



Government of **Western Australia**
Conservation and Parks Commission

Position Statement no. 2: Conservation reserve system proposals for lands vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission

July 2022

Current from	July 2022	For Review	June 2024
Version	1.0	Replaces	
Officer responsible	Director	File / Document No.	

The Commission's Position

The Conservation and Parks Commission (the Commission), established under section 18 of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act), is the Western Australian statutory authority in which terrestrial and marine conservation reserves are vested. The Commission has policy advisory functions to the Minister for Environment in relation to lands and waters wholly or jointly vested with traditional owners.

The Commission supports the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (the department) in establishing and managing, either solely or jointly, a state-wide conservation reserve system. The Commission is committed to maintaining the integrity of a reserve system that is comprehensive, adequate, and representative (CAR) for both marine and terrestrial areas.

Proposed additions to the conservation reserve system should follow the CAR principles and can occur from land donations, agreements with native title holders, environmental offsets, rationalisation of roading infrastructure, recommendations by the Environmental Protection Authority, State Government initiatives such as Plan for Our Parks, and whole of government agreement making to assist in the delivery of Closing the Gap outcomes and the State's Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy.

In 2012, the CALM Act was amended to include a new management objective to *protect the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons and enable ongoing access for Aboriginal customary activities*. Traditional owners can apply the provisions of the CALM Act and regulations to some of the lands where their traditional ownership is recognised. The Commission supports joint vesting and joint management of conservation reserves with traditional owners on lands vested solely or jointly under the CALM Act.

Background

The National Reserve System (NRS) is Australia's network of protected terrestrial areas, conserving examples of natural landscapes and native plants and animals for future generations. The NRS represents the collective efforts of the states, territories, the Australian Government, and non-government organisations to create a system of protected areas for long term conservation of biodiversity. While the NRS does not cover the establishment of protected areas in the marine environment, the NRS approach aligns with that of the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas, which provides for the conservation, protection, and management of marine and estuarine environments.

Western Australia's conservation reserve system is only part of the State's contribution to the NRS. The conservation reserve system is designed to enable the protection of native species and habitat, and the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people while providing for recreation and nature-based tourism opportunities.

The department identifies representative areas using scientifically based CAR criteria and may include areas of high amenity or cultural value. Using a landscape scale approach, areas may also be selected to enhance habitat connectivity and ecosystem resilience by linking ecosystems on conservation estate and private lands