

Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

MINUTES FOR MEETING 3

4 October 2004

9.15am – 11.00am

5th floor conference room, Energy House, Darwin

1. PRESENT

Annie Andrews

John Bailey (Chairman)

Alastair Black

Brendan Dowd

Adele Pedder

Simon Townsend

Liza Schenkel

Kira Schlusser

Robert Wasson

Chris Young

2. APOLOGIES

Rose Calland

John Harrison

Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation representative

3. ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Moved: Mr Dowd

Seconded: Ms Pedder

4. ACTION SHEET

Members noted the action sheet.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence files were not available for the meeting; however, the main items of correspondence were letters out to ERG members inviting them to be on the working group and letters of acceptance from ERG members. Other correspondence included an email from Mr Stephen Sutton (agenda item 12 below) and requests for site visits to ConocoPhillips' LNG facility and Greg Phelps' prawn farm.

6. INDIGENOUS WORKING GROUP

The Chairman explained that forming the Indigenous Working Group (IWG) was taking longer than hoped with no clear way forward. At the chairman's meeting with Kelvin Costello, Coordinator at Larrakia Nation, Mr Costello had indicated he would organise nominations for the IWG and a representative for the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee. To date there has been no nominations forthcoming.

Since the previous committee meeting, the Project Coordinator had followed up Larrakia Nation with phone calls a number of times, but the switch was not

answered, and there had been no reply to a letter requesting feedback on the status of the current situation regarding nominations.

Members expressed the need for input from indigenous representatives and noted funding bids for 2005-06 year were needed to be submitted to support the operation of the Indigenous Working Group.

Action

- Ms Schlusser would contact David Moons at the NLC to see whether he could offer any information regarding Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation and their ability to nominate potential members to the working group.
- Professor Wasson would also speak to Paul Josif, from the NLC
- Ms Pedder would speak to Larrakia traditional owners she has contact with.

7. REPORT FROM ECOSYSTEM MONITORING GROUP

Current Projects

The Chairman of the Ecosystem Monitoring Group (EMG), Dr Townsend, explained that the recruitment process was in place to employ an officer for six months to undertake two funded actions in the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management:

1. Action 1.1, 2.2 *Initiate the development of a Darwin Harbour Regional Integrated Monitoring Program for the environment; and*
2. Action 1.1, 3.1 *conduct an inventory of data management systems and data sources for water quality, flora, fauna and other relevant data, and evaluate data quality.*

The officer would also investigate models of how to integrate monitoring for the Darwin Harbour region's environment.

Funding priorities for 2005-06

The EMG will hold a meeting on 13 October to determine priorities and cost the tasks delegated to the EMG in the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of management.

Members of the committee supported Dr Townsend's suggestion that funding be sought to write a report on the environmental 'health' of the Darwin Harbour region to be completed June 2006.

Actions

- Funding will be sought to prepare a report on the environmental status of the Darwin harbour region by June 2006.
- Meeting dates and times for EMG and ERG meetings and workshops will be made available to members of the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee so they have the opportunity to attend.

8. REPORT FROM ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH GROUP

The Chairman of the Ecosystem Research Group (ERG), Professor Wasson, explained the ERG had met for the first time on 1 October. Members of the ERG decided that in order to work out funding priorities and meet the new deadline for Treasury, they should begin by prioritising the 'hazards' affecting the environment as outlined in the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management. The majority of ERG members agreed that habitat and diversity change was the highest priority 'hazard', which impinged on other listed hazards, such as nutrient loads, contaminants and water changes.

ERG members then decided the best way to proceed was to look at the hazards as a system. Professor Wasson asked for support from the committee to hold a facilitated workshop with the aim of creating a conceptual model of the natural system and the links between habitat and diversity changes. Members would work out whether data is currently available to explain the links, and if not, then these gaps in knowledge would direct needed areas of research. The ERG and EMG would work together to formulate the model and research funding recommendations would be made to the committee by 1 November timed to fit the budget process.

Members of the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee supported the request to hold a workshop and work through the funding priorities in time for 1 November.

Action

Project Coordinator will contact Professor Wasson's office in the afternoon of 4 October to organise a date for the workshop.

9. WORK PROGRAM FOR 2004-05

9.1. STATUS REPORT OF PROJECTS

Action

Project Coordinator to check with OEH whether the draft timelines given for the Stormwater Strategy were finalised and email to members of the committee.

9.2. PROPOSED WORK PROGRAM

Committee members reviewed the draft work program. The Project Coordinator said that, given the shortened timeline for 2005-06 funding bids to Treasury, the three-monthly newsletter to be sent out in November might need to be changed to December.

