



Statement

November 20, 2015

Proposed Marine Parks and National Park – Proposed Joint Management/ DPaW & Traditional Owners.

The Traditional Owners are pleased with the level of interest being shown by members of the public and interest groups/ agencies in the recently released Draft management plans for future Marine Parks/ National Park, which have been developed between the State Government and representatives of Dambimangari, and the proposed Joint Management for these Parks in the future.

For the past three years the Representative Dambimangari Traditional Owners have worked hard on negotiations with the State Government on an indigenous land use agreement (ILUA) and joint management agreement in relation to the proposed parks, securing benefits and concessions from the State that the wider Traditional Owner group will now assess and make balanced decisions on.

Dambimangari Chairperson, Warren Barunga, stated that; “It is important that it is clearly understood that these proposals for Marine and National Parks in Dambimangari land and sea country are just that, proposals that are in the process of being fully informed and developed so that they can be assessed and considered by the Traditional Owners in the first instance and of course the wider West Australian Public”. “The process of discussion and negotiation has been going on for nearly 3 years between the Group of Traditional Owners representing Dambimangari Traditional Owners and the State Representatives and is not something that has happened overnight”.

Warren further stated that; “It is also very important that everyone appreciates and understands that the Dambimangari Traditional Owners have the capacity and ability to assess these proposals and make sound well thought out decisions in regard to what is going to be best for our land and sea country in the long term and how best we can care for the country which we are the custodians for and have been for thousands of years”.

“We are dealing with the reality that with ever growing populations and technology more and more people are able to access our Traditional Land and Sea country and we must look for better ways to protect our country and at the same time enable our people today and in the future to live on our country and maintain it as is culturally appropriate”. “In this context, jointly managed parks offer the potential to complement our indigenous protected area and further enhance our capacity to manage country.”

The recently released Draft Indicative Management Plan includes proposals for future zoning within the Marine Parks and outlines the area adjacent to the Horizontal Falls where it is proposed to

establish a Jointly Managed and jointly vested National Park, managed between DPaW and Dambimangari Traditional Owners. Separate to this, these proposals are the subject of a proposed ILUA between the Dambimangari Traditional Owners and the State of Western Australia and as such will now be part of the ILUA assessment process that the Traditional Owners have in place through their PBC. This process will take five to six months which will include meetings to inform the Dambimangari Traditional Owners of what is contained in the ILUA proposal and the overall benefits package offered by the State, encompassing the proposed Marine Parks and National Park.

The wider Traditional Owner group will now assess the draft to make balanced decisions on behalf of the Dambimangari people .

Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation Chairperson, Warren Barunga, said it was important to understand that these proposals for Marine and National Parks in Dambimangari land and sea areas are still proposals in the process of being assessed.

“This process will consider the Traditional Owners in the first instance and of course the wider West Australian Public,” he said.

“The process of discussion and negotiation has been going on for nearly three years between the Group of Traditional Owners representing Dambimangari people and the State Representatives. This is not something that has happened overnight”.

“It is also very important that everyone appreciates and understands that the Dambimangari Traditional Owners have the capacity and ability to assess these proposals and make sound well thought out decisions in regard to what is going to be best for our land and sea country in the long term and how best we can care for the country of which we have been custodians for thousands of years.

“We are dealing with the reality that - with ever growing populations and technology - more and more people are able to access our traditional land and sea country and we must the look for better ways to protect our country and at the same time enable our people to live on our country and maintain it with culturally appropriate management today and in the future”.

“In this context, jointly managed parks offer the potential to complement our indigenous protected area and further enhance our capacity to manage country.”

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