areas on a quarterly basis in the Northern Rivers Region of NSW. This will allow population comparisons during both breeding and non-breeding seasons.

DRAFT MARINE TURTLE RECOVERY PLAN FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA*

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Five of the world's seven recognised species of marine turtle are known to breed on the coast and islands of northern Western Australia: the flatback (*Natator depressus*), green (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) and loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) turtles. The leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) also forages in (and migrates through) Western Australian waters. Most of the marine turtles that nest in Western Australia represent distinct genetic stocks and are significant for global marine turtle conservation because their breeding populations are estimated to be among the largest and most important in the Indo-Pacific region. In the past, marine turtles have been exploited and killed en masse in Western Australia. For example, green turtle populations were subject to major impacts such as atomic testing in the Montebello Islands in the 1950s and commercial harvesting for export and trade of meat and shell from the 1930s until 1973. The genetic stocks of marine turtles that currently nest in Western Australia are subject to a range of threats, including industrial (particularly oil and gas) and coastal development, predation by foxes and dogs, recreation and tourism, fishing bycatch, indigenous and illegal hunting, marine debris entanglement, pollution and spills and, more recently, climate and sea level change. In 2008, the Department of Environment and Conservation produced a Draft Marine Turtle Recovery Plan for Western Australia. The draft recovery plan addresses actions required to stop the further decline of marine turtle populations and to facilitate their recovery throughout their range in Western Australia. The Department faces significant challenges to meet these objectives, particularly in regard to minimising the threats posed by resource extraction and associated coastal development. Approximately 71% of Australia's oil and 56% of Australia's gas is produced in northwest Western Australia and the associated resource basins closely coincide with important turtle rookeries and feeding sites. However, the Department has a number of tools and mechanisms in place to facilitate the recovery and management of marine turtles in Western Australia. These include an established tagging program that has provided 21 years of data on breeding biology, carefully managed tourism and recreation in high use areas, introduced predator monitoring and control for selected beaches, fishing bycatch monitoring and minimisation (by the Department of Fisheries Western Australia) and a growing number of research programs. With the co-operation of the resource industry, the Commonwealth Government, other State government departments, local government, non-government organisations, universities and the tourism and recreation industry, the Department hopes to better understand and minimise threats to marine turtle populations in Western Australia and make a contribution to local and global marine turtle conservation.

A SURVEY PROGRAM TO LOCATE AND DOCUMENT THE DISTRIBUTION AND STATUS OF MARINE TURTLE NESTING AROUND THE COASTLINE OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA*

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The Northern Territory (NT) of Australia has 10,000+ km of coast, 800+ islands and huge areas of near-coastal wetlands. The majority of this vast area is very remote, inaccessible and still largely undisturbed. Prior to 1990 there had been few systematic or comprehensive attempts to inventory the biodiversity of most of this area. From 1990 to 2004 (and incidentally thereafter) I conducted extensive aerial and ground surveys of this area. These surveys focused on locating and documenting significant sites for a variety of fauna species, including aquatic birds, marine reptiles and marine mammals. Over 70,000 records were collected during more than 500 field days of surveying. Numerous important, previously undocumented sites were located for each of these different species groups. Many of these sites can be regarded as nationally or internationally significant based on numbers of animals present. The results of these surveys have been documented in a series of five detailed Technical Reports which can be found on the NT's NRETA