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Shark Bay, Western Australia  
World Heritage since 1991

# Joint planning for and management of Malgana Country parks and reserves (Shark Bay | Gathaagudu)



Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions





## Joint planning for and management of Malgana Country parks and reserves (Shark Bay/ Gathaagudu)

We recognise and acknowledge Malgana people as the traditional owners of Shark Bay/Gathaagudu and pay our respects to them, their culture and Elders past and present.

Joint management is a partnership between traditional owners and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to work together to care for and provide ongoing protection and management of Country on Western Australia's conservation estate. Malgana Aboriginal Corporation and DBCA have commenced work towards the joint management of existing and proposed parks and reserves of Malgana Country within Shark Bay.

Cover:

Shell Beach, Shell Brach Conservation Park. Photo – Rory Chapple,/DBCA

Thorny devil (*Moloch horridus*). Photo – Steve Reynolds,/DBCA

Spinifex hopping mouse (*Notomys alexis*). Photo – Steve Reynolds/DBCA

Pom pom heads (*Cephalipterum drummondii*). Photo – Rory Chapple/DBCA



## Indigenous Land Use Agreement and Joint Management Agreement

Malgana and DBCA are currently negotiating an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) to agree how jointly managed parks and reserves will be used and managed. A Joint Management Agreement (JMA) will also be negotiated outlining how Malgana and DBCA will provide recommendations and make decisions about managing conservation estate, including protecting Malgana sites and values. Completion of the ILUA and JMA are expected by mid-2023.

## Conservation estate to be jointly managed

The existing reserves in Shark Bay proposed to be jointly managed include Francois Peron National Park, Dirk Hartog Island National Park and Shell Beach Conservation Park. Proposed areas where the creation of jointly managed conservation reserves are being considered include:

- South Peron,
- Ex Nanga pastoral lease
- Part ex Carrarang pastoral lease
- Part ex Yaringa pastoral lease
- Part ex Pimbee pastoral lease

The proposed reserves are likely to be conservation park, national park, or nature reserve. Nature reserves have high conservation values, represent natural ecosystems or provide habitat for plants or animal species. Their purpose is for the conservation of flora and fauna and they are managed to maintain and restore the natural environment. Recreation that promotes the study and appreciation of flora and fauna and is compatible with the reserve's purpose, such as bushwalking, is allowed.

National parks have nationally significant scenic, cultural or natural values and conservation parks have a mostly regional or local, rather than a national significance. Both protect the wildlife and landscape, preserve features of archaeological, historical or scientific interest, support scientific study and provide for visitor use that maintains or does not adversely impact these values.



Many of the areas under consideration are within the Shark Bay World Heritage Area. Shark Bay was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1991 based on its natural heritage values, satisfying all four of the natural criteria for World Heritage listing. These are:

