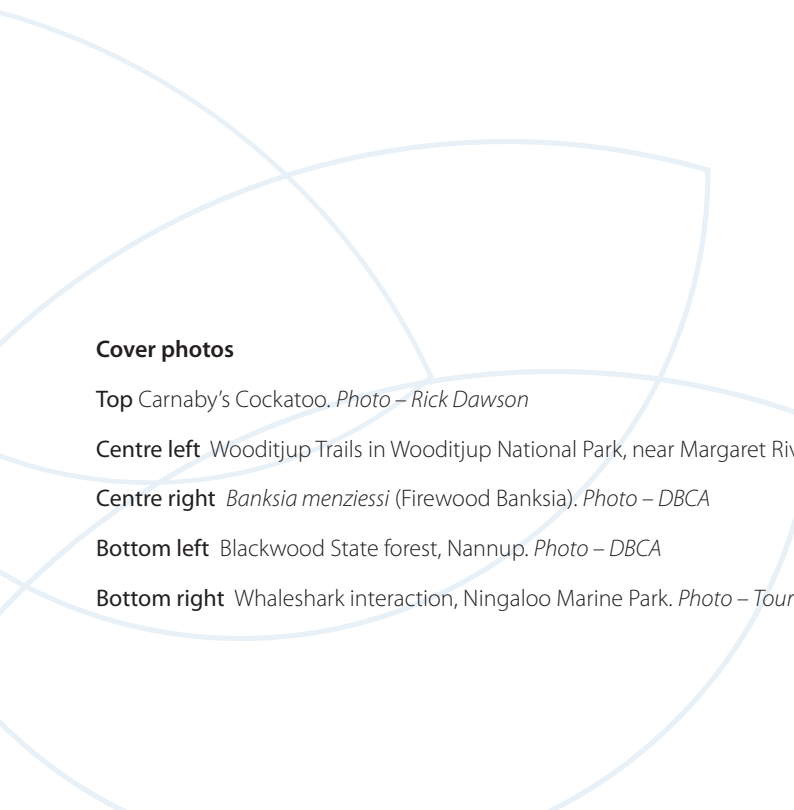




Government of Western Australia
Conservation and Parks Commission

Conservation and Parks Commission Annual Report 2022–23





Cover photos

Top Carnaby's Cockatoo. *Photo – Rick Dawson*

Centre left Wooditjup Trails in Wooditjup National Park, near Margaret River. *Photo – Denzil Heeger*

Centre right *Banksia menziessi* (Firewood Banksia). *Photo – DBCA*

Bottom left Blackwood State forest, Nannup. *Photo – DBCA*

Bottom right Whaleshark interaction, Ningaloo Marine Park. *Photo – Tourism WA*



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

Conservation and Parks Commission
Annual Report 2022–23

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Transmittal to the Minister

Hon Reece Whitby MLA
Minister for Environment

I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the Conservation and Parks Commission for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 in accordance with section 31 of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*.



Professor Chris Doepel PSM
Chair
Conservation and Parks Commission

Contacts:

Postal

Locked Bag 104
BENTLEY DELIVERY CENTRE
Western Australia 6983

Electronic

Email: info@conservation.wa.gov.au
Internet: conservation.wa.gov.au
Telephone: +61 8 9219 9000

Overview

Chair's report

From year to year, core business remains the same for the Conservation and Parks Commission, but policy and program settings continue to evolve. The 2022-23 reporting year serves as a prime example.

In 2022-23, the Commission contributed to the continuing implementation of the Government's 2019 Plan for Our Parks initiative. It recommended the creation of new marine and terrestrial parks and amalgamation of existing marine parks, and endorsed the creation of Indigenous Land Use Agreements that will add protected areas to the conservation estate. While the creation of additional parks and approval of management plans is the Commission's core business, the shift is towards joint vesting of protected areas with Traditional Owners. Aboriginal peoples' connections to land and aspirations to protect cultural and natural heritage have become central considerations in the creation of national and marine parks in Western Australia.

