

Other

Other papers presented to the committee included marine aquarium studies by Dr. Chittleborough and a background paper by Mr. Bowen on a recent visit by Mr. S.J. Holt.

BUNBURY EFFLUENT NEUTRALIZED

Concern has been expressed in some quarters over the alleged pollution of Bunbury waters by effluent being discharged into the sea at Bunbury from the local titanium works. Fishermen, particularly, were concerned over the possible effect on marine life and the possibility that the effluent would be drawn into the Leschenault Inlet during the winter months. However, although the water is deeply discoloured, the detrimental effect on marine life, is apparently not as serious as was first feared.

Recent tests of the water by officers of the Government Chemical Laboratories, disclosed that the acid effluent containing iron sulphate in solution was completely neutralized by the sea water within a few hundred yards of the discharge pipe. Commenting on the results of the tests, the Director of the Laboratories (Dr. L.W. Samuel) said that neutralization caused precipitation of the iron and most of that substance settled within a short distance of discharge. Within that limited area, he explained, conditions would be unsuitable to marine life. Outside it, however, there was a greater area of water that was visibly discoloured by a small amount of precipitated iron kept in suspension by wind and wave action. It was most unlikely Dr. Samuel concluded, that the small amount of suspended material would be detrimental to marine life.

UNDERSIZE SPERM WHALES

The Minister for Primary Industry, Canberra, has approved of the taking for scientific purposes, of five undersize sperm whales each month by the Cheynes Beach Whaling Company during the 1964 season. The permit for the capture of these whales provides that there can be no carry over of uncaught numbers from month to month and representatives of C.S.I.R.O. must be allowed access to each whale and to remove any biological specimens necessary. The Cheynes Beach Whaling Company will be the sole owner of the products of the whales taken under permit.