



Conservation Commission  
of Western Australia



# Annual Report 2008-2009





# Conservation Commission of Western Australia

## *Annual Report 2008-2009*

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## Cover Photo

Black-necked Stork (*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*) at Marlgu Lagoon at Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve, East Kimberley.

**Conservation Commission  
of  
Western Australia**

***Annual Report 2008-2009***

**Transmittal to the Minister**

Minister for Environment

Dear Minister

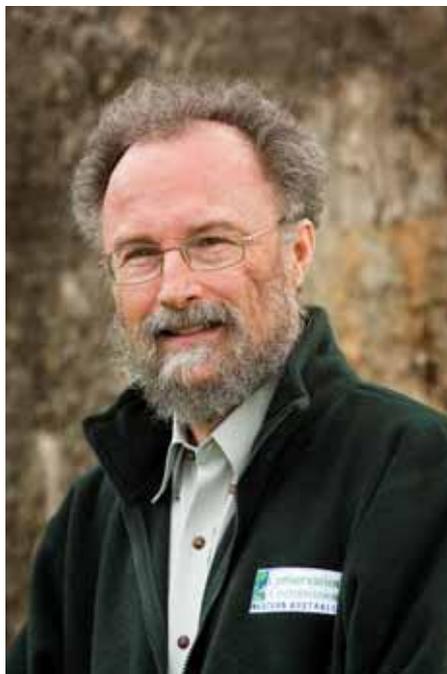
I am pleased to submit the Annual Report 2008-2009 of the Conservation Commission of Western Australia, covering its activities for the period ending 30 June 2009, as provided for under section 31 of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*.

Pat Barblett  
Acting Chair

## Overview of the Agency

### Chair's Report

The 2008-2009 reporting period saw the Conservation Commission undertake significant work on a number of important issues and projects. In particular, the Conservation Commission has been instrumental, and has worked with the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC), in bringing about significant progress on the timely and efficient production of management plans. The Conservation Commission has adopted three principles that guide a new management planning framework: a regional approach to management planning; more concise documents focused on relevant values, threats and management responses; and meaningful objectives that are precise, specific, achievable and measurable. The Conservation Commission believes that the revised management planning framework will assist in providing clear management direction.



Last year mention was made of the importance of the joint management planning process being undertaken by DEC, the Miriuwung Gajerrong people and the Conservation Commission. The Cultural Planning Framework has been finalised during 2008-2009 and was launched by the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council. The Conservation Commission continued to attend meetings of the Regional Park Council and assist in the development of the future management plan for the parks. It is envisaged that the final sign off on the Joint Planning Guidelines will occur in Kununurra in September 2009.

The Conservation Commission has continued its assessment program of old-growth areas under review, and assessment of publicly nominated areas of old-growth. This reporting period saw three areas nominated by the public for assessment. The total area assessed for old-growth was over 1000ha. This has been a significant achievement for all involved.

The Conservation Commission and DEC have applied considerable resources towards the preparation and finalisation of the mid-term audit of performance of the *Forest Management Plan 2004-2013* (FMP). While finalising the audit the Conservation Commission gave considerable thought to a proposed recommendation to cease logging in the eastern Jarrah forest. In place of this recommendation, the Conservation Commission sought to initiate a more wide-ranging process to review the future sustainability of the timber industry, and forest management more generally, in the face of climate change. It may well be that climate change impacts on our forests will be such that it is no longer possible to support a sustainable timber industry. Early attention to this prospect is vital to ensure the ongoing health of our forest ecosystems.

A particular concern of the Conservation Commission is to ensure the survival of those forest dwelling species that have been moved into a higher category of threat in recent years. For example, a response to the decline in population of Phascogales needs to be determined in the forthcoming year as a matter of some urgency. The Conservation Commission will need to consider such measures as significantly increasing the number of habitat trees and avoiding gap clearing in areas of forest where populations of Phascogales are predicted to occur.

The mid term audit report was submitted to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) in December 2008. The report was made publicly available during April to June 2009 and the Conservation Commission is now working with the EPA to address the public submissions.

The Conservation Commission considers *Phytophthora* dieback to be an ongoing threat to the State's biodiversity, warranting greater attention from Government and the investment of significant resources to manage the threat. The Conservation Commission commenced a performance assessment of dieback management in early 2009, adopting a team based approach with the Centre for Phytophthora Science and Management at Murdoch University and DEC. The performance assessment will review the effectiveness of policy and its implementation and look to provide recommendations for improvement of on-ground management. The Conservation Commission is working towards completing the performance assessment early in 2010.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the Commissioners and Conservation Commission Service Unit staff for their efforts and work over the year, and the support of officers from DEC. The year has been challenging and rewarding.

John Bailey  
Chair

## Operational Structure

The Conservation Commission was established in November 2000 by the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act), and works independent of, but closely with, DEC. It is a statutory commission and body corporate and has vested in it terrestrial conservation reserves (including freshwater areas), State forest and timber reserves. It has associated management planning responsibilities and functions in respect of monitoring and auditing performance of DEC and the Forest Products Commission (FPC) in respect of those management plans. It also has policy advisory functions in relation to vested lands and waters, and broader biodiversity conservation matters. Appendix 1 provides details of the Conservation Commission's functions as provided in section 19 of the CALM Act.

## Members and Meetings

The CALM Act provides that the Conservation Commission of Western Australia is to have nine members who, in the opinion of the Minister have knowledge of and experience in:

the conservation or management of biodiversity, or;

environmental management, including the management of the natural environment for use for recreational purposes, or;

the sustainable use of natural resources, or;

who have a particular function or vocational interest relevant to the functions of the Conservation Commission, and;

who, in the opinion of the Minister, are able to make a contribution to the functions of the Conservation Commission.

One member is to be a person who, in the opinion of the Minister:

has knowledge of and experience in Aboriginal cultural and Aboriginal heritage matters relevant to the functions of the Conservation Commission, and;

is able to make a contribution to the functions of the Conservation Commission.

Commissioners are appointed by the Governor, on the nomination of the Minister. The members of the Conservation Commission and the date of their initial appointment and term of appointment (including any reappointments) at 30 June 2009 were:

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Dr. John Bailey, Chairperson           | November 2001 – November 2010 |
| Mrs Patricia Barblett AM, Deputy Chair | November 2000 – November 2008 |
| Ms Regina Flugge                       | November 2003 – November 2010 |
| Mr William Mitchell                    | December 2002 – November 2008 |
| Ms Karen Jacobs                        | November 2007 – November 2010 |
| Dr David Newsome                       | December 2006- December 2009  |
| Mr Vince Paparo                        | December 2006 – December 2009 |
| Mr Graeme Rundle                       | November 2000 – November 2008 |
| Ms Carolyn Turner                      | July 2006 – July 2009         |

The re-appointment of Commissioners or appointment of new Commissioners for those whose terms have expired is currently in process and are expected to be finalised in the near future.

The Conservation Commission holds meetings on the second Monday of every month, and during the reporting period the Conservation Commission held 11 meetings.

The Conservation Commission has several sub-committees including:

- The Management Planning Review Committee (MPRC) which provides recommendations to the Conservation Commission on planning matters;
- The Communications and Promotions Sub-Committee whose focus is on recommendations relating to stakeholder interactions including website design and continuous improvement; and
- The Performance Assessment Review Committee which provides recommendations relating to audit matters.