Significant changes have also occurred in the development of the new Forest Management Plan. Working with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), the Commission developed a new plan that will preserve karri, jarrah, and wandoo forests, implementing the State Government's decision to end large-scale timber harvesting in the South West. The new Forest Management Plan will provide for co-operative management of the south-west forests with Noongar Traditional Owners, in line with the South West Native Title Settlement. At the close of the reporting period, the Commission was awaiting the outcomes of referral of the new Forest Management Plan to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for a determination on whether it requires formal assessment under environmental protection legislation.

The community's desire for interaction with marine mammals continues to grow. Until this year, whale sharks were the only large species where a management program existed to enable sustainable visitation. Licensed tourism operators have offered the public interactive tours, subject to observing conditions that maintain human safety and avoid harm and distress to the whale sharks. As a result of trials overseen by the Commission and DBCA, opportunities for interactive experiences will be extended to humpback whales from 1 January 2024. During the reporting period, the Commission also endorsed a management program for a trial of interactions with Australian sea lions.

This annual report provides further information about these developments. It also gives an overview of the Commission's many other activities, including its responsibilities for policy development and advice, periodic assessment of management plan effectiveness, oversight of estate management, and governance.

Turning to the Commission's people, the appointment of a seventh member took it to its full complement of seven. In March 2023, the Commission welcomed Mark Webb to its membership. Mark was previously the Director General of DBCA. He brings extensive public and private sector management experience to his new role. Around the same time, the Commission farewelled its Director, Kathleen Lowry, who went to the EPA. The Commission gratefully acknowledges Kathleen's dedication and support during her time as Director.

The Commission thanks DBCA's previous Director General, Mark Webb, and Acting Director General, Peter Dans, and the department's staff for their support. The collaboration and service provided by departmental staff is integral to the effective conduct of the Commission's business. This extends from central office staff who provide briefings and advice, to staff in the regions, who guide and inform Commission members during their visits to the conservation estate.

Professor Chris Doepel PSM
Chair
Conservation and Parks Commission

Purpose

The Western Australian Conservation and Parks Commission has an important role to conserve the State's biological diversity and ensure the conservation estate is managed in an ecologically sustainable manner.

The Commission's purpose is to act as a trusted community steward and government advisor for the protection of Western Australia's biodiversity and conservation estate while fostering its appreciation and sustainable use.

Functions

The Commission is a body corporate under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act), comprising seven members appointed by the Governor through nomination by the State Minister for Environment. As part of its functions, the Commission has vested in it the following lands:

- (i) State forest, timber reserves and marine reserves
- (ii) unless section 8B(2)(f) of the CALM Act applies, national parks, conservation parks and nature reserves, either solely or jointly with an Aboriginal body corporate
- (iii) relevant land referred to in CALM Act section 5(1)(g).

The Commission also has the care, control and management of relevant land referred to in section 5(1)(h) placed with it, either solely or jointly with another person or body.

Section 19 of the CALM Act relates to the functions of the Commission which include:

- advising the Minister on the development of policies
- preparing and dealing with proposed management plans for land and water vested in or under the care, control, and management of the Commission, whether solely or jointly with a joint responsible body
- conducting periodic assessments of the implementation of management plans by those responsible for implementing them, including the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and, if the land is State forest or a timber reserve, the Forest Products Commission (FPC).

Commission membership

Subject to sections 21(4) and 22 of the CALM Act, members are to be persons who, in the opinion of the Minister, have knowledge and experience or a particular function or vocational interest that is relevant to the functions of the Commission.

Professor Chris Doepel PSM – Chair (from 7 May 2019, former Deputy Chair)



Chris Doepel is a part-time Professor at the University of Notre Dame Australia in Fremantle, where he chairs the University's Academic Council. Until March 2016, he was the Dean of Business and Chair of College Committees for Arts and Sciences, Business and Law at the University. Prior to undertaking this last role, he was Dean of the Faculty of Law and Business at Murdoch University in Perth. Before joining Murdoch University in 2008, Chris was the Registrar and Chief Executive Officer of the National Native Title Tribunal. He has extensive experience as a senior manager in public administration and in the formulation of policy advice to governments. Chris holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons), a Bachelor of Jurisprudence, a Bachelor of Laws and a Master of Arts. He is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management. In 2006, Chris was awarded a Public Service Medal (PSM) in the Australia Day Honours for his native title work.

