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# **Proposed Walpole-Nornalup Inlets Marine Conservation Reserve**

**Focus Group Workshop 2**

**Walpole Recreation Centre**

**Walpole**

**20 February 2004**

**Summary of Focus Group outputs**

## **Members of the proposed Walpole-Nornalup inlets marine conservation reserve Focus Group are:**

Robin Adair\*, David Anning\* (Timber Communities Australia), Vaughan Bellanger\*, Murray Brown, Wayne Brown, Rick Chaucer\*, Frank Cooper\* (Walpole Yacht Club), Wayne Crombie-Wilson\*, Wayne Dumbrell, Geoffrey Findlay (Department for Planning and Infrastructure), Derren Foster (Walpole Tourist Bureau), Nigel Fry, Terry Fuller\* (Australian Anglers Association), Mark Halse\*, Merv Hull, Steve Hunter\*, Eddie Liddelow\*, Ernest Love, Paul Minchin\*, Ross Muir\*, Barry Nockolds, Kate O'Brien\*, Ian Payton\*, Louise Pickett\*, Mark Pagano\* (Recfishwest), Mick Sawyer, Phil Shaw\* (Department of Fisheries), John Stockley, David Tapley\*, Gary Tiszavolgyi, Malcolm Vigus, Mark Virgo\* (District Senior Ranger, CALM), Percy Vlietman, Brett Ward\* (Department of Environment), David Warnock\* (Walpole Nornalup and Districts Community Development Group), Wayne Webb.

Representative for the Great Southern Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee (to be advised).

(\* denotes those present at Workshop 2)

Alan Kendrick (Planning Officer for the proposed Walpole-Nornalup inlets marine conservation reserve, CALM).

Also in attendance were:

- Angus Horwood (Marine Parks and Reserves Authority).
- Peter Keppel (Warren Region Manager, CALM).
- Peter Bidwell (Frankland District Manager, CALM).
- Andrew Hill (Senior Marine Planning Officer, CALM).
- Tammie Reid (Facilitator, CALM).

## **Agenda for Workshop 2**

1. Building on our last workshop:
  - a. A draft vision statement.
  - b. Draft strategic objectives.
  - c. A draft list of ecological and social values.
2. Presentation by Malcolm Robb (Manager, Aquatic Sciences Branch, Department of Environment).
3. Presentation by Glenn Hyndes (Senior Lecturer, Centre for Ecosystem Management, Edith Cowan University).
4. A preliminary designation of reserve type and class for the proposed marine conservation reserve.

## **Draft vision statement**

*A sub-group of Focus Group members was asked to develop a draft vision for the proposed marine conservation reserve, which was then presented to the group for comment. The vision*

*is a short statement that describes the desired status of the region in the future which, is to be either maintained or worked towards.*

The agreed **draft vision** statement for the proposed Walpole-Nornalup inlets marine conservation reserve is:

‘To protect and improve the unique natural biodiversity and aesthetic qualities and cultural values of the inlets. The area will support sustainable human use for present and future generations, such that:

- The inlets and their shores are sustainably managed in a condition that is similar or better than today.
- The aesthetic values of the inlets are maintained.
- People can still experience a range of activities, such as fishing, tours and holidays, on and around the inlets.
- The biodiversity of the inlets is monitored and protected.
- Economic benefits flow to the Walpole community.
- There is a substantially raised awareness of the value of the inlets.
- The local community feels ownership of the inlets, participates in managing the area, and feels confident of their long-term protection.
- The ambience of the inlets does not change.’

