmental education initiatives across the curriculum from kindergarten through to Year 12. All new initiatives will be directly linked to the State Sustainability Strategy.

Comments:

Carriage of implementation of this commitment largely rests with the Department of Environment. CALM is represented by its Senior EcoEducation Officer on the six-person Environmental Education Advisory Committee appointed late in 2004 to report to the Minister for the Environment and to provide strategic direction and support for environmental education in Western Australia, develop relationships with stakeholders, audit existing initiatives, and identify funding opportunities for future programs. Many CALM programs and activities contribute to the Environmental Education Strategy.

### **Forest conservation**

#### ***South West Forests***

The Gallop Government will:

- Continue to implement the Forest Management Plan and Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management;

Comments:

The Forest Management Plan 2004-2013 (FMP) which incorporates the Government's commitment to ecologically sustainable forest management (ESFM) came into effect on 1 January 2004. The plan is being implemented by CALM with the involvement of the Conservation Commission of Western Australia (CCWA) and the Forest Products Commission (FPC). There are no significant immediate issues that need to be dealt with in respect of the FMP implementation.

A significant issue arose during winter 2004 with respect to wet weather logging. The FMP introduced more stringent access requirements to the forest when soils are wet and the FPC was unable to stockpile sufficient logs to avoid the need to operate in the forest during wet soil conditions. Sawlog supply was maintained through *ad hoc* special approvals provided by CALM in conformity with the FMP. Conditions applying to wet weather logging are currently being reviewed in light of last year's experience and further advice in this regard will be provided before the end of March 2005.

CALM has carriage of implementation of this policy commitment. Subject to the CCWA endorsing wet soil conditions for logging that are reasonable, and the FPC ensuring that log stockpiles are built up to the maximum possible levels prior to winter, and ensuring that it complies with ESFM standards, there is no significant risk to the FMP being implemented.

- Commit \$1.99m to the purchase of 5 freehold forest blocks of high conservation value wholly contained within the D'Entrecasteaux National Park for inclusion in the National Park;

Comments:

Subject to confirmation from the Department of Treasury and Finance that funding will now be made available to meet the Government's policy commitment, purchase of this land can occur immediately as CALM has reached agreement on purchase with the vendor of the land, Cable Sands.

Subject to confirmation of the funding it is recommended that there be an early announcement of this purchase. CALM will provide advice on a media announcement as soon as confirmation of funding is received from Treasury (CALM wrote to Treasury requesting confirmation on 1 March 2005).

- Implement a program of community forest inspections based on the successful pilot program.

Comments:

CALM has carriage with the CCWA and the FPC for the implementation of this commitment. The past approach has been for inspections to be planned by CALM in consultation with peak and local conservation groups and to then undertake an inspection with the community representatives, and representatives of the CCWA and FPC. The purpose of the inspections is to determine whether forest harvesting standards are being met and to discuss issues of community concern.

It is recommended that CALM facilitate three community forest inspections per year (one in each of CALM's south-west forest regions).

**Tuarts**

The Gallop Government will:

- Implement the Tuart Conservation Strategy with continued community consultation and cooperation through the Tuart Response Group;
- Finalise the new tuart conservation reserves.

Comments:

CALM, through the Tuart Response Group, will maintain responsibility for finalization of the Tuart Conservation and Management Strategy. A draft strategy was released for public comment in December 2004. CALM will also assume responsibility for the finalization of the new tuart conservation reserves announced in December 2004 and the works programs associated with the community based tuart conservation initiatives and the implementation of the Cable Sands offset funding projects.

**Wandoo**

The Gallop Government will:

- Continue to provide resources and policy support to progress the work of the Wandoo Recovery Group;
- Develop and consult on a Wandoo Recovery Plan.

Comments:

CALM will assume responsibility for this policy commitment, following on from initiatives already in place. The Department currently coordinates the Wandoo Recovery Group and has carriage of preparation of a Wandoo Recovery Plan modelled on the Tuart Conservation and Management Strategy. CALM has recently initiated research work that will facilitate development of the recovery plan.