Mrs Jo-anne Lanagan – Deputy Chair (from 7 May 2019)



Jo Lanagan heads up a consultancy, currently providing advice to resource companies on engagement with Indigenous groups. In February 2023, Jo left full-time work at Central Desert Native Title Services (CDNTS) where she had held the position of Chief Executive Officer for the preceding 3 years. Jo had worked in various roles at CDNTS for the past 12 years. She has held senior roles in the State and Commonwealth Governments including Director of Heritage and Culture at the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Director of Claims Management for the Office of Native Title. She has led negotiations on behalf of both the State and Commonwealth Governments in the Australian Square Kilometre Array Project, leading to the CSIRO build of the largest radio astronomy observatory in the world and Australia hosting international radio astronomy projects. Jo was one of two negotiators on behalf of the State Government to reach a comprehensive native title settlement with the Yawuru people over Broome, resulting in the creation of conservation estate and marine park. Through her native title work Jo has had the good fortune to visit much of the more remote conservation estate in Western Australia.

Mrs Tania (Tahn) Donovan – Member (from 7 May 2019)



Tania (Tahn) Donovan is a Wadandi Yok woman from Busselton and has experience in Aboriginal affairs in relation to employment, tourism, business development, policy and capacity building across State Government. Tahn is Director Aboriginal Tourism, Tourism Western Australia. She has a wide range of skills and experiences in the environmental, tourism and hospitality, disability employment, farming and transport industries.

Ms Penny Bond – Member (from 7 May 2019)



Penny Bond graduated with a Bachelor of Laws (with Distinction) and Bachelor of Arts from Murdoch University and has both public and private sector experience. She previously worked as a Senior Policy Adviser in State Government, with responsibility for ensuring the implementation of cross-portfolio policies and progressing Bills through Cabinet and the State Parliament. Penny represented the Minister as a panel member on the Ministerial Advisory Panel for Occupational Health and Safety Reform, which saw her work collaboratively with stakeholders on important law reform. Penny is a lawyer at MinterEllison and is undertaking a Master of Laws at The University of Western Australia, where she was recently recognised as the highest achieving postgraduate student in Climate Change and Emissions Trading Law. Penny enjoys hiking and camping and is passionate about the appreciation of Western Australia's conservation estate.

Ms Kim Eckert OAM – Member (from 7 May 2020)



Kim resides in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and is the Chief Executive Officer of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Urban Landcare Group (KBULG), a not-for-profit community organisation in the Goldfields. Kim uses her broad range of skills and experience in conservation and the environment, not-for-profit, disability, tourism, and volunteering sectors to assist community groups in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and sits on many community committees. Kim also sits on the Pastoral Lands Board as the Conservation Interest Member. Appointed as a WA Parks Foundation Ambassador in 2017, Kim is passionate about our State's conservation areas, educating the community about the local flora (including facilitating Traditional Owners to educate the community about traditional bush food and bush medicine), connecting people to parks and nature, and promoting travel in Western Australia to our most precious and natural areas. Kim holds a qualification in conservation and land management and is a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. In 2019, Kim was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her significant contributions to the Kalgoorlie-Boulder community. She is a Councillor for the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and also sits on the Pastoral Lands Board as the conservation interest member.

Dr John Keesing – Member (from 7 May 2021)



Dr John Keesing is a Senior Principal Research Scientist with the CSIRO and an adjunct Professor with Curtin University. He is Australia's representative on the UNESCO Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms. As a marine biologist he has carried out research in Australia, New Zealand, China, India and Japan, publishing more than 100 scientific articles. John has led ship-based research voyages surveying the biodiversity in many of the marine parks off the Western Australian coast and in his spare time he enjoys camping and exploring in our national parks. John holds a Bachelor of Applied Science, a PhD in Zoology and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance and Investment. He was previously a Visiting Senior Professor with the Chinese Academy of Sciences and is a past President of the Australian Marine Sciences Association.

Mr Mark Webb PSM – Member (from 21 March 2023)



Mark retired from the Public Service in February 2023. Before this, he was Director General of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, which included being the Chief Executive Officer of the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, the Rottnest Island Authority, and the Zoological Parks Authority. Mark has extensive experience in horticultural research, public and private sector management and business, both nationally and internationally. Mark also volunteers in his local community and has a strong interest in social justice.