### **Draft strategic objectives**

*A sub-group of Focus Group members was asked to develop a draft set of strategic objectives for the proposed marine conservation reserve, which was then presented to the group for comment. Strategic objectives are the objectives that must be reached to achieve the vision.*

The **draft strategic objectives** for the proposed Walpole-Nornalup inlets marine conservation reserve are:

<i>Conservation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain the biodiversity of the reserve.</li> <li>• To maintain key biological processes and ecosystem structure and function.</li> <li>• To work in partnership with catchment areas that flow into the inlet system.</li> <li>• To maintain the aesthetic values and ambience of the reserve.</li> </ul>
<i>Recreational uses</i>	To facilitate and, where appropriate, assist in the management of compatible recreational activities in the reserve within a social, equitable and ecologically sustainable framework.
<i>Commercial uses</i>	To ensure that commercial tourism activities are managed in a manner that is compatible with the maintenance of the ecological and social values.
<i>Cultural heritage</i>	Maintain indigenous and European cultural and historical heritage.
<i>Science &amp; education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote education and nature appreciation.</li> <li>• To promote ongoing scientific research to improve knowledge and support the management of the reserve.</li> </ul>

## Draft ecological and social values

*A sub-group of Focus Group members was asked to develop a list of ecological and social values for the proposed marine conservation reserve, and to identify those values of particular significance. This list was then presented to the group for comment. The ecological and social values are those important characteristics of the area that are to be protected and maintained.*

The **draft ecological and social values** for the proposed Walpole-Nornalup inlets marine conservation reserve are:

<b>Ecological</b>	<b>Social</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geomorphology</li> <li>• Water quality*</li> <li>• Sediment quality*</li> <li>• Sandy beaches</li> <li>• Shoreline vegetation</li> <li>• Macroalgae and seagrass</li> <li>• Invertebrates</li> <li>• Bony fishes*</li> <li>• Elasmobranches (sharks and rays)*</li> <li>• Waterbirds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational fishing*</li> <li>• Boating</li> <li>• Nature-based tourism*</li> <li>• Aesthetic values (scenery, peace and quiet, wilderness)*</li> <li>• Local community ownership</li> <li>• Indigenous and European cultural and historical significance*</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Scientific research</li> </ul>

\* designates those key ecological and social values recognised to be of particular importance by the Focus Group.

### **Presentation by Malcolm Robb, Manager of the Aquatic Sciences Branch, Department of Environment.**

Major points from the presentation:

- The Walpole-Nornalup inlets are essentially marine except during periods of elevated freshwater discharge.
- The inlets are in good condition compared to numerous other south coast estuaries because they are well-flushed and well-mixed, and the riparian zones of the associated rivers are in relatively good condition.
- While the Deep River and lower Frankland River catchments are still forested, the upper Frankland catchment is heavily degraded. Nutrient levels are elevated in the upper Frankland River, but are reduced in the lower river, probably due to dilution by freshwater input and processing by riparian vegetation in protected aquatic habitat along the lower reaches of the river.
- The inlets are in better condition now than in the recent past due to the removal of proximate nutrient sources, such as agricultural effluent and septic systems. In the past, high growth of the seagrass *Ruppia*, for example in the Walpole Inlet, has been a consequence of this eutrophication.

### **Presentation by Glenn Hyndes, Senior Lecturer, Centre for Ecosystem Management, Edith Cowan University.**

Major points from the presentation:

- A diverse range of fish species utilise the Walpole-Nornalup inlets because they are permanently open, usually marine, and are relatively deep compared to many other estuaries.
- Use of the inlets by fish may be categorised as:
  - Marine stragglers (*ie* marine fishes that randomly enter and leave the inlets);
  - Marine-estuarine opportunists (*ie* fishes that enter the inlets as juveniles to feed and grow before usually returning to the ocean as adults);
  - Marine and estuarine (*ie* fishes that equally inhabit and breed in the inlets and the ocean); and
  - Estuarine (*ie* fishes that usually only inhabit and breed in the inlets).
- Use of the inlets by fish is dynamic and depends on the species and the environmental conditions. Species may move within the inlets, between the inlets and the lower reaches of the rivers and/or between the inlets and the ocean, and these movements may occur seasonally or more frequently. This mobility would make it difficult to use zones within the inlets as a strategy to manage fish. Few species actually spawn in the inlets, the most notable being black bream, cobbler and blue-spot flathead.

