



Christmas Island Marine Park Management Plan Committee

Terms of Reference

Background

Established in March 2022, the Christmas Island Marine Park is designed to help protect the unique marine environment of Australia's Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) and support positive social and economic outcomes for local communities and other marine users. This marine park will build on the work of Christmas Island National Park, which was established in 1980 to protect the island's unique terrestrial and shallow reef habitats.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* requires that a management plan for the new Christmas Island Marine Park be created 'as soon as practicable'. As with the process to establish the marine park, Parks Australia wants local community views and aspirations to be a key part of the process to create the management plan.

Purpose

The purpose of the Christmas Island Marine Park Management Plan Committee is to provide advice and input on behalf of the Christmas Island community and in areas of expertise relevant to preparation of the marine park management plan.

Functions

The Committee's functions are to:

1. Provide advice and recommendations on:
 - The preparation of marine park management plans (noting the statutory process will also include two stages of broader public consultation)
 - Priorities for managing marine parks while management plans are prepared
 - Development of a ToR for a committee to advise on the management of marine parks following completion of the management plan
2. Facilitate two-way information flow between Parks Australia and the broader community of Christmas Island about marine park projects and management.

Term

Consistent with the Functions described above, the Committee's term will cease when the Christmas Island Marine Park Management Plan has been approved by the Minister for the Environment and tabled in the Parliament, or at another time to be determined by the Director of National Parks.

Membership and appointments

Members will be appointed by the Director of National Parks or their delegate and will comprise:

1. Parks Australia representatives, one of which will also chair the committee
2. Up to three members of the Christmas Island Fishing Management Committee to be selected by agreement of that Committee
3. A member of the Christmas Island National Park Community Consultative Committee
4. Marine scientist(s) with relevant IOT expertise
5. A Christmas Island Tourism Association member, preferably with marine tourism experience
6. Up to three interested Christmas Island community members to be selected through a locally advertised Expression of Interest process.



Member Conduct

Members will:

- make reasonable efforts to prepare for and attend meetings
- be courteous and respectful towards other members and participants, and members of the community when discussing any matters relating to the marine park
- declare any real or perceived conflict of interest in relation to committee discussions.

Chair

A Parks Australia member will chair the Committee. Chair duties include:

- Chair meetings of the committee
- Develop an agenda for each meeting in consultation with members
- Encourage broad and open participation from members
- Seek to establish a consensus view from the committee on matters under discussion
- Finalising meeting minutes in consultation with members
- Finalising reports to the Director of National Parks or their nominated delegate in consultation with members

The chair may nominate another Parks Australia officer to act as chair for the Committee where they are unable to fulfil their duties (for example, if on leave).

Invited participants / observers

The Commonwealth Territories portfolio will receive a standing invitation for a representative to attend meetings of the Committee as an observer.

Subject to the agreement of the chair, other individuals/organisations may be invited to participate in or observe meetings from time to time at the suggestion of any Committee member.

Secretariat

Parks Australia will provide secretariat support to the Committee.

Meetings

Meetings will be scheduled as needed to support the Committee's purpose and functions. In general, it is expected that meetings will occur every three months and run for up to two hours.

Out of session items

Occasionally, the Committee may be asked to consider a matter outside of a scheduled meeting. In such cases, the secretariat will circulate relevant information via email.

Fees and allowances

These are volunteer positions, so members will not be paid for their time.

Where applicable, Parks Australia will arrange and pay for member travel and accommodation and provide a travel allowance (in line with Parks Australia's staff travel policy) to cover meals and incidental expenses.

Working groups

The Committee may establish working groups from time to time to consider a particular matter or matters and report back to the Committee.

Conflict of interest

Actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest must be declared by all Committee members following their appointment. A record of such interests will be maintained by the secretariat and Committee members must regularly consider and update their declaration via the secretariat. An opportunity to update information about conflicts will be provided at each meeting of the Committee.