Executive support

Policy, operational and systems support was provided to the Commission by DBCA under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DBCA and the Commission for service delivery effective as of September 2020. Ms Kathleen Lowry filled the role of Director, Conservation and Parks Commission between 1 July 2022 and 25 March 2023.

Priorities – building an environmental legacy

During 2022-23, the Commission has contributed to and supported delivery of election commitments and Government priorities including:

- increasing the conservation estate by five million hectares under the Plan for Our Parks (PfOP) initiative by 2024
- recognition of Aboriginal connection to Country and opportunities for joint management and joint vesting of conservation reserves
- development of the *Forest Management Plan 2024-2033*
- increased opportunities for sustainable visitation and appreciation of the natural environment
- protection of the State's biodiversity.

Plan for Our Parks

In early 2019, the State Government announced a plan to create five million hectares of new national parks, marine parks and other conservation reserves across Western Australia. The five-million-hectare expansion will see the conservation estate increased by over 20 per cent.

Throughout 2022-23, the State Government continued to progress the negotiation of Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs), which are generally required to create the reserves, and concurrent management planning processes for each reserve proposal.

The Commission's role in the development of Plan for Our Parks has included considering reserve proposals and associated ILUAs, responding to departmental briefings on work in progress and providing subsequent advice to the Minister for Environment.

As of 30 June 2023, 12 out of 28 proposals had been fully or partially completed with 2.15 million hectares reserved, which equates to approximately 43 per cent of the five-million-hectare target. In addition, ILUAs for the Bunuba portion of the Fitzroy River National Park and additions to Kennedy Range National Park and Pimbee National Park have been endorsed by the Commission, registered with the National Native Title Tribunal and are in the process of being created. A further two ILUAs have been endorsed by the Commission for Waldburg National Park and the Giralalia National Park, Boologooro Nature Reserve and a part of the additions to Kennedy Range National Park. It is anticipated that additional ILUAs will be presented to the Commission for endorsement in the later part of 2023.

The Commission has recommended the creation of the proposed Matuwa Kurrara Kurrara National Park and nature reserve at Lake Carnegie within the 2022–23 reporting period. This area covers 811,000 hectares and represents 16 per cent of the five-million-hectare target.

Management planning

The Commission's main objectives in relation to estate planning are to provide quality and timely advice to the Minister for Environment and to ensure the preparation and implementation of effective management plans for land and water vested either solely or jointly in the Commission. DBCA prepares management plans on behalf of the Commission.

The Commission's Management Plan Review Committee was established to ensure early engagement with the Commission with the aim of ensuring a consistent planning approach, more uniform presentation of plans and effective use of key performance indicators (KPIs). The Management Plan Review Committee has been provided updates on the active planning processes throughout the reporting period. During this reporting period, three joint management plans and the amalgamation of four marine parks for the Buccaneer Archipelago marine parks occurred, including the:

- Mayala Marine Park
- Bardi Jawi Gaarra Marine Park
- Maiyalam Marine Park
- the amalgamation of the Maiyalam Marine Park, Lalang-garram Horizontal Falls Marine Park, North Lalang-garram Marine Park and Lalang-garram/Camden Sound Marine Park to become the Lalang-gaddam Marine Park Joint Management Plan.

Further, final management plans were released for:

- Nyngulu (Ningaloo) Coastal Reserves: Red Bluff to Winderabandi
- Houtman Abrolhos Islands National Park

Amendments to the *Murujuga National Park Management Plan 2013* to facilitate visitor opportunities, public access and current recreation priorities and to reflect changes to the plan area were also finalised for implementation.

The Commission will continue to be updated on DBCA's learnings to strengthen existing partnerships and expand the joint management program, including through the PfOP initiative.

Forest Management Plan 2024–33

The Commission developed the *Draft Forest Management Plan 2024–33* (FMP 2024–33) with DBCA, which gives effect to the State Government's decision to end large-scale commercial timber harvesting in south-west native forests and preserve 400,000 hectares of karri, jarrah, and wandoo forests in reserves.

The Draft FMP 2024-2033 underwent a two-month public consultation period from 18 October to 18 December 2022. A total of 3,517 submissions were received on the draft plan, comprising 345 unique submissions and 3,172 proforma submissions. The *Summary of public submissions on the Draft Forest Management Plan 2024-2033* report is published on the Commission website.

