

North Marine Parks Advisory Committee

Meeting #3 Communique

26 May 2020 - Videoconference

Member attendance

Jacqui Doyle (Chair)
Andrew Maclean
Carol Conacher
Christine Lamont
David Ciaravolo
Ian Knuckey
Jackie Gould
John Glaister
Peter Cox
Robert Fish
Rachel Baird (apology)
Jason Fowler (apology)
Robert Pender (apology)

Meeting #3 Focus

A key focus of the meeting was members providing input into priority setting across the North Network at both a park and program level.

Initial feedback captured by a pre-meeting survey, showed that areas to prioritise include Indigenous engagement, science and research and stakeholder relationships.

These results were discussed at the meeting with members providing valuable advice that will help inform future priorities and activities in each park.

About the Committee and Meeting #3

The North Marine Parks Advisory Committee advises the Director of National Parks on the implementation of the North Marine Parks Network Management Plan.

Meeting 3 was held via a videoconference on Tuesday 26 May 2020. Topics for discussion included the North Network Management Progress report; a prioritisation session for the 8 marine parks in the North Network and an update on the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) system for Australian Marine Parks.

Invited Observers attended from the Torres Strait Regional Authority (Melinda McLean) and the Northern Territory Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Jonathan Veal). Parks Australia staff attendees were Frances Verrier, Cassie Layton, Kath Sale, Steffan Howe and Lou Fava.

An update was also provided on progress with management actions in the North Marine Parks Network over the last six months:

Communication, Education and Awareness Program

Parks Australia is finalising a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the NT Government articulating areas of mutual interest in the management of Australian Marine Parks in the North network. It is anticipated the MoU will support partnerships and collaborative arrangements in areas such as Limmen Marine Park.

Tourism and Visitor Experience

Parks Australia is developing a Tourism and Visitor Experience Strategy that will provide prioritised, action-orientated guidance for the next five years. It will enable the effective promotion, delivery and management of

sustainable tourism activities across the Australian Marine Parks network.

Science

Bathymetric maps, report, science atlas article and 3D visualisation of Carpentaria Shoal have been provided to Parks Australia from the November 2019 Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) transit voyage through the West Cape York Marine Park.

Planning is currently underway for a voyage in November 2020 to Arafura and Arnhem Marine Parks under the National Environmental Science Program (NESP) Marine Biodiversity Hub and in collaborations with AIMS.

Authorisations and Assessments

Twelve authorisations issued since July 2018 include activities involving non-commercial research (9), structures and works (1); and commercial tourism (2).

Indigenous Engagement

Parks Australia is looking forward to working with AIMS and the Thamarrurr rangers in the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf, training them to undertake their own marine scientific monitoring using Baited Remote Underwater Videos (BRUVs) and drop cameras.

Work has started on a project with the Yirralka, Dhimurru and Marthakal ranger groups to map cultural values with traditional owners for the sea country in Wessel Marine park.

Parks Australia continues to work cooperatively with the NT Government and traditional owners on the integrated management of the Limmen Marine Park, and looks forward to contributing towards the development of an interim Healthy Country Plan for the Marra people.

Park Protection and Management

Parks Australia continues to work cooperatively with AFMA on the recovery of ghostnets from Australian Marine Parks under an MoU.

Compliance

One compliance incident in the North Network for the Jan-Mar 2020 quarter. The compliance team have a hotline for reporting illegal activities: 1800 852 975 or marine.compliance@environment.gov.au

A Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement system for Australian Marine Parks

A draft National Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) framework for Australian Marine Parks was provided to the Committee for comment. This outlines the approach to monitoring the health of Australian Marine Parks and explains the process for evaluating the effectiveness of management actions in delivering outcomes outlined in management plans. The Committee will be consulted further on MERI.

Other updates and presentations

Jonathan Veal, meeting observer from NT Government gave an update on the Limmen Bight Marine Park Plan of Management that became operational on 25 April 2020. It is anticipated that the Plan will present a new approach for integrated land and sea management, including the management of Limmen Marine Park.

Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting is planned to be held in Darwin in November 2020. For more information about the North Marine Parks Network or the Committee:

Visit parksaustralia.gov.au/north

Email marineparks@environment.gov.au