## Marine Conservation

### Marine Parks

The Gallop Government will:

- Work with the community to finalise marine parks at Geographe Bay / Leeuwin- Naturaliste / Hardy Inlet; Dampier Archipelago; Walpole / Nornalup;

Comments:

CALM will have carriage of the implementation of the policy commitment to create specific new marine parks. The most significant issues in respect of marine park/reserve planning and creation relate to the need to balance conservation, general recreation and commercial interests. The most significant risk to the implementation of this policy will arise from the fishing sector.

It is strongly recommended that you set a timeframe for the implementation of these proposals, all of which are in advanced states of planning, to be completed not later than the end of 2006.

CALM will provide further detailed advice to you on the current status and implementation of the proposals. Options for "driving" the implementation of this policy commitment through a special working group or through the Cabinet Standing Committee on Environmental Policy need to be considered.

- Work with the community through the regional marine planning process to create a new marine park at the Recherche Archipelago.

Comments:

See Regional Marine Planning comments on the next page.

There should be a clear target of completing creation of this marine park during the Government's term.

### Marine Science

The Gallop Government will invest \$21 million to establish the Western Australian Marine Science Institution, a collaborative venture bringing together the expertise of Western Australian universities, State Government departments and national research bodies such as the CSIRO.

The Institution will undertake focused research programs that contribute to outcomes including the following:

- A better scientific understanding of the marine environment;
- World-leading, science-based marine conservation, including for iconic marine tourism areas like the Ningaloo Reef;
- Ecologically sustainable fisheries management;
- Sustainable development of existing and new marine industries.

Comments:

The Office of Science and Innovation (currently in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet) has carriage of coordinating the implementation of this commitment. CALM is a partner organisation in the proposed Institute.

### ***Regional Marine Planning***

The Gallop Government will:

- In consultation with a Statewide Marine Reference Group to be comprised of peak bodies with interests in the marine environment, develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to the conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment through regional marine plans;

Comments:

CALM will provide a separate briefing note to you on this matter. However, it is strongly recommended that the proposed State regional marine planning processes, which will take some time to implement, not be allowed to delay the commitment to finalise specific marine parks (mentioned above) that are already significantly advanced.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet's Environmental Policy Unit has had a role in stakeholder discussions relevant to the development of the regional marine planning process. The Ministers for the Environment and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries have written to stakeholders outlining marine policy issues that will need to be considered and resolved in order to support the introduction of regional marine planning.

CALM is of the view that there is a need for absolute clarity and agreement within the Government as to what outcomes the Government seeks to achieve from regional marine planning processes. This cross Government agreement is needed prior to further involvement or communication with stakeholders.

The roles and interests of Ministers and their agencies vis-à-vis the Environmental Policy Unit will need to be carefully addressed in the design and conduct of regional marine planning.

- Finalise the Biodiversity Conservation Act and any consequential amendments to the Conservation and Land Management Act and Fish Resources Management Act as a priority. The Biodiversity Conservation Act will include a specific section on Regional Marine Planning;

Comments:

A separate briefing note on the status of the proposed Biodiversity Conservation Act is included within the Issues section of this briefing package.

It is noted that the most significant issue to be overcome relates to the resolution of potential overlap between the Fish Resources Management Act and the proposed Biodiversity Conservation Act. Past and present disagreement between the Environment and Fisheries portfolios has resulted largely from legal overlaps between the State's existing conservation and fisheries legislation.

CALM will be likely to recommend that all issues upon which an agreement has not been reached between the Environment and Fisheries portfolios be resolved by a small working group chaired by yourself involving both portfolios. It is imperative that the proposed Biodiversity Conservation Act be progressed as a matter of urgency with a view to it being finalised in 2006. This is achievable if policy issues within Government are finalised, as comprehensive drafting instructions have been prepared.

- As part of the bioregional marine planning initiative establish an independent, high-level scientific panel to develop a scientific statement on the role of marine sanctuaries in biodiversity conservation, fisheries management and natural resources management as the basis for a new marine sanctuaries policy for Western Australia. This statement will provide a sound basis for the development of a sanctuaries policy and for the implementation of the bioregional marine planning framework. It will also provide the basis for establishing bioregional targets for marine sanctuaries that are based on independent scientific advice.