The Draft FMP 2024-2033 was revised to create the *Proposed Forest Management 2024-2033*, which incorporated all changes resulting from the public consultation process, including corrections and clarification/factual changes.

The Draft FMP 2024-2033 was referred to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) in October 2022 for a determination on whether it requires assessment under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). In May 2023 the EPA determined to undertake an assessment on referral information. The Commission is currently awaiting the outcome of the EPA assessment.

Engagement has occurred with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) and with several Noongar regional corporations as they became operational. Consistent with the South West Native Title Settlement, the next FMP will provide for cooperative management of south-west forests with Noongar Traditional Owners to give effect to their aspirations for this area.

The term of the current *Forest Management Plan 2014-2023* is due to end on 31 December 2023, and the FMP 2024-2033 is expected to commence on 1 January 2024.

Sustainable visitation

Expressions of interest process to allocate whale shark and humpback whale in-water interaction tour licences

An expressions of interest (EOI) process was undertaken to allocate whale shark and humpback whale in-water interaction tour licences. The EOI also transitioned in-water tours with humpback whales from a trial to a licensed industry. With the Commission's endorsement, the grant of 15 whale shark and 15 humpback whale interaction licences was approved from the process. The licences commence 1 January 2024 for a period of 10 years and may be renewed for a further five years, subject to a performance review.

To ensure businesses are continually improving and moving towards achieving best practice, operations will be audited against sustainability benchmarks and in accordance with the proposals in their submissions.

Management program for seal interactions in Western Australia

The Commission endorsed a management program for seal interactions in Western Australia, developed to guide management of tourism, recreation and other human interactions affecting seals in WA state waters.

Included within the management program is a trial of in-water interaction tours with Australian sea lions. The trial applies a higher level of management in locations that receive high visitation in Jurien Bay and Shoalwater Islands marine parks. The trial is designed to manage impacts on this endangered species, with tour operators working under licence conditions that address conservation and safety outcomes.

Strategic directions and governance

The Commission operates under its functions outlined in the CALM Act and supports government priorities. For effective management of the conservation estate in Western Australia, the Commission works collaboratively with DBCA for the delivery of these services. The Commission continued to operate under its Strategic Directions 2022–25, which supports a focus on planning, evidence-based decision making, performance monitoring, management effectiveness and good governance.

An MOU executed in September 2020 between the Commission and DBCA to establish terms for the service provisions and indicative resource requirements remains operational and has proven effective in enabling the Commission to deliver on its priorities.

The Commission has established two sub-committees: the Governance and Risk Sub-Committee which reviews Commission documents, policies, procedures, guidelines and position statements to ensure relevance and currency; and the Management Plan Review Committee which considers CALM Act management plans and makes recommendations to the Commission.

The Public Sector Commission's principles for good governance continued to be implemented and maintained by carrying out the annual review of the Commission's Charter, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest Policy and Risk Register.

Policy development and advice

The Commission develops position statements to inform the Commission's functions under section 19 of the CALM Act. These functions include advising the Minister for Environment and preparing management plans. During the 2022–23 financial year, the Commission reviewed and updated the following policies, position statements and associated guidelines:

- Conservation and Parks Commission Charter
- Code of Conduct Policy and Register
- Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite Statement
- Position Statement No. 2 – *Conservation Reserve System proposal for lands vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission*
- Position Statement No. 6 – *Management Plans*
- Position Statement No. 11 – *Water Management and the assessment of proposals affecting lands vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission*
- Position Statement No. 13 – *Development of Position Statements for the Conservation and Parks Commission*
- Position Statement no 16 – *Section 19(g) functions – Managing the implementation of management plans*

- Position Statement no 18 – *Protect and Conserve the Value of the Land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people*
- Position statement no.19 – *Carbon farming on lands vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission*
- Position Statement No. 20 – *Responding to climate change in the context of lands and waters vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission*

Periodic assessment framework

The Commission partners with DBCA to ensure management plans are implemented effectively through a periodic assessment framework. This framework incorporates the Commission’s statutory responsibility to develop guidelines for monitoring, sets performance criteria for evaluating and conducts periodic assessments of the implementation of management plans.