## **Executive Support**

In 2006 an operational relationship agreement was signed between the Conservation Commission and DEC which established the Conservation Commission Service Unit.

The Conservation Commission Service Unit had the following staff at 30 June 2009:

Director: Gordon Graham (Acting)  
Executive Assistant: Kelly Boxall  
Audit Manager: Tom Hughson (Acting)  
Environmental Auditor: Geoff Cullen (Acting)  
Project Officer: Carol Lacroix  
Policy Advisor: Juanita Renwick

Corporate Services, including Human Resource Management, Financial Services and Information Technology support are provided to the service unit under the operational relationship agreement.

## Vested Lands

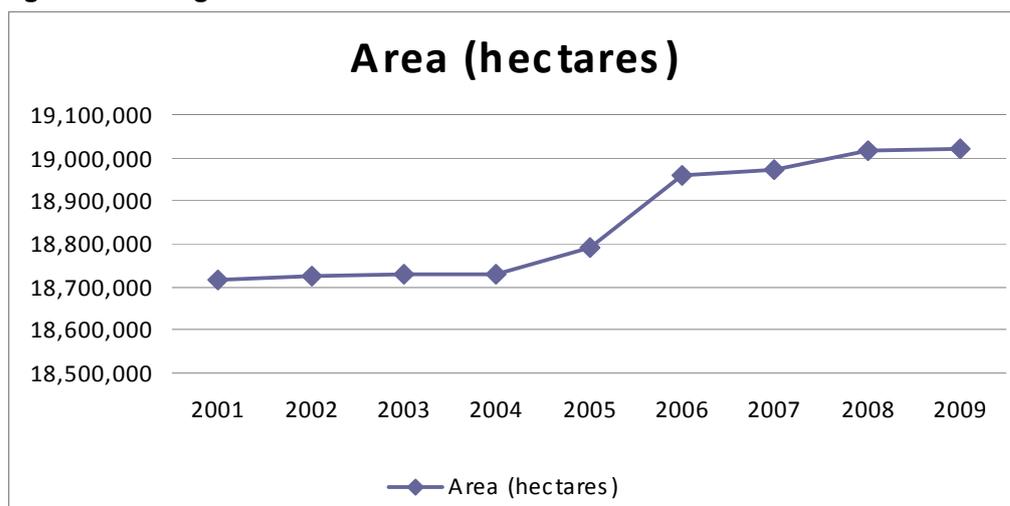
### Total Estate

As at 30 June 2009 the total area of the lands vested in the Conservation Commission was 19,019,096 hectares, approximately 7.5% per cent of the land area of Western Australia. This represents a net increase of 3056 hectares during July 2008 – June 2009. Table 1 provides a summary of the land categories and figure one demonstrates the variation in lands vested over time.

**Table 1. Land vested in the Conservation Commission**

| Land Classification                  | Area (ha) as of 30 June 2009 | Area (ha) as of 30 June 2008 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| National Park                        | 5,637,483                    | 5,637,482                    |
| Conservation Park                    | 847,586                      | 844,039                      |
| Nature Reserves                      | 10,872,105                   | 10,873,039                   |
| State Forest                         | 1,304,709                    | 1,304,710                    |
| Timber Reserves                      | 123,279                      | 123,279                      |
| Section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) Reserves | 233,934                      | 233,491                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                         | <b>19,019,096</b>            | <b>19,016,040</b>            |

**Figure 1. Change in area of lands vested in the Conservation Commission over time.**



### National Parks

National parks are established for wildlife and landscape conservation, scientific study, preservation of features of archaeological, historic or scientific interest, and enjoyment by the public. They have national or international significance for scenic, biological or cultural values.

The area of the national parks vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2009 was 5,637,483 hectares.

### Conservation Parks

Conservation parks have the same purpose as national parks but do not have the same national or international significance. They have significant local or regional value for conservation and recreation. This classification may be used where there is, for example, high mineral potential. In many cases existing conservation parks should be considered for national park status.

The area of the conservation parks vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2009 was 847,586 hectares. This is a net increase of 3,547 hectares.

### **Nature Reserves**

Nature reserves are established for wildlife and landscape conservation, scientific study and preservation of features of archaeological, historic or scientific interest. Recreation that does not harm natural ecosystems is allowed.

The total area of the nature reserves vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2009 was 10,872,105 hectares.

### **State Forest**

State forests are managed for multiple purposes, including water catchment protection, recreation, timber production on a sustained yield basis, and conservation. Provision is also made for public utilities and mineral production. Within State forests, designated areas are managed for specific purposes, such as conservation or the optimum yield of exotic plantings.

The total area of the state forests vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2009 was 1,304,709 hectares.

### **Timber Reserves**

Timber reserves declared under the CALM Act are managed on the same basis as State forests. The category is often transitional; as reserves are evaluated they may be changed to a more appropriate tenure, e.g. State forest or nature reserve.

The total area of the timber reserves vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2009 was 123,279 hectares.

### **Section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) Reserves**

Under the CALM Act, lands categorised as section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) reserve are lands reserved under the *Land Act 1933* and the *Land Administration Act 1997* respectively, for which care, control and management is placed with the Conservation Commission. Unlike national parks, conservation parks and nature reserves, they are not automatically vested in the Conservation Commission.

The total area of section 5 (1) (g) and the section 5 (1) (h) reserves vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2009 was 233,934 hectares, representing a total increase of 443 hectares.

## **Performance Management Framework**

The Conservation Commission contributes to the State Government's five strategic goals for public sector management under the Government's *Better Planning: Better Services* policy.

These goals relate to:

- People and Communities;
- The Economy;
- The Environment;
- The Regions; and
- Governance.

The Conservation Commission is one of the lead agencies for achieving the environment strategic goal. The Conservation Commission also contributes, often indirectly, to the other goals, such as People and Communities and the Regions, through implementing its policies and responsibilities that fall within its portfolio.

## Agency Performance

The Conservation Commission's activities and achievements during the last twelve months are detailed below under the key outcome areas of policy; estate; management plans; forest management; audit; advice and promotion; and other Conservation Commission activities.

### Policy

#### Dieback

The Conservation Commission regards *Phytophthora* dieback to be an ongoing major threat to the State's biodiversity, warranting continued attention from government and the investment of significant resources to manage the threat.

Under the FMP the Conservation Commission is required to undertake a performance assessment on dieback hygiene. The Conservation Commission recognises that the threat of dieback extends much further than lands managed under the FMP and has broadened the performance assessment to cover all lands vested in the Conservation Commission.

The Conservation Commission commenced the assessment in early 2009, adopting a team based approach that includes the Centre for Phytophthora Science and Management at Murdoch University and DEC. The performance assessment is an evidence-based management review using case study and policy analysis. The Conservation Commission believes that the case study analysis will provide a realistic base for a review of the effectiveness of policy and its implementation. The case studies will be used to investigate and illustrate issues involved in *Phytophthora* dieback management and how we might go about improving on-ground management. The performance assessment will also address the effectiveness of legislation, policy and guidelines relating to *Phytophthora* dieback and what changes might be required to bring about better statutory management of dieback on public land.

The Conservation Commission is working towards completing the performance assessment by early 2010.

### Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy

Early in 2009 the Minister for Environment announced the development of the Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy to be undertaken over a four year period. The Minister identified the Conservation Commission and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority as playing key roles in the development of the strategy.

The Conservation Commission has expressed its full support for the development of the strategy and will be an active participant in its development. The Conservation Commission identified a number of key points in its submission on the strategy including:

- the importance of progressing longstanding recommendations for additions to the conservation estate;
- realising the potential for tourism opportunities in the unique Kimberley environment while also recognising the significant threats to the values of the area;
- the importance of investigating additional and complementary approaches to conventional tenure arrangements to enable shared and joint management of national parks and nature reserves;
- the opportunities for partnerships with Indigenous people in the management of other lands held as reserves with the purpose of the benefit of Aboriginal people. The Conservation Commission considers the meaningful engagement of Indigenous people in the management of conservation areas is imperative;

- the importance of recognising a cooperative and collaborative approach inclusive of all stakeholder groups to address environmental, social and economic requirements of the region;
- linkage among research programs with management outcomes, including the development of a rapid assessment system for documenting and analysing the biodiversity of the Kimberley and introducing mechanisms that facilitate the ability of Indigenous people to protect their cultural and scientific knowledge.

The Conservation Commission also intends to undertake a performance assessment of the biodiversity management of islands (stage 2) with a focus on unallocated (unvested) islands of the Kimberley as part of its contribution to the strategy.

## **Joint Management**

Joint management with Aboriginal landowners acknowledges the invaluable role of Indigenous knowledge, culture and land management practices in management. Through the implementation of joint management plans, traditional custodians and traditional knowledge can play an important part in natural area management. Joint management represents an opportunity for conservation interests and the interests of Aboriginal people to be simultaneously served. Indigenous lands represent a significant percentage of Western Australia's land area and, if agreements can be made to have these lands managed in accord with conservation objectives there is the potential to contribute significantly to improved conservation management in the state. Joint management encourages increased communication not only between Indigenous landowners and government agencies but also between Indigenous groups themselves.

The joint management of Western Australia's natural areas is one of the Conservation Commission's stated priorities. The Conservation Commission's role in joint management includes statutory management planning and performance assessment. Joint management initiatives provide a means for the Conservation Commission to explore ways of better integrating Indigenous issues within management plans.

During the reporting period, significant achievements have been made in progressing towards achieving the Conservation Commission's goal of formulating cooperative management solutions. An example of this is the development of the Cultural Planning Framework associated with the Ord Final Agreement (outlined below).

As part of the Conservation Commission's ongoing commitment to joint management, the Conservation Commission continues to seek opportunities to become more closely involved in joint management initiatives such as raising this as an issue in the development of the Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy and an involvement in management options under the Yawuru Native Title Claim.

## **Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework**

The Ord Final Agreement (OFA) is an agreement between the Western Australian State Government, the Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgab Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation (Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation), to which the Conservation Commission is a signatory. The OFA provides for the development of joint management arrangements with the Miriuwung Gajerrong Traditional Custodians and for the creation of six new parcels of conservation land covering 154,000 hectares.

The OFA acknowledges that Indigenous cultural and social wellbeing are intrinsically connected to the physical landscape. Following the establishment of the Ord Final Agreement, a decision was made to establish a Cultural Planning Framework, which expresses Indigenous values and aspirations for land in their own words, sets out the Miriuwung Gajerrong laws and policies to be included in the management plan and will provide the basis for formal joint management of the areas.

The Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council have launched the Cultural Planning Framework – *Miriuwung and Gajerrong Peoples' Guidelines for Developing Management Plans for Conservation Parks and Nature Reserves under the Ord Final Agreement*. The Conservation Commission is committed to maintaining its support for the incorporation of this Framework within shared Joint Planning Guidelines, which will be used to develop a final management plan for the reserves.

During the reporting period the Chair of the Conservation Commission continued to attend meetings of the Regional Park Council and assist in the development of the future management plan for the parks. The Chair of the Conservation Commission attended workshops for the complete planning guidelines in Kununurra in April. This process will culminate in a Conservation Commission visit to Kununurra to sign off on the final planning guidelines in September 2009.

## Estate

In meeting the objectives of:

- Identifying what is required for a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve (CAR) system for Western Australia, and;
- Considering proposed changes of purpose, or boundary of, land vested in the Conservation Commission and evaluating potentially incompatible activities on that land with a view to maximising biological diversity,

the following activities have been undertaken:

Changes in purpose or boundaries, including advice on any contentious issue or activity, or the need to excise areas that are not of value in maintaining biological diversity, are considered at the monthly meetings of the Conservation Commission. Advice on applications is subsequently provided to the Minister.

The policy for the delegation of decisions on minor changes to the conservation estate to a Commissioner continued to be implemented. Proposals involving large areas or that involve potentially contentious issues are still considered at the monthly meetings of the Conservation Commission.

In working towards establishing a CAR reserve system, the Conservation Commission considered changes to reserves and their uses. As previously discussed, during the period, more than 3000 hectares were added to the estate, through: land purchases, land exchanges and reserve disposals by other agencies. Lands acquired by DEC in the present financial year, but not yet vested in the Conservation Commission, will be detailed in DEC's Annual Report.

Advice on matters relating to leases, licenses, permits, mining tenements and other activities such as utility infrastructure proposed on land vested in the Conservation Commission was provided to DEC. Table 2 summarises the Conservation Commission's consideration of CALM Act leases, licenses and permits.

**Table 2. CALM Act Leases, Licenses and permits considered during 2008-2009**

|                | Conservation Commission endorsement |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Leases         | 32                                  |
| Licenses       | 18                                  |
| Apiary permits | 252                                 |

## Management Plans

Key functions of the Conservation Commission with respect to management plans are:

To prepare, as the controlling body, proposed management plans for land vested in the Conservation Commission to be submitted to the Minister for approval. This is to be achieved:

- through the agency of DEC;
- if the vested land is State forest or a timber reserve, the Conservation Commission through the agency of DEC in consultation with the FPC; or
- if the vested land is or includes a public water catchment area, the Conservation Commission through the agency of the DEC in consultation with the Minister for Water Resources and any the Water Corporation.

The Conservation Commission is also responsible for the review of existing management plans. Further it is the responsibility of the Conservation Commission:

- to develop guidelines for monitoring and assessing the implementation of the management plans by DEC;
- to set performance criteria for assessing and auditing the performance of DEC and the FPC in carrying out and complying with the management plans; and
- to assess and audit the performance of DEC and the FPC in carrying out and complying with the management plans.

During the 2008-2009 reporting period, the Minister for Environment approved the management plan for the Wellington National Park, Westralia Conservation Park and Wellington Discovery Forest.

The Conservation Commission has a committee (MPRC) to facilitate liaison with DEC. The committee's function is to improve the delivery of the Conservation Commission's statutory responsibility for the preparation and submission to the Minister of proposed management plans, and for the review of expiring plans.

