



SHARK BAY

WORLD HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting 20 Communiqué

The twentieth meeting for the Shark Bay World Heritage Advisory Committee (SBWHAC) was held in Denham on 3rd – 5th December 2023. Six of the current committee members were in attendance, accompanied in person by DBCA's District Manager, Policy Advisor and World Heritage Executive Officer; and virtually with DCCEEW's Director, Assistant Director and Heritage Policy Officer.

FIELD TRIP

The Committee undertook a field trip on December 4th across southern Francois Peron National Park inclusive of Big Lagoon, Peron Homestead, Monkey Mia, Little Lagoon and the shorebird beach habitat adjacent to Little Lagoon.

Visitor Infrastructure: The committee inspected components of the visitor experience and infrastructure of Francois Peron National Park to conserve and rehabilitate sites.

Interpretation: The committee discussed the benefits of an overall World Heritage interpretation strategy for the property with the aim to be interactive and engaging for visitors and to raise awareness of the global, cultural, and environmental significance of the area.

Shorebirds: The committee noted the multi-tenure management challenges faced when protecting the Shorebird habitat near Little Lagoon. This challenge is present across the World Heritage site, along with the threat of invasive species and visitor use.

SEAGRASS RESTORATION PROJECTS

Shark Bay's Wooramel Seagrass Bank covers 103,000 hectares and is the largest seagrass bank in the world. With 12 species of seagrass, Shark Bay also has the greatest diversity of seagrass in one area. These amazing facts highlight the importance in protecting and conserving its health.

Two seagrass restoration trials were presented to the Committee in response to the significant dieback of seagrass following the 2011 marine heatwave event.

Shark Bay's extensive seagrass meadows act as a massive carbon sink which also provides a vital habitat for dugongs and sea turtles. The Committee supports the ongoing development of restoration research to assist seagrass recovery.

INDUSTRY OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The committee discussed a range of industry activities present in and adjacent to the Shark Bay World Heritage Area (SBWHA), relevant to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

Activities undertaken by:

1. Shark Bay Resources
2. RAC Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort

GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

The committee resolved the annual calendar of meeting dates for 2024 to support stakeholder engagement and progress with committee priorities, including strengthening the relationship and communication channels with both State and Federal government and encouraging further stakeholder engagement at Committee meetings.

RESEARCH

The committee were provided with a summary of recent research published pertaining to the SBWHA OUV's.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The committee were briefed by key government representatives on current planning activities and items of interest relevant to the SBWHA.

Attendance	
Committee Members	Government Presenters
Juliane Bush	Dr Therese Morris (DBCA) District Manager
Laura Gray	Michelle Harrison (DBCA) Heritage Policy Officer
Dr David Newsome	Dr Sarah Titchen (DCCEEW) Director
Janine Guenther	Elizabeth Cotterell (DCCEEW) Assistant Director
Anthony Bellottie	Ben Wiesner (DCCEEW) Heritage Policy Officer
Jane Blennerhassett	Jack Dawson (DPIRD) Supervising Fisheries & Marine Officer
	<i>Executive Support: (DBCA) Angela Johns</i>

NEXT MEETING

The committee will hold a brief virtual session on February 13th, 2024.

Meeting 21 is scheduled in Denham for May 19th-21st, 2024.

Contact

The Committee welcomes community and Stakeholder engagement. Contact the Chair C/O Angela Johns, Executive Officer, Shark Bay World Heritage Advisory Committee.

Angela.johns@dbca.wa.gov.au or (08) 9948 2210