A corporate policy was adopted by DBCA that guides management effectiveness. DBCA is in the process of operationalising this policy and finalising a reporting process that will support the Commission’s periodic assessment framework reporting for parks and reserves. It is anticipated that better integrated reporting will deliver a more systematic approach to management plan implementation (and will provide for continuous improvement in the development of new management plans).

Terrestrial management plan management effectiveness

The Commission reviewed terrestrial management plan management effectiveness assessments for *Yanchep and Neerabup Parks and Reserves Management Plan* and *Shannon and D’Entrecasteaux National Parks Management Plan* and undertook site visits to these planning areas as part of its periodic assessment program.

Marine park management effectiveness

The Commission reviewed the annual marine park management effectiveness assessments and attended the marine management workshop held in October 2022 with DBCA and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD). The Commission provided DBCA a summary of its observations from the workshop, providing guidance and requesting advice on how particular issues were to be addressed.

An update was provided to the Commission by DBCA on the implementation of the Management Effectiveness Policy and its operationalisation in the form of a guideline.

Estate management

Climate change

In August 2022, the Commission released Position Statement No.20: *Responding to climate change in the context of lands and waters vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission*.

This position statement acknowledges the potential for significant change in environmental conditions as a result of climate change and the impacts that this may have on biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

The Commission supports the following activities being considered and undertaken on lands and waters vested in the Commission in response to climate change:

- activities that contribute to the State Government's Climate Policy and target of net zero emissions by 2050 and public sector targets to a 2030 emission reduction of 80 per cent below 2020 levels;
- adaptive management that protects and improves biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage values, supports ecosystem and species resilience and supports ecologically sustainable use for social and economic benefits;
- research and science to inform assessment of climate vulnerability and development of adaption strategies;
- enhancing carbon sinks (marine and terrestrial);
- prescribed burning and landscape scale fuel mitigation to reduce risk to the community and biodiversity values; and
- ecosystem rehabilitation consistent with biodiversity and conservation outcomes.

Carbon farming on the conservation estate

In July 2022, the Commission released Position Statement No 19: *Carbon Farming on lands vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission*.

This position statement acknowledges the important role of the conservation reserve system in protecting global carbon stores and that management of conservation reserves can support climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration and emission reduction.

The Commission supports carbon farming activities being considered and undertaken on lands and waters vested in the Commission to the extent that those activities:

- are consistent with the objectives of the CALM Act and relevant management plans, and purpose for which the land was reserved under the *Land Administration Act 1997*;

- support biodiversity outcomes and employment opportunities for Traditional Owners; and
- generate revenue that, following the recovery of costs relating to the carbon project, is reinvested in the management of the respective reserve/s.

Mineral exploration consents

Section 24 of the *Mining Act 1978* requires that the recommendations of the Minister for Environment and the Commission are provided to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum prior to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum's consideration of consent to mining activities within 'other than class A' reserves, managed under the CALM Act and within class A reserves (other than national parks and nature reserves) outside the South West Land Division of the State and the shires of Esperance and Ravensthorpe.

In general, proponents were required to develop exploration plans or conservation management plans in consultation with DBCA that detail the proposed activities, risks to reserve values and risk management measures, before the Commission would consider the applications.

In 2022–23, the Commission provided recommendations relating to applications to undertake mineral exploration activities in a number of vested reserves or amendments to existing mining activities including the following:

- Dundas Nature Reserve R36957 – South Coast Region
- Jilbadji Nature Reserve R 24049 – Wheatbelt Region
- Woondowing Nature Reserve R14275 – Swan Region
- Bullock Holes 5(1)(g) Timber Reserve R19825 – Goldfields Region

In cases where recommendations agreeing to provide consent for exploration activities were provided, the Commission also highlighted that its support for further exploration activities should not be assumed. This would be dependent upon detailed review of proponents' proposals, advice from DBCA and potential impacts on the conservation estate.

Leases, licences and apiary authorities

Advice on matters relating to leases, licences, permits, mining tenements and other activities, such as utility infrastructure proposed on land and water vested in the Commission, was provided to DBCA during this reporting period. Table 1 summarises the Commission's consideration of CALM Act leases, licences and permits during this reporting period. It is noted that only licences that are not consistent with the approved Commercial Operator Handbook are referred to the Commission.