During the course of the reporting period the MPRC met eight times and considered a range of matters including the creation and operation of management plans with special attention to the cost of plans, their timeliness, management plan priority setting and assessment criteria. Over the course of the reporting period, the MPRC also made a significant contribution to final and draft plans under development. These relate to the following areas of the conservation estate:

- Cape Range National Park
- Dryandra Woodland
- Shannon and D'Entrecasteaux National Parks
- Shark Bay Terrestrial Reserves and Proposed Reserve Additions
- Millstream Chichester National Park and Mungaroon Nature Reserve
- Proposed Murujuga Range National Park
- Parks and reserves of Yanchep and Neerabup
- Northern Yilgarn (Mount Manning Range, Mount Elvire and Jaurdi) Conservation Areas.
- Tuart Forest National Park
- Parks and Reserves of the Lake Muir, Perup, Kingston, Tone and Unicup Area
- Parks of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste Ridge, Scott National Park and Gingilup Swamps Nature Reserve
- Lane Poole Reserve and Proposed Reserve Additions

## Improving the Management Planning Process

Last year's annual report reiterated the Conservation Commission's ongoing concern about the need for the timely and efficient production of management plans that are useful and

relevant for managers and the lack of progress that had been made in this area, despite past efforts on the part of the Conservation Commission.

During the 2008-2009 reporting period, the Conservation Commission has been instrumental, and has worked with DEC, in bringing about significant progress in this area. Progress has been achieved primarily through three key steps that have been taken by the Conservation Commission throughout the period.

First, the Conservation Commission adopted a set of principles that will guide the management planning process from now on. Planning areas now relate to a geographical area that contains a suite of reserves rather than to individual reserves. As a general rule, plans are to be concise and focused on relevant values, threats and management responses. In addition, whilst retaining possibilities for more aspirational goals, objectives and strategies contained within plans will be more precise, specific, achievable, realistic, time-related and measurable, thus providing clear management direction.

At the same time, the Conservation Commission has initiated a research project through Murdoch University that will provide information about current trends in management planning. The research will also provide advice about the needs of stakeholders in management planning and will be used to further guide the changes in the management planning process. The full report on the research is due to be finalised by September 2009 for consideration by the Conservation Commission.

Thirdly, a staff role has been created within the Conservation Commission Service Unit that is dedicated to the management planning project. This has seen the Conservation Commission more able to assist in the development of strategies and guidelines. These include the development of a framework for planning regions. A total of 35 new planning regions have been broadly mapped for the State, which can be used to guide final planning region boundaries. A framework for converting to the new planning regions has also been produced, which takes into consideration the reserves, existing plans, plans under development and special issues in each of the planning regions. The Conservation Commission is currently working with DEC to establish the most effective set of steps for approvals. These activities will see further progress throughout the 2009-2010 period. A summary of the status of those management plans under development or review as at 30 June 2009 is shown in Table 3.

## Summary of management plan progress

The following table provides an indication of progress of draft and final management plans at the end of the reporting period.

**Table 3: Summary of Management Plan Progress**

|                              | <b>Changed approach to management plans</b>  | <b>Preparation of draft plan</b>   | <b>Endorsement of plan by Conservation Commission</b>   | <b>Comment</b>  |
|------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Albany Coastal Reserves      | Under the new Planning Region framework, this area represents the southern portion of the area referred to as <i>Albany Coastal Reserves</i> .   | Draft plan commenced in September 2004. A public participation strategy is yet to be prepared. Gull Rock and Mt Martin reserves Community Working Groups formed in December 2004. Community Advisory Committee formed in January 2007. Issues paper is in preparation. |   | New Planning Officer appointed 2008.  |
| Barrow Island Nature Reserve | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Pilbara Islands</i> .   | Draft plan commenced in October 2007.  |   | Finalisation of draft plan pending legal advice and negotiations with Gorgon Joint Venture. |
| Cape Range National Park*    | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area forms part of the planning region referred to as <i>Ningaloo Coast</i> . | Draft plan commenced in May 2003. Public participation strategy released in May 2003. Community Advisory Committee formed in July 2003 (reformed in May 2007). Aboriginal Park Council formed in April 2004. Issues paper released in April 2004.                      | Final plan submitted to the Conservation Commission on 6 September 2008. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission on 6 September 2008. | Submitted to Minister in May 2009.  |

|   | <b>Changed approach to management plans</b>   | <b>Preparation of draft plan</b>   | <b>Endorsement of plan by Conservation Commission</b>   | <b>Comment</b>   |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Dampier Archipelago Terrestrial Reserves*                       | Under the new Planning Region framework, this area forms part of the planning region referred to as <i>Pilbara Islands</i> .  | Draft plan commenced in March 2002. Public participation strategy released in October 2002. Issues paper released in March 2002.   |   |  |
| Dryandra Woodland*  | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area forms part of the planning region referred to as <i>Wheatbelt</i> . | Draft plan commenced in August 2005.   | Final plan submitted to the Conservation Commission on 13 October 2008. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission on 13 October 2008. | To be submitted to Minister in late 2009.  |
| Esperance Coastal Reserves                                      | Under the new Planning Region framework, this area relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Esperance Coast</i> .   | Draft plan commenced in January 2005. Public participation strategy in preparation. Community Advisory Committee notified in August 2002. Issues paper released in March 2007. |   | Indications are that a draft plan will be available sometime in the first half of 2010.  |
| Kalbarri National Park  | Under new Planning Region framework, this area represents the southern portion of the planning region referred to as <i>Shark Bay</i> .   | Draft plan commenced in 1999. Community Advisory Committee formed in July 1999. A public participation strategy and an issues paper are yet to be prepared.                    |   | Preparation of the draft plan has been delayed due to the process for pastoral lease acquisitions and availability of a Planning Officer.            |
| Parks and reserves of Lake Muir, Perup, Kingston, Tone & Unicup | This plan is the first to relate to an entire new planning region. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Muir</i> .                               | Draft plan commenced in July 2008. Issues Paper released in January 2009.  |   | First draft plan was prepared in 2000, released but never finalised due to the creation of new parks in the area. Planning recommenced in July 2008. |

|   | <b>Changed approach to management plans</b>  | <b>Preparation of draft plan</b>   | <b>Endorsement of plan by Conservation Commission</b>   | <b>Comment</b>   |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Lane Poole Reserve*<br>(to replace existing plan)                               | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Lane Poole</i> .          | Draft plan commenced in January 2004. Public participation strategy released in January 2004. Community Advisory Committee formed in September 2002 (reformed May 2004). Issues paper released in February 2004.               | Draft plan submitted to the Conservation Commission in November 2008. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission in November 2008. | The Minister released the draft plan in June 2009.                                       |
| Leeuwin-Naturaliste Capes Area Parks and Reserves*                              | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Leeuwin Naturaliste</i> . | Draft plan commenced in April 2000. Public participation strategy released in June 2003. Community Advisory Committee formed in April 2000. Issues paper released in September 2001.   | Final plan submitted to the Conservation Commission in November 2008. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission in November 2008. | To be submitted to Minister in late 2009.  |
| Millstream-Chichester National Park and Mungaroona Range Nature Reserve         | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Millstream</i> .          | Draft plan commenced in January 1998. Community Advisory Committee, Aboriginal Park Council, formed May 2003. Planning commenced prior to the current system of preparing a public participation strategy and an issues paper. | Final plan submitted to the Conservation Commission in October 2008. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission in October 2008.   | Submission to Minister pending further negotiations with local Aboriginal organisations. |
| Northern Yilgarn (Mt Manning Range, Mt Elvire and Jaurdi) Conservation Reserves | Under the new Planning Region framework, this area relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Yilgarn Woodlands</i> .  | Draft plan commenced in February 2006. Issues Paper released in April 2008.  |   | To be submitted to Minister in late 2009.  |