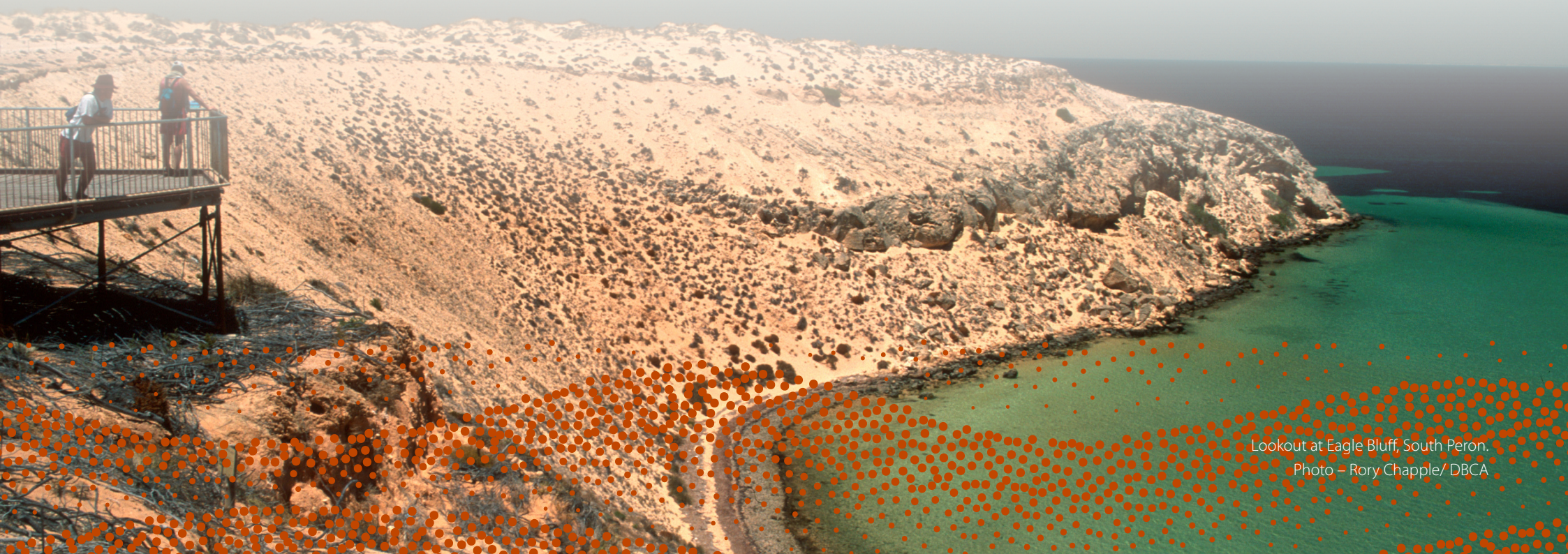
- outstanding examples representing the major stages of the earth's evolutionary history
- outstanding examples representing significant ongoing geological processes, biological evolution and human interaction with the natural environment
- superlative natural phenomena, formations or features (for example outstanding examples of the most important ecosystems, areas of exceptional natural beauty or exceptional combinations of natural and cultural elements)
- the most important and significant habitats where threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science and conservation still survive.

The existing and proposed reserves contain features which meet at least one of the World Heritage criteria. Key World Heritage values are:

- the peninsulas and islands which provide refuge for migratory and threatened fauna, including threatened mammals and bird species on Wirruwana (Dirk Hartog Island), and breeding sites for seabirds;
- exceptional scenery including Shell Beach and the birridas, lagoons and coastal cliffs of Peron Peninsula, and
- the botanical transition zone between the Eucalypt dominated Southwest Botanical Province and the Acacia dominated Eremaean Botanical Province.

The existing and proposed parks and reserves to be considered for joint management are shown on **Map 1**.

There are also proposed parks and reserves on Nanda Country, south of Useless Loop Road, within the Shark Bay World Heritage Area, that are being considered for joint management, via a separate process with Nanda Aboriginal Corporation.