Comments:

It is anticipated that the Office of Science and Innovation (currently in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet) will coordinate the implementation of this commitment. CALM is well positioned to provide advice regarding panel membership, and substantial input to the development of both a scientific statement and a policy. The Marine Parks and Reserves Authority also has a role to play, given its statutory functions.

- In the context of the new bioregional approach to marine planning, review the institutional, legislative and policy framework for marine park planning in consultation with stakeholders.

Comments:

Consistent with the advice above, there is an initial need for cross government agreement as to what outcomes are sought from the regional marine planning process. With this agreement the policy framework required to deliver the required outcomes can be pursued.

CALM's view is that the Government should adopt a clear marine parks policy, replacing the 'New Horizons' policy of the Court Government. Even though most aspects of 'New Horizons' remain pertinent, it has been discredited by various players and a "fresh start" is warranted.

### **Reversing salinity and protecting rivers, river catchments and wetlands**

The Gallop Government will:

- Create the Swan River Park and introduce tough new legislation to manage the Swan and Canning rivers.

Comments:

Carriage of implementation of this commitment rests with the Swan River Trust. CALM will provide a separate briefing note setting out the Department's interests in this matter. In particular the Department is seeking to ensure that the proposed legislation allows CALM, which has management responsibility over sections of the Swan River and flora and fauna conservation responsibilities generally, to continue to operate subject to a consistent management policy framework. The legislation as currently proposed does not provide for this and may similarly affect the interests of local governments and other agencies.

### **Protecting biological diversity**

The Gallop Government will:

- Create a new Biodiversity Commission that will combine the role of the Conservation Commission and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority;

Comments:

This recommendation arises in part from a March 2003 report of the review of the statutory authorities established by the CALM Act. The review considered the Conservation Commission of Western Australia, the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority and the Marine Parks and Reserves Scientific Advisory Committee. Implementation of the policy commitment will require an amendment to the CALM Act.

CALM will provide a separate briefing note on this matter. It will be strongly recommended that the new Biodiversity Commission be created as a statutory advisory body without management functions. Such a model is consistent with the Government's Machinery of Government Review outcome which determined that the day to day business of Government be implemented through Departments of State. CALM will also be suggesting that the name of the proposed Commission be carefully



considered to ensure that it is reflective of the broader purposes of national parks and other reserves in particular with respect to public recreation.

- Continue to consult on, develop and implement a Biodiversity Conservation Act and a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy as a priority;

Comments:

See above advice on this matter.

- Continue to provide incentives to assist landowners with the conservation of biodiversity on private land;

Comments:

In response to a request from the Cabinet Standing Committee on Environmental Policy, CALM is preparing a detailed briefing paper on current incentive programs and opportunities for Government to build on these over the next few years. The paper covers the current programs delivered by CALM that are a core part of ensuring the State's biodiversity conservation responsibilities are met. CALM is also working with community and conservation groups, including Regional natural resource management groups, other State agencies and the Australian Government on proposals for possible funding through the NAP/NHT Strategic Reserve, which currently totals \$42 million for investment across natural resource management over the next three years.

- Further investigate removal of land tax for other categories of conservation management;

Comments:

CALM led negotiations with the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) ahead of the State Government's decision last year to implement a land tax exemption for conservation on lands protected under perpetual conservation covenants. This requirement made the State land tax exemption consistent with the Commonwealth income tax and capital gains tax exemptions, and also provided a level of surety for the Office of State Revenue in respect of potential loss of revenue. It is proposed to consider extending exemptions to local government conservation zoning, and Bush Forever conservation management zones. This will again involve negotiations with DTF. It is suggested that CALM should play a lead role in a small group to progress this commitment.

- Continue to develop and implement joint management for conservation with indigenous people;

Comments:

A briefing note detailing CALM's involvement with indigenous affairs including joint management is provided in the Issues section of this briefing package. The most significant immediate issue to be addressed is the need for a budget for CALM's indigenous management program as funding for this program concludes in the current financial year. The matter has been listed for consideration as part of CALM's 2005/06 budget submission.