|  | <b>Changed approach to management plans</b>  | <b>Preparation of draft plan</b>   | <b>Endorsement of plan by Conservation Commission</b>   | <b>Comment</b>   |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Ord River and Parry Lagoons Nature Reserves                    | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Kununurra</i> .                 | Draft plan commenced in March 2008. Issues Paper released in January 2009.   |   | Endorsement of draft plan pending further negotiations with local Aboriginal organisations.                  |
| Proposed St John Brook and Jarrahwood Conservation Parks       | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area nominally relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Southern Jarrah</i> . | Draft plan commenced in June 2002.   | Final plan submitted to the Conservation Commission in November 2005. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission in December 2005.       | Submitted to Minister in February 2007. Awaiting creation of reserves before approval by current government. |
| Shannon and D'Entrecasteaux National Parks*                    | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area relates to the planning region referred to as <i>Southern Forest</i> .           | Draft plan commenced in January 1999. Community Advisory Committee formed or notified in June 1999. Planning commenced prior to the current system of preparing a public participation strategy and an issues paper. | Final plan submitted to the Conservation Commission on 6 September 2008. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission on 6 September 2008. | Submitted to Minister in May 2009.   |
| Shark Bay Terrestrial Reserves and Proposed Reserve Additions* | Under the new Planning Region framework, this area represents the northern portion of the planning region referred to as <i>Shark Bay</i> .  | Draft plan commenced in May 2005. Public participation strategy released in October 2005. Community Advisory Committee formed in March 2006. Issues paper released in October 2005.                                  | Final plan submitted to the Conservation Commission on 10 March 2009. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission on 10 March 2009.       | To be submitted to Minister in late 2009.  |

|   | <b>Changed approach to management plans</b>   | <b>Preparation of draft plan</b>  | <b>Endorsement of plan by Conservation Commission</b>   | <b>Comment</b>  |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tuart Forest National Park  | Under the new Planning Region framework, this area is related to the planning region referred to as <i>Swan Coastal Plan South</i> .  | Draft plan commenced in April 2005. Public participation strategy released in July 2006. Community Advisory Committee formed in October 2006. Issues Paper released in July 2006. |   |   |
| Walpole Wilderness Area and Adjacent Parks and Reserves*                              | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area is related to the planning region referred to as <i>Walpole</i> .         | Draft plan commenced in June 2002. Public participation strategy released in May 2003. Community Advisory Committee formed in January 2003. Issues paper released in March 2003.  | Final plan submitted to the Conservation Commission on 10 December 2007. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission on 10 December 2007. | Submitted to Minister in April 2008. Approval by Minister: Pending.<br>Re-submitted to Minister: in March 2009. |
| Wellington National Park, Westralia Conservation Park and Wellington Discovery Forest | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area is related to the planning region referred to as <i>Southern Jarrah</i> . | Draft plan commenced in March 2002. Public participation strategy released in July 2002. Community Advisory Committee formed in March 2002. Issues paper released June 2002.      | Final plan submitted to the Conservation Commission on May 2008. Endorsed by the Conservation Commission on May 2008                  | Plan has been approved by the Minister.   |
| Yalgorup National Park and Adjacent Parks and Reserves                                | Under the new Planning Region framework, this area is related to the planning region referred to as <i>Swan Coastal Plain South</i> .   | Draft plan commenced in March 2009.   |   |   |

|  | <b>Changed approach to management plans</b>  | <b>Preparation of draft plan</b>   | <b>Endorsement of plan by Conservation Commission</b> | <b>Comment</b> |
|--|--|--|---|----------------|
| Yanchep and Neerabup National Parks and Neerabup Nature Reserve* | The plan was prepared prior to the adoption of the changed approach to management plans. Under the new Planning Region framework, this area is related to the planning region referred to as <i>Swan Coastal Plain North</i> . | Draft plan commenced in August 2001. Public participation strategy released August 2001. Community Advisory Committee formed in July 2001. Issues paper released in August 2001. |   |                |

\*These plans are being produced to replace an existing plan.

## Forest Management

The Conservation Commission has a statutory role to prepare forest management plans for vested lands. The FMP, which covers all land categories vested in the Conservation Commission and freehold land held in the name of the Director General of DEC, within DEC's Swan, South West and Warren regions, aims to ensure that State forest and timber reserves in particular, are managed according to the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management. The reporting period saw the completion of the fifth year of implementation of the FMP (2004-2008) and a mid-term audit of performance on implementation of the plan provided to the EPA (see further information below).

Implementation of the FMP is the responsibility of the Conservation Commission, DEC and the FPC, with the Conservation Commission undertaking independent audits of the effectiveness of land management by the other two agencies under the FMP.

### Mid-Term Audit of Performance

In accordance with Ministerial conditions attached to the FMP, the Conservation Commission undertook a mid-term audit of performance of the FMP. The audit assessed whether land in the plan area had been managed in accordance with the plan and considered the extent to which key performance indicator targets had been achieved.

The Conservation Commission worked with DEC and the FPC throughout 2008 to gather information and assess the agencies performance against the actions and key performance indicators of the Plan.

Some of the key FMP actions addressed in the mid-term audit included progress of implementation of formal reserves proposed under the *Protecting our old-growth forests* policy; implementation of fauna habitat zones; the annual removals of wood products compared to the sustained yield estimated by the plan; soil management and the management of the effects of climate change on forest ecosystems.

The audit highlighted a number of areas in which the FMP had delivered including the establishment of important national parks; the establishment of an old-growth assessment process, which includes the opportunity for public nomination; and improved silvicultural practices, such as the increased protection of soil and water.

The audit also identified a number of areas where there were shortfalls including changes to the threat category of several fauna species; the lack of progression of forest conservation areas; and the need to gain a better understanding of how Western Australia's forest ecosystems should be managed under a changing climate.

The audit was provided to the EPA in December 2008 and made available for public comment during April to June 2009.

### Old-Growth Forests

Through the FMP, approximately 331,370 hectares of old-growth forest has been set aside from timber harvesting in formal and informal reserves.

The FMP also identifies an additional portion of forest for the Conservation Commission to assess. This portion of the FMP area consists of 9,387 hectares of State forest which was reclassified from old-growth to non old-growth by DEC (ex CALM) between 1997 and 2001. A further 2,650 hectares of other crown land which is not vested in the Conservation Commission was also reclassified in DEC's corporate database during the same period and is also subject to this assessment.

The methodology applied for these assessments is outlined in the document *Assessment Criteria and Process for the Conservation Commission Review of Old-Growth Amendments* which was released in December 2005. This document describes the process for the assessment of reclassifications of old-growth forest together with a process to allow the public to nominate areas of forest they consider to be old growth for assessment by the Conservation Commission. There was considerable stakeholder consultation through its development including the provision of field demonstrations for interested stakeholders. The assessment process is ongoing and involves remote and field assessment techniques.