Lookout at Eagle Bluff, South Peron.  
Photo – Rory Chapple/ DBCA





Eagle Cliff, South Peron.  
Photo – Rory Chapple/ DBCA

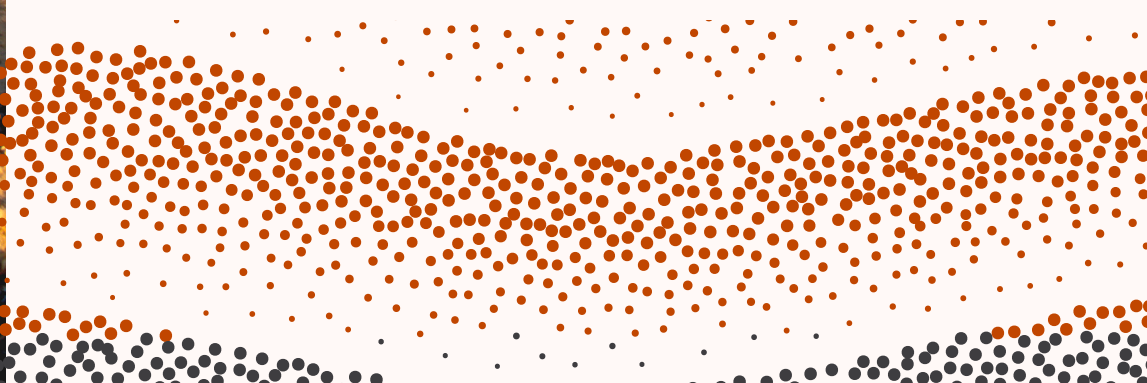
## Joint management plan

Joint management also includes the development of a joint management plan (the plan) which considers the natural, cultural, visitor use, community, economic and resource use values of the existing and proposed parks and reserves and outlines long-term management objectives and strategies to protect these. The plan will be prepared by joint management partners in accordance with the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act). The JMA being negotiated between Malgana and DBCA will be attached to the plan.

The plan will also be prepared in consultation with the community and stakeholders, once an ILUA has been agreed to, and the process will include:

1. collection and analysis of background information about the values and management issues of the existing and proposed parks and reserves
2. community and stakeholder consultation
3. preparation of the draft joint management plan
4. release of the draft joint management plan for public comment
5. analysis of submissions received during the public comment period
6. preparation and release of the final joint management plan

Australia has management obligations under the World Heritage Convention, administered under the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), to protect, conserve and present the World Heritage values of Shark Bay. These will also be addressed in the plan.





## Community consultation

Consultation events will provide opportunities for input from the community during the joint management planning process.

## Community workshop, May 2021

In May 2021, a workshop was held in Denham where the community was invited to share their knowledge, ideas and concerns about the management of existing and proposed reserves in Shark Bay, with a focus on South Peron.

Over 50 Shark Bay community members attended and shared what they valued about the area, where they go and what they do, activities they supported in various locations, their concerns, and the experiences and facilities they would like to see in the area. Participants shared a deep appreciation of, and concern for, the values of the Shark Bay World Heritage Area and emphasised the importance of maintaining access to remote recreation experiences.