- Develop in consultation with the community, local government and industry a biodiversity plan for the Swan Coastal Plain. This will integrate biodiversity conservation with local and regional planning. Funding of \$1.9 million has been allocated over 4 years to develop the plan;

Comments:

This refers to a proposal that the Department of Environment has received new funding for. No new funding has been provided to CALM. Further interagency consultation is required in relation to expected commitments from CALM and the Department for Planning and Infrastructure.

- Implement the new Wilderness Policy which adopts the Australian Heritage Commission's National Wilderness Inventory.

Comments:

This policy commitment relates to CALM's wilderness policy which was released in October 2004. The initial area to be identified under the policy is the Walpole Wilderness Area. A management plan for the Walpole Wilderness Area is being prepared in consultation with community interests. It is expected that the plan will be completed as a draft for your consideration within several months.

### ***Cane Toads***

The Gallop Government has announced a \$600,000 initiative to help protect Western Australia from the impacts of Cane Toads. The new Cane Toad strategy will focus on the following areas:

- Enhanced border security;
- Enhanced surveillance and targeted control of populations;
- Public awareness and education;
- Identification of high value biodiversity assets at risk;
- Specific conservation strategies for at risk biodiversity;
- Research, including bio-control and impacts on biodiversity;
- Monitoring impacts on biodiversity and movement of toad populations;
- Establishment of a State Cane Toad Management Advisory Committee to oversee the strategy;
- Establishment of a Kimberley Cane Toad Working Group to provide coordination of local response.

Comments:

CALM prepared a new funding initiative for consideration by Government late in 2004. Government viewed the submission favourably but the funds were allocated to the Department of Agriculture (DoA). CALM and DoA have since reworked the initial CALM proposal to include cane toad management initiatives involving the DoA. At this point in time the \$600,000 allocation does not extend beyond the current financial year.

CALM is very strongly of the view that the threats posed by cane toads are threats primarily to biodiversity and not agricultural production. It is essential for biodiversity conservation that the cane toad threat is addressed in an ongoing manner and this is reflected in CALM's 2005/06 budget submission in relation to animal and plant pest control.

### ***Environmental Weeds***

Recent new funding of \$400,000 has been provided for the control of serious weeds on crown land in the south-west region. This will be used in cooperation with local government and community groups to target weeds such as Arum Lily, Blackberry, Paterson's Curse and Watsonia.

Comments:

The new funding was provided through the Department of Agriculture and is being expended in 2004/05 under a cooperative program involving CALM. Much of the weed control is to be undertaken on lands managed by CALM. CALM has jointly prepared a budget submission with the Department of Agriculture on adequate resourcing for weed and pest animal control, which is widely recognised as a

major issue in rural areas for Government land managers, including unallocated Crown lands for which CALM has been given weed, pest animal and fire management responsibility, as a result of the Machinery of Government process. This is reflected in CALM's 2005/06 budget submission.

### ***Labor's plan for fisheries***

The Gallop Government will provide \$21 million to establish a \$100 million world class Marine Science Institution to further enhance our understanding and management of the marine environment and fish resources. This significant investment in marine and fisheries science will provide scientists and managers with data and research outcomes to ensure science-based decisions in respect of fisheries management, marine parks and bioregional marine planning.

Comments:

See above advice on this matter.

The Gallop Government will continue to work with the commercial fishing sector to ensure that the sector remains strong and viable into the future. The Gallop Government will:

- Assist industry in meeting the Commonwealth Government's *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* requirements for export approval to facilitate reporting against sustainability criteria in the annual State of the Fisheries report.

Comments:

This commitment will be implemented through the Department of Fisheries.

- Undertake research and implement management practices that minimise interactions by the fishing industry with protected species.

Comments:

This commitment will be implemented primarily through the Department of Fisheries (DoF). However, there is a need for DoF to engage more with CALM on incidental captures and entanglements of species such as whales, dolphins, turtles and sea-lions, rather than continuing to keep these issues "in-house".

- Continue to support the provisions of the *Fishing and Related Industries Compensation (Marine Reserves) Act* and provide amendments to that Act with respect to compensation that may be payable in relation to marine management areas established under the *CALM Act* and Fish Habitat Protection Areas under the *Fish Resources Management Act*.