To facilitate greater public access to these reports an on-line publishing system has been developed for the Conservation Commission website. Detailed results including aerial maps of all old-growth assessments can be easily accessed via the Conservation Commission's website at <http://www.conservation.wa.gov.au/growth.htm>. During the reporting period the Conservation Commission undertook and published four assessments of old-growth forest extent in Beaton, Burnside, Easter and Mowen forest blocks.

## **Old-Growth Review Areas**

### **Beaton**

Both field assessment and remote analysis was undertaken for areas within Beaton block totaling approximately 130 hectares. Records for Beaton block indicated harvesting activity from 1920-1929. Large areas were also mapped as dieback infested with positive dieback samples collected. The recommendation made by the Conservation Commission was that the 130 hectares within Beaton block did not meet the minimum criteria of old-growth forest.

### **Burnside**

Both field assessment and remote analysis was undertaken for areas within Burnside block totaling approximately 37 hectares. Records for Burnside indicated much of the area mapped as jarrah forest to be infested with dieback with positive dieback samples collected. The recommendation made by the Conservation Commission was that 13.5 hectares within Burnside block met the criteria for old-growth forest.

### **Easter**

Both field assessment and remote analysis were undertaken for areas within Easter block totaling 14 hectares. Records for Easter block indicated harvesting activity from 1960-1969. A small area was mapped as dieback infested with positive dieback samples collected. The recommendation made by the Conservation Commission was that 14 hectares within Easter block did not meet the criteria of old-growth forest.

### **Mowen**

Remote assessment was undertaken for a half hectare area within Mowen block. Records for Mowen block indicated the area to be infested with dieback with positive dieback samples adjacent to the polygon. The recommendation made by the Conservation Commission was that the 0.5 hectares within Mowen block did not meet the criteria of old-growth forest.

## **Summary of Assessment of Old-Growth Areas**

During the reporting period, approximately 182 hectares, in 4 forest blocks, were subject to reclassification work that was completed and endorsed by the Conservation Commission. Of the 182 hectares, the reclassification to non old-growth was confirmed for approximately 168.5 hectares while approximately 13.5 hectares were found to have been incorrectly reclassified and are now identified as old-growth forest. Please see Table 4 for a breakdown of the assessments.

**Table 4: Summary of old-growth assessment carried out during the reporting period**

| Block Name | Area classified as old-growth (ha) | Area classified as non old-growth (ha) | Total area under review (ha) |
|------------|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Beaton     | Nil                                | 130                                    | 130                          |
| Burnside   | 13.5                               | 23.5                                   | 37                           |
| Easter     | Nil                                | 14                                     | 14                           |
| Mowen      | Nil                                | 1                                      | 1                            |
| Total area | 13.5                               | 168.5                                  | 182                          |

### Public nomination of old-growth

As required in the FMP, and further detailed in the Conservation Commission's paper *Assessment criteria and process for the Conservation Commission review of old-growth amendments*, there is a public nomination process for persons to request the Conservation Commission to assess whether areas should be classified as old-growth in DEC's corporate database.

During the reporting period the Conservation Commission received three such requests, Quindanning, Gregory and Warrup forest blocks. Reports have been published for Quindanning and Gregory community nominations. Remote and field assessments have been completed for Warrup. The details of the Warrup assessment are to be released in the next reporting period.

#### Quindanning

Quindanning forest block contains predominantly jarrah forest. Both remote and field assessments were conducted in an area of approximately 18 hectares of which 7.3 hectares was determined to meet the criteria for minimally disturbed old-growth forest.

#### Gregory

Gregory forest block contains predominantly jarrah forest with varying predominance of marri and blackbutt. Both remote and field assessments were conducted in an area of approximately 333 hectares. Canopy sampling was undertaken at 5 different locations. A total of 151.8 hectares of was determined to meet the criteria for minimally disturbed old-growth forest.

**Table 5: Summary of public nominations carried out during the reporting period**

| Block Name  | Area found to be old-growth (ha) | Area found to be non old-growth (ha) | Total area assessed under nomination (ha) |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Gregory     | 151.8                            | 181.2                                | 333                                       |
| Quindanning | 7.3                              | 10.7                                 | 18  |
| Warrup      | pending                          | pending                              | 573                                       |
| Total area  | 159.1                            | 191.9                                | 924                                       |

### Fauna Habitat Zones

Fauna habitat zones (FHZs) within State forests and timber reserves are intended to maintain fauna populations and to provide a source for recolonisation of nearby areas after timber harvesting. There are approximately 300 indicative FHZs, of at least 200 hectares each, designed to provide a sufficiently extensive network of areas excluded from timber harvesting to maintain fauna numbers.

The Conservation Commission provides advice to DEC concerning proposed locations of FHZs. To assist in the development of this advice, the Conservation Council of Western

Australia, under an agreement with the Conservation Commission, provides reports on DEC's proposed FHZs.

#### Summary of fauna habitat zones

During the reporting period the Conservation Commission provided advice to DEC on 15 proposed FHZs in the following forest blocks:

- Batalling
- Bristol
- Chandler
- Clare
- Clarke
- Curara
- Driver
- Happy Valley
- Hillman
- Mowen
- Mundlimup
- Nelson
- Yornup

The reports supported DEC's proposed FHZs. The Conservation Commission recommended one minor boundary change.

As of 30 June 2008 there were a further nine FHZs under consideration.

During the reporting period the Conservation Commission, DEC and the Conservation Council's representatives (Western Australian Forest Alliance) worked together to improve and streamline the process for assessing the indicative and interim FHZs. This has ensured timely provision of advice back to DEC with the intention of improving the FHZ finalisation part of the harvest planning process.

## **Performance Assessment**

Two Conservation Reserve Performance Assessments were published in 2008/2009 and one 12 month review of a previous year's assessment. These were the management plan assessments for Yalgorup and Purnululu National Parks.

### **Yalgorup National Park**

This Conservation Commission performance assessment reviewed the implementation of the Yalgorup National Park Management Plan 1995 – 2005 reporting on information gathered in 2008. Eight key findings resulted in responses from DEC.

### **Purnululu National Park**

This Conservation Commission performance assessment reviewed the implementation of the Purnululu National Park Management Plan 1995 – 2005 reporting on information gathered in 2008. Eight key findings resulted in responses from DEC.

## **Dryandra Woodlands Performance Assessment – 12 Month Review**

A twelve month review was undertaken of the Dryandra Woodlands Performance Assessment from the previous financial year.

## **Wungong Catchment Environment and Water Management Project**

One Forest Management Plan Performance Assessment (FMPPA) was undertaken in 2008/2009. This FMPPA reviewed the implementation of the Water Corporation's 'Wungong Catchment Environment and Water Management Project'. The performance assessment was finalised in 2008 but not published at the time of finalising the Annual Report.

## **Status Performance Assessment – Biodiversity Conservation of Western Australian Islands**

One Status Performance Assessment (SPA) was undertaken in 2008/2009. The Conservation Commission conducted an assessment of biodiversity conservation on Western Australian islands. An assessment workshop was held on 6 March 2008. The assessment had a broad focus. Of the 2562 islands, islets and rocks in Western Australia (WA), about 635 (24.7%) are vested in the Conservation Commission. WA's islands have very high biodiversity conservation values. The performance assessment was finalised in 2008 but not published at the time of finalising the Annual Report.