### Preliminary designation of the reserve type

The three possible reserve types are:

<i>Marine Nature Reserve</i>	<p>The purpose of a <i>marine nature reserve</i> shall be for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the conservation or restoration of the natural environment;</li> <li>• the protection, care and study of indigenous flora and fauna; and</li> <li>• the preservation of any feature of archaeological, historic or scientific interest.</li> </ul> <p>The Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve is currently the only <i>marine nature reserve</i> in WA.</p>
<i>Marine Park</i>	<p>The reservation of a <i>marine park</i> shall be for the purpose of allowing only that level of recreational and commercial activity which is consistent with the proper conservation and restoration of the natural environment, the protection of indigenous flora and fauna and the preservation of any feature of archaeological, historic or scientific interest. In <i>marine parks</i>, four statutory management zones can be created, these being sanctuary, recreation, general use and special purpose zones.</p> <p>There are currently seven <i>marine parks</i> in WA: Rowley Shoals Marine Park, Ningaloo Marine Park, Shark Bay Marine Park, Jurien Bay Marine Park, Marmion Marine Park, Swan Estuary Marine Park and Shoalwater Islands Marine Park.</p>
<i>Marine Management Area</i>	<p>The reservation of a <i>marine management area</i> shall be for the purpose of managing and protecting the marine environment so that it may be used for conservation, recreational, scientific and commercial purposes where “commercial purposes” include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aquaculture, commercial fishing and pearling activity;</li> <li>• mining, within the meaning of the <i>Mining Act (1978)</i>;</li> <li>• seismic surveys and exploratory drilling for petroleum; and</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>production of petroleum and associated activities.</li> </ul> <p>There are currently no <i>marine management areas</i> gazetted in WA; however, a proposal to create a <i>marine management area</i> around Barrow Island has recently been released for public comment.</p>
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Activities that can be permitted in different marine conservation reserve types:

	Marine Management Area	Marine Park				Marine Nature Reserve
		General use zone	Special purpose zone	Recreation zone	Sanctuary zone	
Petroleum exploration and production						
Mining						
Commercial fishing						
Aquaculture						
Pearling						
Recreational fishing						
Recreation and tourism						

Key:  permitted  not permitted

- Only low-key recreation and tourism is permitted in *marine nature reserves*.
- Zoning for *marine parks* is determined in accordance with the specific management requirements of each reserve. Hence, not all of the management zone types need to be present in each *marine park*. For example, while all four management zone types are present in the Jurien Bay Marine Park, the much smaller Swan Estuary Marine Park comprises only special purpose zones for the protection of seagrass and waterbird habitats.

*Focus Group members were asked to vote on which preliminary reserve type they considered to be appropriate for the proposed Walpole-Nornalup inlets marine conservation reserve, with the following results:*

	yes	no	undecided
<b>Marine nature reserve</b>	1	17	1
<b>Marine park</b>	18	0	1
<b>Marine management area</b>	0	18	1

NB: Two of the initially present 21 focus group members had left the workshop at this point.

The **draft reserve type** of the proposed Walpole-Nornalup inlets marine conservation reserve is *marine park*.

### Preliminary designation of the reserve class

Marine conservation reserves can be gazetted as *A Class* or *non-A Class* reserves under the *Conservation and Land Management Act (1984)*. The classification does not affect the management of the reserve but it does affect its legal status or tenure (*ie* determines the

process that is required to amend the boundaries and purpose of a reserve once established). The purpose and boundaries of a marine conservation reserve classified as *A Class* can only be amended with the support of both Houses of Parliament. A reserve classified as *non-A Class* can, subject to the concurrence of the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and the Minister for State Development, be cancelled or the reserve boundaries altered to reduce the area of the reserve, by order of the Governor.

*Focus Group members were asked to vote on which preliminary reserve class they considered to be appropriate for the proposed Walpole-Nornalup inlets marine conservation reserve, with the following result:*

	<b>A-class</b>	<b>non A-class</b>	<b>undecided</b>
	19	0	0

NB: Two of the initially present 21 focus group members had left the workshop at this point.

The **draft reserve class** of the proposed Walpole-Nornalup inlets marine conservation reserve is *A-class*.