Comments:

CALM does not consider that proposals to create marine reserves will have a significant impact on commercial fishing to the extent that compensation will be payable. This is a matter to be worked through when implications of individual reserve proposals (i.e. reserve category and zoning) are being considered.

Development of proposed amendments to the compensation legislation rests with the Department of Fisheries, however close consultation with CALM will be needed.

- Retain the Minister for Fisheries' powers of concurrence with respect to the making and zoning of marine reserves.

Comments:

The Minister for Fisheries powers of concurrence are set out in the CALM Act. While the conservation movement has asked for the power of concurrence to be removed, citing it as the primary cause of the difficulty in creating marine parks/reserves, there is no proposal to change those powers.

- Ensure that the management and control of the Abrolhos Islands remains with the Minister for Fisheries.

Comments:

The conservation movement, the Conservation Commission, the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority and CALM consider that the Abrolhos warrants consideration for the creation of a national park on the non-fishing islands as well as a marine park/reserve, consistent with previous planning documents. However, the political sensitivity of this matter to the fishing industry is understood and as such there is no proposal currently to consider conservation reserves. Management of the islands by the Department of Fisheries is unusual in terms of that Department's core business and the need to advance other values including conservation and wildlife protection, and tourism management, however, there is no proposal to seek the re-vesting of the islands or to change management arrangements at this time.

- Review processes for the establishment of marine reserves and bioregional marine planning in consultation with all fisheries stakeholders and the wider community.

Comments:

CALM is concerned that this process not be used to delay the specific marine park proposals that are set out in the Government's policy. It is recommended that implementation of this proposal be considered after the Department has had an opportunity to provide you with a detailed briefing on the marine parks/reserves program.

The Gallop Government will continue to work with recreational fishers and the wider community to ensure that recreational fishing experiences can continue to be enjoyed by present and future generations of Western Australians. To ensure that recreational fishing can continue to be enjoyed by Western Australians, the Gallop Government will:

- Reaffirm its commitment not to support bans on fishing at Rottnest Island.

Comments:

In 2004 the Rottnest Island Task Force recommended that the creation of a marine park in the waters surrounding Rottnest Island would be a desirable conservation, recreation and tourism outcome. The Government decided not to adopt this recommendation at that time, because of an expected backlash from recreational fishers following an earlier move by the Rottnest Island Authority to establish significant no fishing areas without any proper consultation. CALM suggests that this matter be revisited, with care, as the policy commitment is not inconsistent with marine park status.

- Work with the Rottnest Island Authority to improve signage for recreational fishers, particularly with respect to species identification, and size and bag limits.

## Comments:

This matter will be implemented by the Department of Fisheries in consultation with the Rottnest Island Authority. CALM will need to be involved given the intended national park status of the non-settlement part of the island.

- Retain the Minister for Fisheries' powers of concurrence in respect the making and zoning of marine reserves.

## Comments:

As noted above there are no Government proposals to change the powers of concurrence.

- Continue to provide better efficiencies in government delivery of marine compliance and education services.

## Comments:

CALM and the Department of Fisheries recognise that within the context of the different on-water roles of both agencies, there are some opportunities for improvement in marine compliance and education delivery. These matters are under consideration between the Departments and will be the subject of further, detailed advice.

- Review processes around the establishment of marine reserves and bioregional marine planning in consultation with all fisheries stakeholders and the wider community.

## Comments:

CALM recommends that this review not be allowed to delay the implementation of the specific marine park proposals that are contained within the Government's environment policy. As mentioned above CALM recommends that those proposals be progressed immediately, to be completed by the end of 2006.

The Gallop Government will conserve and enhance fish habitats and aquatic biodiversity in partnership with the Western Australian community.

The Gallop Government recognises that healthy marine and aquatic ecosystems are a prerequisite for healthy fish stocks. To preserve these habitats, the Gallop Government will:

- Shift marine park planning to a bioregional concept with better integration of fisheries management, marine park management and marine and coastal planning in a consistent overall government planning and natural resource management framework for the State's marine resources.