Table 1. CALM Act leases, licences and authorities endorsed by the Commission during 2022–23

Commercial operations licences	0
Apiary authorities	4
Other leases and licences	20

**Supplied by DBCA, 2023*

Evidence based information for decision making

To assist in gaining a better understanding of the range of issues confronting estate managers in different parts of the State, the Commission received presentations on the following matters:

- Plan for Our Parks initiative
- Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements
- Visitor risk management
- CALM Act amendment proposals
- World Heritage listing
- Bent Street Navigational Channel, Shoalwater Islands Marine Park
- Development of the next Forest Management Plan 2024–33
- Worsley mine expansion
- Rehabilitation and compliance auditing of mining operations.

Stakeholder engagement

Commission members regularly engage with key stakeholders on matters relevant to the objectives of the CALM Act and the role of the Commission. Through the Management Plan Review Committee (MPRC), Commission members engage with Traditional Owners and representatives from conservation, tourism, industry, mining, forestry and other relevant sectors, via the management planning processes.

Members have participated in key workshops, stakeholder forums and steering group meetings including the *Forest Management Plan 2024–33* steering group, Proposed South Coast Marine Park, and Marmion Marine Park community reference committees and the annual marine park management workshop.

Biodiversity and conservation

Vested lands and waters

The following table provides a summary of lands and waters vested in the Commission during the 2022–23 financial year.

Table 2. Lands and waters vested in the Commission

Land classification	Area as at 30 June 2023 (ha)	Area as at 30 June 2022 (ha)
National parks	7,275,931	6,510,138
Conservation parks	1,323,095	1,264,027
Nature reserves	10,296,811	10,093,737
State forests	1,281,234	1,281,292
Timber reserves	123,147	123,148
CALM Act section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h)	501,282	1,081,823
Marine park	5,070,469	4,424,469
Marine nature reserve	132,000	132,000
Marine management area	143,385	143,385
Total	26,147,354	25,054,019

* Supplied by DBCA, 2023

Additions to the conservation estate

The Commission endorsed the following additions to the conservation estate:

- Indigenous Land Use Agreement with Tjiwarl Aboriginal Corporation which includes creation of a 111,390 hectare national park and expansion of Wanjarri Nature Reserve by 8,483 hectares
- Indigenous Land Use Agreement with Yinggarda Aboriginal Corporation which includes creation of a 93,752 hectare national park, 831 hectare conservation park and 174,885 hectare addition to Kennedy Range National Park
- Indigenous Land Use Agreement with Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation which includes creation of a 159,981 hectare national park, a 47,173 hectare conservation park, a 11,955 hectare conservation park and 1,946 hectares of additions to existing conservation reserves

- inclusion of 2.28 hectares of unconstructed road reserve into Midgegooroo National Park A47884. This inclusion rationalises the boundaries of Midgegooroo National Park
- addition of approximately 22.5 hectares of unconstructed road reserve to Gull Rock National Park as part of a project to rationalise the road network within the park's boundaries
- addition of Lot 1494, being 73.7 hectares and 1.2 hectares of unconstructed road reserve to Mount Roe National Park A47890. This inclusion rationalises the boundaries of Mount Roe National Park. Indigenous Land Use Agreement with Jidi Jidi Aboriginal Corporation which includes creation of 102,000 hectare national park. Indigenous Land Use Agreement with Nganhurra Thanardi Garrbu Aboriginal Corporation which includes creation of approximately 510,000 hectare of conservation estate.

Disclosures and legal compliance

Financial statements

In accordance with section 31(2) of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, the Commission is not a statutory authority within the meaning of the *Financial Management Act 2006*, but is a statutory body established by section 18 of the CALM Act.

Funding for the operation of the Commission is provided through DBCA. Expenditure is monitored by the Commission and the reporting and audit of expenditure is undertaken by DBCA.

Total expenditure for the Commission for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 was \$276,523.