## **Advice and Promotion Meetings with the Minister for Environment**

During the reporting period the Chairman of the Conservation Commission met with the Minister for Environment to inform the Minister of current issues facing the Conservation Commission and to provide advice on issues raised by the Minister. Additionally, the Conservation Commission provided advice on specific issues concerning the conservation estate as and when required.

## **New-Look Conservation Commission Website**

The Conservation Commission website, ([www.conservation.wa.gov.au](http://www.conservation.wa.gov.au)), underwent a complete redesign during the reporting period. The focus on the new site is in providing a document centre that allows for ease of access to Conservation Commission publications searchable by topic and region. The main goal of the site is to enable greater community involvement through the provision of regular updates on outcomes via the media centre. The Conservation Commission's current focus can be seen in the Featured Document section on the home page.

## **Interaction with Other Agencies**

In order to ensure it effectively conducts its responsibilities the Conservation Commission works closely with a range of other agencies on a variety of issues. The Conservation Commission works closely with DEC on a day to day basis.

The Conservation Commission works collaboratively with other environmental agencies including the EPA and the MPRA. It also has association with the FPC, Department of Mines and Petroleum, Tourism Commission, Western Australian Museum, local government authorities, Department of Indigenous Affairs, Rottnest Island Authority, Main Roads, Water Corporation, Department of Water, Office of Native Title, Swan River Trust, and Office of the Auditor General for Western Australia.

One of the Conservation Commission's key functions is to promote and facilitate community involvement in the conservation of Western Australia's environment. Outside the public sector, the Conservation Commission works with a range of community, conservation and industry stakeholders, as well as Indigenous representatives to ensure that policies and plans meet the balanced needs of the wider community. This includes regular interactions with the Conservation Council of Western Australia and the Australian Wildlife Conservancy.

## Participation on External Committees

The following members represented the Conservation Commission on other committees, or as observers on Advisory Committees and Park Councils as noted.

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Dr John Bailey           | Esperance Coastal Reserves Community Advisory Committee<br>Albany Coastal Reserves Management Plan Advisory Committee<br>Chair of Gull Rock National Park Community Working Group<br>Chair of Mt Martin Botanic Park and Voyager Park Community Working Group<br>Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council  |
| Mrs Patricia Barblett AM | Founder and immediate past President, now an Executive Board Member of Forum Advocating Cultural and Ecotourism.<br>Capes Parks Community Advisory Committee<br>Member Maritime Museum Advisory Committee<br>Member Bush Bank Steering Committee of the National Trust<br>Deputy Chair, Project Reference Committee for Southern Darling Region Recreation Strategy for Inland Water Bodies and Catchments<br>Member of the Rottneest Island Foundation Inc<br>Deputy Chair Rottneest Conservation Foundation<br>Member of the Kaitajin Mia Mia Foundation (Bush University)<br>Member Southern Darling Range Recreational Study |
| Ms Regina Flugge         | Millstream Chichester Park Council   |
| Karen Jacobs             | Board Member Rottneest Island Authority  |
| Dr David Newsome         | Cape Range Advisory Council<br>Shark Bay Advisory Committee<br>Coral Coast Advisory Committee  |
| Mr Graeme Rundle         | Kalbarri National Park Community Advisory Committee<br>Yanchep and Neerabup National Parks Community Advisory Committee<br>Tuart Forest Community Advisory Committee   |

The majority of Commissioners are also members in a wide variety of community-based committees. While not formally representing the Conservation Commission in these instances this does provide networking and information sharing opportunities that help to build upon stakeholder relationships and increase the public profile of the Conservation Commission. Examples include: the Perth Noongar Foundation, National Long Term Tourism Advisory Committee, the Coastal Planning and Coordination Council, Pastoral Lands Board, Port Kennedy Management Board, Golden Gecko Selection Panel, Dieback Consultative Council, Perth Airport Environmental Consultative Group, and IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas.

## Significant Issues Impacting the Agency

### Strategic Plan

The Conservation Commission completed its review of the strategic plan. A copy of the plan for the period 2009-2011 will be available on the Conservation Commission's website. The

development of the strategic plan provided an opportunity to clarify the Conservation Commission's purpose, vision and critical success factors.

Guiding principles outlined in the strategic plan include the need to consider:

- the need to comply with relevant State Government policies and national and international treaties, protocols and conventions relating to ecologically sustainable development and biological diversity conservation;
- the need for the application of the precautionary principle;
- the need for intergenerational equity;
- the need for community involvement and participation;
- the need for the involvement of indigenous peoples and consideration of their perspectives, cultural needs and rights;
- the need for community appreciation and enjoyment of the natural environment;
- the need to maintain a diverse range of values, incl. cultural & heritage values; and/or
- the need to maintain the integrity of the conservation estate.

High level objectives outlined in the strategic plan include:

- The development of a world-class parks system
- Best practice estate management
- Reduced biodiversity loss
- Appreciation of our unique flora, fauna, landscape and heritage by all
- Encourage partnerships and stewardships

The strategic plan also sets out the Conservation Commission's action plans for the future. These include the introduction of report card monitoring and board governance procedures as well as the practical maintenance of existing strengths associated with management plans, forest management planning and performance assessments.

## **Joint Management**

The joint management of Western Australia's natural areas is an ongoing priority of the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission will continue to seek opportunities to become more closely involved in joint management initiatives. The Conservation Commission's role in joint management includes statutory management planning and performance assessment.

## **Improving the Management Planning Process**

The implementation of changes to the way in which management plans are prepared remains a major task for the Conservation Commission and its staff. Changes to the management planning have been underpinned by a consultative approach throughout and communication with DEC has been a central part of the process of change. The process for approving management plans is important for the change process and the Conservation Commission is currently working with Parks and Visitor Services to establish the most effective set of steps for approvals.

## **Performance Assessment**

As part of its ongoing responsibility for audit, the Conservation Commission will continue to implement its performance assessment program, including fire related assessments, assessments under the FMP and assessments of management plan implementation in reserves in other parts of the State.

## **Greater Community Engagement**

The need for greater community engagement and participation in the activities of the Conservation Commission continues to be a major consideration. The Conservation

Commission also acknowledges that there is still a degree of confusion as to the roles and responsibilities of the Conservation Commission amongst the general public.

To facilitate greater public inclusion and information access, a complete overhaul of the website was completed during the reporting period.

Over the next reporting period the Conservation Commission will work towards greater community engagement and consultation through a variety of mechanisms including further improvements to the website, including a review of how well it is currently meeting demand.

## Proposed Reserves

A number of proposed reserves are awaiting tenure changes so they can be added to the Conservation Estate. This includes a large number of pastoral leases in the Rangelands purchased by DEC for the purpose of conservation, along with long standing reservation proposals. The Conservation Commission considers that a whole of Government approach is required in order to meet appropriate CAR outcomes.

## Disclosures and Legal Compliance

### Financial Statements

Funding for the activities of the Conservation Commission is provided for by DEC with administrative arrangements being handled by that agency. The reporting and audit of expenditure is undertaken by DEC and, as required, is incorporated into DEC's annual report. Total expenditure by the Conservation Commission, and the associated support unit, was \$913,000 as identified in DEC's 2008-2009 annual report.