## Comments:

See above advice on this matter.

### ***Labor's plan to boost tourism***

In the next four years we will protect our natural environment and promote nature based tourism in Western Australia by:

- Improving tourism infrastructure in our national parks and conservation reserves.
- Encouraging sustainable tourism in our old growth forests.

Comments:

CALM has an extensive program of capital works development on national parks and other lands managed by the Department. The policy also commits (in the financial table attached to it) to a capital spend over the next four years of \$56.6 million which is included in CALM's capital program.

- Protecting the Ningaloo reef.

Comments:

The protection of the Ningaloo reef will be effected through the implementation of the Ningaloo Marine Park Management Plan which applies across the recently expanded Park and the Muiron Islands Marine Management Area. A budget has been allocated for this purpose.

### ***Labor's plan for new jobs in the new economy***

The Gallop Government will contribute \$21 million to establish an \$100 million world class Marine Science Institute to promote the sustainable use of our marine environment. The Institution will undertake focused research programs that contribute to:

- A better scientific understanding of the marine environment
- World-leading, science-based marine conservation, including for iconic marine tourism areas like the Ningaloo Reef
- An improved understanding of the role of the ocean in the climate system, leading to better forecasting of Western Australia's climate variability and change
- Ecologically sustainable fisheries management
- Marine aquaculture
- Sustainable development of existing regional marine industries, and the development of new industries based on the State's marine resources
- Improved ocean science for offshore engineering, including offshore oil and gas facilities
- Growing exports of knowledge-based marine technology and services.

Comments:

See above advice on this matter.

### ***Labor's plan to secure our water future***

#### Water Source Protection Plans

Protecting the quality of our water resources is essential to securing Western Australia's water future. In consultation with the community, we will continue to develop water source protection plans for the State's present and future water supplies. New drinking water source protection plans will be completed in the next four years for the following sources:

Augusta  
 Bickley Brook  
 Bunbury  
 Camballin  
 Churchman's Brook  
 Condingup  
 Conjorunup  
 Gibson Harris  
 Kalbarri

Laverton  
 Marbellup  
 Marble Bar  
 Margaret River  
 Mt Magnet  
 Nabawa  
 North Dandalup  
 Northcliffe  
 Seaview  
 Serpentine  
 South Dandalup  
 Sovereign Hill  
 Walpole  
 Wungong

Comments:

CALM will provide separate advice with respect to Water Source Protection Plans and the relationship of those plans with other management plans that exist over land within water catchments that is managed by CALM. It is essential that such plans recognise the other purposes of such lands to ensure that conservation and land management activities, and tourism and public recreation, are not excluded.

### ***Labor's plan for better beaches***

The Gallop Government will provide \$1 million in grants to community groups and local government to rehabilitate beaches by restoring and protecting beach and dune ecosystems in the metropolitan area, and major regional coastal centres.

Comments:

It is expected that this commitment would be implemented through the Department for Planning and Infrastructure.

### ***Building a better future for Mandurah***

The Gallop Government will provide \$1.4 million establish a Peel-Harvey Environmental Research Centre. The new Centre will be a focus for research on algal bloom and the implementation of projects under the State Algal Management Strategy. The Centre will also operate as a shopfront for residents seeking advice on planning and environmental matters in the Peel-Harvey Region. Information on the Peel Region Plan, the Peel Deviation Road and the New MetroRail project will be available to the community at this Centre.

Comments:

It is expected that this commitment would be implemented through the Department of Environment. CALM should be consulted in its development, given its conservation responsibilities in the area.

A Gallop Government will create a Peel Regional Park. Following parliamentary approval of the Peel Regional Scheme the Gallop Government is proceeding to create a 20,280 ha Peel Regional Park. The Government has already spent \$3 million in purchasing 252 ha of private land to add to the park.

Comments:

The structural arrangement for the creation of regional parks is for the Department for Planning and Infrastructure (DPI) to undertake the acquisition, establishment planning and community consultation with respect to lands to be incorporated into the parks, with relevant lands then transferred to CALM for management.

This arrangement was endorsed by Cabinet in 1997 and has proved very successful in the establishment, management planning and day to day management of the eleven regional parks in the metropolitan region.