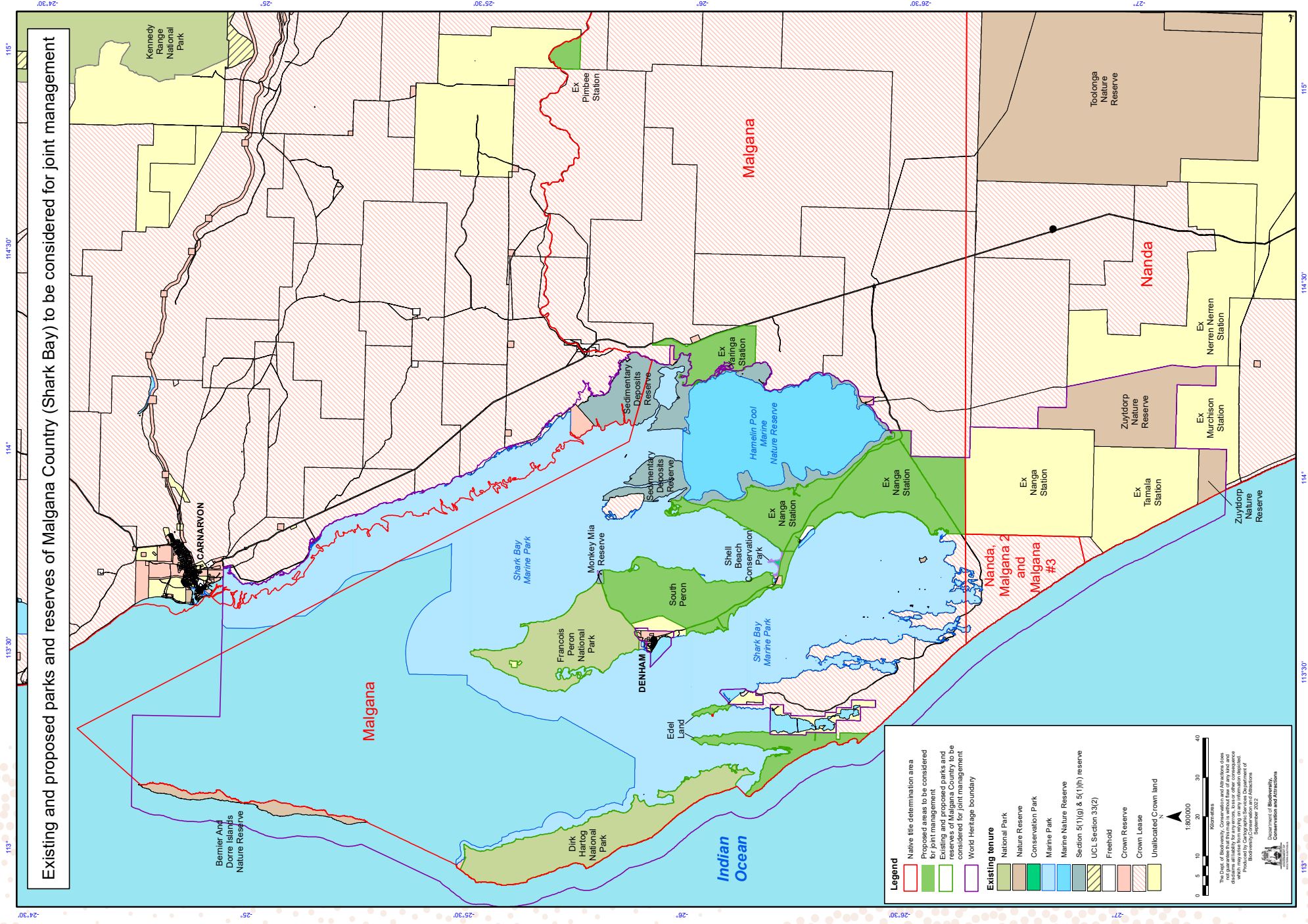
The community supported visitor activities such as walking, nature photography, picnicking, and camping, while opinion was divided on dog walking, recreational boating and fishing, and the use of off-road vehicles. Concerns were raised about the impacts of rapidly increasing visitor numbers, such as littering, overcrowding, degradation of vehicle tracks and damage to natural and cultural values.

Most participants did not support the development of visitor facilities in South Peron, on the basis that it would detract from the current remote experiences that the area provides. Suggested improvements included more four-wheel driving opportunities and the development of one-way loops, better visitor information, a greater ranger presence to improve visitor behaviour, and differing levels of management for areas visited by the local community (such as South Peron) and areas visited by tourists (such as Francois Peron National Park). The input provided by the community was highly valuable and will be considered in the development of the joint management plan for Malgana Country in Shark Bay.

Western spiny tailed skink (*Egernia stokesii badia*). Photo – Steve Reynolds/DBCA

A photograph of a Western spiny tailed skink (Egernia stokesii badia) resting on red sand. The lizard is positioned horizontally, facing right, with its body angled slightly upwards. Its scales are a mix of light tan and brown, with a prominent spiny ridge along its back. The sand is a vibrant red-orange color, and the background is a soft-focus expanse of the same sand. The lighting is bright, casting a clear shadow of the lizard onto the sand.









Turtle Bay, Wirruwana (Dirk Hartog Island).  
Photo – Rory Chapple

## Opportunities to have your say

Further community consultation will take place during development of the draft joint management plan, to incorporate community ideas and aspirations. The community and stakeholders will also have a say on the draft joint management plan when it is released for a two-month public comment period, and preparation of the final management plan will take those comments into account.

If you would like to discuss any matters relating to the joint management or the planning process, please contact.

### **Shark Bay parks and reserves management and operations**

Luke Skinner

District Manager

Gascoyne District

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Ph: (08) 9948 2226

### **Joint management plan**

Clare Atkins

Planning Officer

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Ph: (08) 9842 4556