### Detailed Key Performance Indicators Information

The Conservation Commission's performance is reported at *Performance of statutory functions by the Conservation Commission of WA – Service 3* in DEC's annual report. The performance indicator reported is the average cost per management plan and significant policy submitted for the Conservation Commission's consideration.

### Other legal requirements

#### Advertising

(*Electoral Act 1907*, section 175ZE)

In accordance with section 175ZE of the *Electoral Act 1907*, the Conservation Commission of Western Australia incurred the following expenditure in advertising, market research, polling, direct mail and media advertising:

Total expenditure for 2008-2009 was \$2010.50

Expenditure was incurred in the following areas:

FMP \$809.50

Member ads \$1201

| Expense Type                  | Amount | Supplier |
|-------------------------------|--------|----------|
| Advertising agencies          | nil    |          |
| Market research organisations | nil    |          |
| Polling organisations         | nil    |          |
| Direct mail organisations     | nil    |          |

|   |           |                     |
|---|-----------|---------------------|
| Media advertising (including employment, public participation notices and advertising of contracts) | \$2010.50 | The West Australian |
|---|-----------|---------------------|

## Disability access and inclusion plan outcomes

*(Disability Services Act 1993, amended 2004, section 29)*

Under its operational relationship agreement with DEC that agency's policy relating to disability access and inclusion is adopted.

## Compliance with public sector standards and ethical codes

*(Public Sector Management Act 1994, section 31(1))*

DEC undertakes human resource management for the Conservation Commission under an operational relationship agreement.

In the administration of the Conservation Commission, the Director has complied with the Public Sector Standards in Human Resource Management, the Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics and the Conservation Commission's Code of Conduct.

Information on both the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct is provided to employees on commencement with the Conservation Commission.

No complaints have been lodged under the Code of Ethics during the reporting period and there have been no instances of misconduct.

## Recordkeeping plans

A Record Keeping Plan Review Report was submitted to the State Records Office in 2008 in compliance with the *State Records Act 2003*. A review of the Record Keeping Plan is currently in process and due to be submitted to the State Records Office by December 2009. The plan will incorporate recommendations made in the Review Report. A review of management of vital records was undertaken in 2009 and recommendations for improvements to security, storage and retrieval processes have been implemented.

As part of the Conservation Commission's employee induction program, all staff receive basic training in record keeping. This is conducted using DEC's online Record Keeping Awareness program. This addresses employee roles and responsibilities in regard to their compliance with the recordkeeping plan. To meet job requirements the Executive Assistant also received ongoing detailed training, through DEC, in the use of Objective, the records management program used by the Conservation Commission.

As the recordkeeping training program is provided by DEC, the review of its efficiency and effectiveness is conducted by DEC.

## Ministerial directives

In the reporting period there have been no instances under the CALM Act section 24 where the Minister has given the Conservation Commission directions in writing with respect to the exercise or performance of its functions.

In accordance with the CALM Act section 17(4), there have also been no instances where advice has been provided to the Minister under section 19(10) and the Minister has decided to act otherwise than in accordance with the recommendation.

## Government policy requirements

### Corruption prevention

*(Premier's Circular 2005/02 : Corruption Prevention)*

The Conservation Commission operates under an Operational Relationship Agreement with DEC which includes adoption of DEC's Code of Conduct.

All new staff are inducted according to DEC's induction program, which includes ensuring they are informed about information and asset security as well as guidelines for private use of vehicles, if applicable. The Conservation Commission complies with DEC's administrative policies and procedures as they relate to corruption prevention issues such as the use of credit cards.

### Substantive equality

*(Premiers Circular 2009/23: Implementation of the Policy Framework for Substantive Equality)*

The Conservation Commission operates under an Operational Relationship Agreement with DEC which includes departmental representation on the Strategic Management Council. Information on DEC progress achieved in implementing the Policy Framework for Substantive Equality can be found in the Annual Report of the DEC.

### Occupational health and safety management

*(Premiers Circular 2007/12: Code of Practice: Occupational Safety and Health in the Western Australian Public Sector)*

The Conservation Commission operates under an Operational Relationship Agreement with DEC which includes provision of occupational health and safety management and the adoption of Occupational Health and Safety policy and guidelines set down by DEC.

**Table 6 Summary of Occupational Safety and Health incidences**

| <b>Indicator</b>                                 | <b>Target 2008/2009</b> |
|--|-------------------------|
| Number of fatalities                             | Zero (0)                |
| Lost time injury/diseases (LTI/D) incidence rate | Zero (0)                |
| <b>Lost time injury severity rate</b>            | <b>Zero (0)</b>         |

Information provided by DEC Risk Management Section

# APPENDIX 1

## Functions of the Conservation Commission

### Policy

- To develop policies —
  - for the preservation of the natural environment of the State and the provision of facilities, and;
  - for the enjoyment of that environment by the community, and;
  - for promoting the appreciation of flora and fauna and the natural environment, and;
  - to achieve or promote the objectives for management plans, taking into account specific requirements referred to in the CALM Act pertaining to State forests, timber reserves, national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves and other vested land, and;
  - to advise the Minister on the development of policies for the conservation and management of biodiversity and biodiversity components throughout the State, and;
  - with the approval of the Minister, to cause study or research to be undertaken for the purposes of the development of policies.

### Estate

- To have vested in it State forest, timber reserves, national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves, relevant land referred to in section 5(1)(g) of the CALM Act and to have the joint management function with other bodies as provided for in the CALM Act.
- To have the care, control and management of relevant land referred to in section 5(1)(h) of the CALM Act placed with it.
- To consider any cancellation, change of purpose or boundary alteration in respect of land vested, whether solely or jointly with an associated body, in the Conservation Commission.
- To be consulted on matters relating to the granting of licenses, leases, permits and mining tenement applications on land vested in the Conservation Commission.

### Management Plans

- To be responsible for the preparation of proposed management plans, and the review of existing management plans for all lands vested in the Conservation Commission.
- To prepare, as the controlling body, proposed management plans for land vested in the Conservation Commission –
  - through the agency of DEC;
  - if the vested land is State forest or a timber reserve, the Conservation Commission through the agency of DEC in consultation with the FPC; or
  - if the vested land is or includes a public water catchment area, the Conservation Commission through the agency of the DEC in consultation with the Minister (Water Resources) and the Department of Water.
- To submit proposed management plans to the Minister for approval.
- In relation to management plans for land vested, whether solely or jointly with an associated body, in the Conservation Commission —

- to develop guidelines for monitoring and assessing the implementation of the management plans by DEC;
- to set performance criteria for assessing and auditing the performance of DEC and the FPC in carrying out and complying with the management plans; and
- to assess and audit the performance of DEC and the FPC in carrying out and complying with the management plans.

### **Forest Management**

- To advise the Minister on the application of the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management in the management of —
  - State forest and timber reserves; and
  - forest produce throughout the State.
- To advise the Minister on the production and harvesting, on a sustained yield basis, of forest produce throughout the State.

### **Advice and Promotion**

- To inquire into and after relevant consultation, to advise the Minister on any matter on which the Minister requests advice.
- To provide advice, upon request, on matters relating to land and waters vested in the Conservation Commission, whether solely or jointly with an associated body, to any body or person, if the provision of the advice is in the public interest and it is practicable for the Conservation Commission to provide it.