The process to create the Peel Regional Park (PRP) has been slow to date, with a number of community consultative issues yet to be resolved. As part of the establishment planning process DPI, for some time, has been preparing a 'working paper' for release for public consultation early this year. The PRP concept is well accepted in the local community and CALM will be seeking prompt finalization of planning processes so that active management and promotion of the PRP can be commenced.

It has come to CALM's attention that some alternative management arrangements for the proposed Peel Regional Park have been suggested to DPI and that these are being considered. CALM is of the view that the metropolitan region model has been proven to be successful in the delivery of desired outcomes and does not warrant modification for Peel.

***Building a better future for the Kimberley***

The Gallop Government will progress development of the Ord River Irrigation Scheme Stage II. Ord Stage II will generate substantial investment in irrigated farming and create jobs and economic growth in the East Kimberley. The Gallop Government will capitalise upon the sound planning already undertaken and negotiate the commitments of all stakeholders to bring this project to reality, ensuring that Indigenous people share equitably in the benefits from Ord Stage II.

Comments:

CALM is participating in the Ord Global Negotiations to clear native title and enable Ord Stage 2 to progress. The Government has signed a memorandum of understanding, which agrees amongst other things, to establish five new conservation parks for joint management by CALM and the Miriwung-Gajerrong people. Funding of \$1 million per annum for management for four years, \$1 million for the preparation of an overarching management plan and \$1 million for park infrastructure has been approved by Cabinet. A final Native Title agreement is being developed and will be submitted through the Office of Native Title to Cabinet for approval.

There is also an expectation from all parties that Government fund CALM an additional \$350,000 per annum to implement joint management of existing reserves (Mirima National Park and the Point Springs, Parry Lagoons and Ord River Nature Reserves) within the Miriwung-Gajerrong claim area. This component was separated from the negotiations and the costings factored into the four-year Ord Enhancement Scheme package approved by Cabinet to progress the Ord Global Native Title Negotiations.

***Building a better future for Murray***

The Gallop Government will provide \$400,000 to develop a biodiversity plan for the Peel region. The development of this biodiversity plan will conserve the Peel regions natural heritage values, recognise community needs for access to open space and provide certainty for land use development.



## Comments:

See above advice on this matter, under the Environment - Protecting Biological Diversity section.

The Gallop Government will provide \$1.25 million towards a Forest Heritage Centre in Dwellingup. The Forest Heritage Centre in Dwellingup is a multi-purpose facility combining a forest interpretation /education centre, a fine wood products gallery and the Australian School of Fine Wood. The funding committed by the Government will allow the Centre to continue its development, upgrade its facilities, provide appropriate student workspaces and establish an incubator for graduating students.

## Comments:

It is expected that this policy commitment will be implemented by the Forest Products Commission and the Department of Industry and Resources. It should be noted that the Forest Heritage Centre is situated on State forest under peppercorn lease from CALM.

### ***Building a better future for Central Kimberley-Pilbara***

Provide \$1million to build a North West Sea Turtle Interpretive Centre at Port Hedland. Labor will provide up to \$1million towards the establishment of North West Sea Turtle Interpretive Centre to be located in a suitable location near Port Hedland's Cemetery Beach.

The Interpretative Centre will be designed to be complementary to other projects earmarked for the Port Hedland foreshore as a part of the Gallop Government's Port Hedland Enhancement Scheme. The Interpretative Centre will both raise public appreciation of the Sea Turtle and become a valuable tourist attraction. The Interpretive Centre will build upon Labor's strong record in protecting the North West Sea Turtle, which has included:

- Creating the Jurien Bay Marine Park;
- Creating the Montebello Islands Marine Park;
- Creating the Barrow Island Marine Park;
- Creating and expanded Sanctuary Zones (SZs) in the Rowley Shoals Marine Park from zero percent to 22 per cent; and Expanding the areas of SZ in the Ningaloo Marine Park from 10 per cent to 34 per cent.

The Rowley Shoals are internationally significant shelf edge coral atolls (250km NW from Broome) and the establishment of lagoon and deep water SZs will be important for sea turtles. The whole of the Imperieuse Reef lagoon is a SZ and about two thirds of the Clerke reef lagoon is SZ.