Board and committee remuneration

The Commission operates in accordance with Part III of the CALM Act, the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, and its Charter, Code of Conduct and other policies. Commission member's remuneration is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Commission remuneration

Position	Name	Period of membership	Gross/actual remuneration (\$)
Chair	Chris Doepel	1/7/2022 to 30/6/2023	\$40,570
Deputy Chair	Jo-anne Lanagan	1/7/2022 to 30/6/2023	\$25,538
Member	Penny Bond	1/7/2022 to 30/6/2023	\$19,427
Member	Tahn Donovan	1/7/2022 to 30/6/2023	\$11,806
Member	Kim Eckert	1/7/2022 to 30/6/2023	\$19,427
Member	John Keesing	1/7/2022 to 30/6/2023	N/A
Member	Mark Webb	21/3/2023 to 30/6/2023	\$5156
Total			\$121,924

The Commission met 10 times during the reporting period. Attendance for the total number of eligible meetings for each member are shown in Table 4, noting that formal leaves of absence are sought, approved and recorded where necessary.

Table 4. Commission meeting attendance

Position	Name	Eligibility	Attendance
Chair	Chris Doepel	10	9
Deputy Chair	Jo-anne Lanagan	10	9
Member	Penny Bond	10	9
Member	Tahn Donovan	10	9
Member	Kim Eckert	10	9
Member	John Keesing	10	8
Member	Mark Webb	3	0

Governance disclosures

At the date of reporting, no Commission members or officers, or firms of which Commission members or officers are members, or entities in which Commission members or officers have substantial interests, had any interests in existing or proposed contracts with the Commission, other than normal contracts of employment of service, or had any interests in issues before or likely to come before the Commission for consideration, endorsement or consultation.

Employment and industrial relations

Further to CALM Act amendments in 2015, staffing resources are provided to the Commission through the Director General of DBCA as the employing authority. One permanent fulltime staff member was employed in the secretariat of the Commission from 1 July 2022 until their resignation on 25 March 2023. Permanent staffing support in the secretariat is being finalised. This does not include staff numbers and effort allocated to the delivery of Commission functions through DBCA.

Ministerial directives

No Ministerial directives were received during this reporting period.

Recordkeeping plans

The Commission prepared and reviewed its recordkeeping plan in consultation with DBCA in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000*. The review was submitted to the State Records Commission. In 2024 the Commission will be included in DBCA’s review of its business classification system, however, the Commission’s records will remain independent of DBCA’s.

Government policy requirements

Substantive equality

The Commission implements the State Government's Policy Framework for Substantive Equality, primarily through management planning processes associated with the CALM Act.

Disability access and inclusion plan outcomes

The Commission is committed to fostering an accessible and inclusive environment for its staff and Commission members. The Commission advocates under DBCA's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2021–25 for disability inclusion. The Commission has adopted DBCA's Disability Confident Recruiter process.

Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework

The Commission has adopted DBCA's Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework and Workforce and Diversity Plan for its staff and Commission members. The Commission is committed to building an inclusive and diverse workforce.

Compliance with public sector standards and ethical codes

Commission staff are employees of DBCA. DBCA provided the framework for human resource management within the Commission through a MOU.

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

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

Occupational safety, health, and injury management

DBCA's Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) policy requires managers to demonstrate, maintain, monitor and review OSH in the workplace and places a responsibility on employees to implement a cycle of continuous improvement.

The Commission works to DBCA's Health, Safety, Wellbeing (HSW) and Injury Management Framework, which provides a consistent and coordinated approach to the ongoing management of HSW. The framework provides a structure to ensure all health and safety representatives, appointed safety officers and committees across DBCA are provided with a clear understanding of the HSW strategic objectives, desired health and safety culture and mutual obligations for all employees, contractors and volunteers.

No workers' compensation claims were recorded during the reporting period. The performance of the Commission in relation to OSH and injury management is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Performance reporting: Occupational safety, health, and injury management – 2022-2023

Measure	Results				
	Base year	Prior year	Current reporting year	Target	Comment
Number of fatalities	0	0	0	0	Achieved
Lost time injury and/or disease incidence rate	0	0	0	0	Achieved
Lost time injury and/or disease severity rate	0	0	0	0	Achieved
Percentage of injured workers returned to work within 13 weeks	0	0	0	0	Achieved
Percentage of injured workers returned to work within 26 weeks	0	0	0	0	Achieved
Percentage of managers trained in occupational safety, health, and injury management responsibilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	Achieved