9.3. PRIORITISING PROJECTS FOR 2005-06 FUNDING

The chairman explained the timing for Government's funding process had been revised and bids would now need to be ready by early December rather than February, as had been the case in previous years.

As a result, the committee would need to consider priorities for funding at the next meeting on 8 November so that paperwork could be prepared in time for early December. The EMG and ERG had already indicated that they would be making recommendations in time for that meeting.

Mr Black said that the committee needed to check with government departments that they were committed to the priority projects established by the committee.

Mr Dowd and Mr Black said they thought the committee should receive financial reports, including expenditure and forecasting on the expenditure of projects, support for the committee and the budget for the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management in general.

Actions

- Funding for the Indigenous Working Group would be included in the bid to Treasury for 2005-06.
- Project coordinator will find out about a financial reporting system to the committee.
- Project coordinator will look into process of checking with government departments about agreement with priorities set by the committee

9.4. PROTOCOLS FOR COMMITTEE'S INVOLVEMENT IN ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Members of the committee raised concerns about the Terms of Reference, which appeared to limit the committee's ability to provide comment and input from the community to Government on issues and developments, unless specifically requested to do so by the Minister. The committee's role appeared to be mainly the overseeing and review of the actions outlined in the plan of management, whereas members expressed the view that they thought they would also provide advice and feedback on current issues and developments affecting the Darwin Harbour region and, consequently, the community.

Members agreed that the Terms of Reference did not provide a clear trigger mechanism for the committee to be involved in current issues and developments and felt strongly that they should be involved.

Ms Schenkel said feedback she had received indicated community perception of her position as representing community views at the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee on current matters.

Actions

- The chairman and project coordinator will prepare a proposal on a system of involving the committee in current issues, using DIPE as a model, to put to the Minister at their meeting on 27 October.
- At his meeting with the Minister the chairman will clarify whether:
 1. the committee can be involved in current issues and developments
 2. The Terms of Reference restricts what the committee can do.

10. COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION STRATEGY

Members agreed that a subcommittee should be formed to consider the tenders for the communication and education strategy. Members of the subcommittee are: Mr Bailey, Ms Schenkel and Ms Andrews, with Ms Schlusser providing executive support and input and Ms Mella Martin, from Media, Communications and Marketing, providing advice.

The subcommittee would have the authority to select the consultant to undertake the work on behalf of the committee.

Moved: Professor Wasson

Seconded: Mr Young

Action

The nominated subcommittee will meet on 12 October, or another suitable date if required, to select a consultant to undertake research for the communication and education strategy.

11. PETER JACKLYN'S COMMUNICATION PAPER

Ms Pedder said that the communication paper provided a good broad model of communication between government, researchers and the community but that its content was not specifically about intergovernmental communication and so had limited application in this instance.

She said that poor intergovernmental communication had been raised as an issue by the previous Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee and she wanted to ensure that the matter was addressed.

Action

With permission from Dr Jacklyn, his document will be made available to the consultants doing the research for the communication and education strategy.

12. REVIEW OF SUBMERGED CULTURAL HERITAGE IN DARWIN HARBOUR PROJECT

Committee members reviewed the email and project outline sent to the chairman from Mr Stephen Sutton, Director Heritage Conservation Services at the Office of Environment and Heritage, suggesting the submerged cultural heritage project be linked to the Darwin Harbour Plan of Management and seeking advice on how this should occur.

Members agreed that they were happy for the review to be included as part of the \$55 000 project 4.1, 1.1 *Undertake a systematic survey to identify sites of cultural, spiritual and heritage value in the Darwin Harbour region* and looked forward to any advice or results from the project.

Action

The project coordinator will contact Mr Sutton and convey that the committee was happy for the review to be included as part of the \$55 000 project 4.1, 1.1 *Undertake a systematic survey to identify sites of cultural, spiritual and heritage value in the Darwin Harbour region* and looked forward to any advice or results from the project.

13. SITE VISITS

The first site visit has been tentatively set for 22 October and will be confirmed when all arrangements have been made.

14. CONVENTION CENTRE PRECINCT AND LEE POINT ROAD DEFENCE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Members agreed they would not discuss these matters until the Terms of Reference were clarified with the Minister.

15. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

16. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was planned for 8 November in the Ormiston Room at Parliament House, with an expected start of 10am (to be confirmed) to accommodate Minister Burns' participation from 12.30pm - 1.30pm.

The meeting closed at 11am.