The creation of the Montebello Islands Marine Park and the Barrow Island Marine Park, including significant areas of sanctuary zones, are also particularly important for turtle conservation. The recently released Notice Of Intent (essentially a public submission period for the draft proposal) for the Dampier Archipelago M.P also includes a seasonal boating restriction for the northern area of Rosemary Island to help protect sea turtles.

To build upon Labor's record of protecting the sea turtles of the North West, a re-elected Gallop Government will act to build public appreciation of the sea turtle through the Port Hedland Turtle Interpretative Program.

## Comments:

CALM was not consulted during the development of this commitment but given the Department's statutory responsibility for the management and conservation of sea turtles in Western Australia, it would be appropriate for the Department to be closely involved with the policy's implementation. It should be noted that CALM has worked closely with the local government, the local community and conservation groups in the development of the very successful Jurabi Turtle Interpretive Centre and associated community monitoring program on the Ningaloo coast, near Exmouth.

### ***Big Swamp***

The Gallop Government recognises that the Big Swamp is an asset that must be managed in a way that protects its natural values. Funding for the management of the wetland area and the adjacent wildlife park has been piecemeal and constantly under threat. The community has indicated the importance of this nature resource at a number of public meetings to discuss its future. The Gallop Government will provide \$100,000 for an upgrade of the Wildlife Park and an additional \$125,000 funding for an Interpretative and Education Centre to be constructed at the Big Swamp. This Centre will provide the local community and visitors with information on the ecology of the wetland.

#### Comments:

It is CALM's understanding that funds were to have been provided to the South West Development Commission who were to take the lead role in this project. Further clarification of CALM's expected role is being sought.

### ***Our Tuarts***

For the past decade the community has been fighting to save remnant Tuart forest at the southern edge of Bunbury's urban area. That fight has been won and we now have in place a green belt stretching from the ocean to the Preston River that includes high quality Tuart woodland. To celebrate this achievement and allow the community to continue to appreciate this precious asset we will provide \$150,000 to construct a Tuart Interpretative Walk Trail in this green belt.

#### Comments:

The South West Development Commission (SWDC) has been allocated the funds to undertake this project. CALM is represented on the SWDC's Steering Committee to develop a consultant's brief for design and specifications. CALM has also offered assistance with structure plans.

### ***Building a better future for North West Coastal***

The Gallop Government will complete the Shark Bay World Heritage Interpretive Centre at Denham. An essential part of managing a World Heritage area is to improve the public's understanding of the values that attract visitors from all over the world and the issues that have to be addressed if the area is to be conserved for future generations. In addition to the important educational function of the centre, is the contribution it can make to the tourism industry as an attraction in its own right and an agency for promotion and marketing.

#### Comments:

The tender for construction of the Shark Bay World Heritage Interpretive Centre in Denham has been awarded and site works have commenced. The building, including interpretive displays, is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year with a "soft" opening in December followed by an official opening in February-March 2006. As lead agency for management of the Shark Bay World Heritage Property, CALM is involved in the project through membership of the steering committee chaired by the Shire of Shark Bay.

The Gallop Government will spend \$1.5 million on upgrading boat ramps at Exmouth. At Tantabiddi the planned works will involve upgrading the ramp and improving road, car, bus and boat trailer access and parking, pedestrian access, sheltered seating areas, a new toilet block, shaded fish cleaning tables and a new observation platform. As well as improving the boat ramp, car park facilities and boat trailer access, Bundegi will also be provided with pedestrian access and shaded areas. All new facilities will cater for people with disabilities.

Comments:

CALM proposed this initiative to the Government associated with the announcement of the final zoning arrangements for the extended Ningaloo Marine Park. It is intended that the Shire of Exmouth and CALM will work with representatives of local angling and boating groups and the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, the Department of Fisheries and the Australian Department of Defence to determine the most appropriate facilities to be constructed, and other works to be undertaken at each of the sites, as well as the allocation of funds between the two sites.

*Department of Conservation and Land Management*

*8 March 2005*

