



# Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

## MINUTES FOR MEETING 12

3 October 2005

9.00am – 12.00pm

Meeting Room 1, Darwin City Council Building, Harry Chan Ave, Darwin

### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

#### Present:

Name	Representing
Mr Alastair Black	Darwin Port Corporation
Mr John Bailey	Independent chairperson
Mr Chris Young	Shipping and transport industry
Mr Brendan Dowd	Local government interests
Mr Chris Makepeace	Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT
Ms Adele Pedder	Environment Centre of the NT
Ms Kira Schlusser	Project Co-ordinator, Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management
Dr Simon Townsend	Chair, Ecosystem Monitoring Group
Professor Bob Wasson	Charles Darwin University, Chair Ecosystem Research Group

#### Apologies:

Name	Representing
Ms Liza Schenkel	Landcare

Mr Bailey said that Ms Truarn, Ms Odegaard and Ms Andrews had resigned from their positions. He called for suggestions regarding nominations for a horticultural/agricultural representative. Advertising the position was also suggested. Ms Pedder said she would make enquiries.

### PREVIOUS BUSINESS

### 2. ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Members wanted information about the status of the incinerator mentioned at the previous meeting. Mr Black said that OEH had announced a Public Environmental Report (PER) for public comment on the proposal.

**Action: Mr Dowd will meet with Ms Angelika Hesse, Environment Manager at Darwin City Council who had attended the last meeting and raised the issue, to provide further information about her concerns to DHAC.**

Ms Pedder moved that the minutes from the previous meeting be accepted. Seconded by Mr Young.

### 3. ACTION SHEET FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Prof Wasson said that he was holding a meeting at the university this week to organise the next stage of the Honours stipend which had been discussed at the previous meeting.

Members queried the status of Item 15.2 regarding coastal erosion. Mr Dowd said that Ms Hesse had only recently returned from holidays and had not been able to follow up her concerns regarding the low pH at some of the ground water sites. He said that he would follow up the issue with her and provide further information.

Item 15.3 INRM funding. Members noted that while most of the briefs had been released, the brief for implementing management plans was yet to be provided.

#### **Actions**

- 1. Prof Wasson will progress the Honours stipend.**
- 2. Mr Dowd will follow up on information regarding low pH in some groundwater sites.**

#### **4. WORKSHOP OUTCOMES**

Mr Bailey reported on his meeting with the CEO's and Ms Diane Tarte who had participated the committee's recent workshop. He said that they had been receptive to the idea of a public database to track the progress of actions in the Plan of Management.

Mr Bailey raised the need to progress some of the action items arising from the workshop including Activity 5 under the Organisation theme. Members agreed that Mr Rod Applegate from the Department of Infrastructure and Planning should be invited to attend the meeting on 31 October in order to develop a realistic process involving the Northern Territory Government and the committee on development applications.

Mr Young gave his apologies for the meeting on 31 October. However, he said it was important for Government departments to consult with DHAC.

#### **Actions:**

- 1. The Project Coordinator will invite Mr Applegate to attend a meeting on 31 October when members will meet to develop a process to engage in planning, development proposals and policy.**
- 2. Those committee members who can attend will meet on Friday 7 October at 11am to discuss DHAC actions from the Plan of Management for the status report to the Minister.**

#### **5. CORRESPONDENCE**

Members noted the correspondence.

## **6. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr Bailey said that a financial report would be provided in a couple of weeks once the new department had finalised its new accounting procedures.

## **7. ECOSYSTEM MONITORING GROUP**

Dr Townsend tabled the *Review of Environmental Monitoring of the Darwin Harbour Region and Recommendations fro Integrated Monitoring* report. He said that he would write to the CEO's of the Government departments that had contributed to the report thanking them for their contribution and highlighting the importance of their cooperative efforts.

He said that the next EMG meeting was on 13 October. Topics for discussion included developing criteria for each agency to review the effectiveness and relevance of their monitoring programs and the funding bid for 2006-07, which likely to be a bid for a health of the harbour report.

## **8. ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH GROUP**

Professor Wasson reported on the recent ERG meeting where members had endorsed:

1. the engagement of a consultant to do a gap analysis. The scope had been prepared by HLA Consultants, who were familiar with the EMG report and would be in a good position to extend the work to include the research component.

He said that the ERG would meet again with the assistance from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to determine likely scenarios, which would be used in model simulations.

2. Hypothetical data would be exported to "what if" questions to determine the likely impacts of various scenarios, for example, doubling the clearing size of the Darwin Harbour region would have implications for sediment loads and pollution point source loads going into the harbour.

He said that he had also had discussions with an IT company that had expertise in presenting information in a visually interesting way, which would be useful when showing managers the outcomes of possible development scenarios.

He said that the indicator species was still to be determined; however the development of a dipstick histopathological dipstick test for barramundi would become an Honours project.

## **9. INDIGENOUS WORKING GROUP**

Mr Bailey reported that the tender process was in train for the consultancy for the IWG funded project.

**Action: The Project Coordinator will contact NIASMA to be part of the IWG.**

#### **10. PROJECT COORDINATOR'S REPORT**

Members noted the Project Coordinator's report.

Members supported the idea of listing the action plan from the workshop under the functions of DHAC listed in the Terms of Reference.

**Action: The Project Coordinator will list the actions from the workshop under DHAC function headings as listed in its Terms of Reference.**

#### **11. STORMWATER STRATEGY BRIEFING**

Mr Michael Lawton and Ms Merylyn Barnes presented the main points contained in the draft stormwater strategy, which was nearing completion prior to a community consultation phase.

Ms Barnes said that the committee would have input into the draft prior to public release through the Steering Committee. Mr Bailey said that all the committee members needed to see the plan so they could make comments to Mr Dowd, who would represent DHAC on the Steering Committee.

**Action**  
**The Project Coordinator will distribute the draft Stormwater strategy to committee members via email for comment.**

#### **12. SAND MINING APPLICATION**

Mr Bailey reported on the meeting he attended regarding the sand mining application at East Arm and Cullen Bay. A final decision had not been made.

#### ***BUSINESS ARISING***

#### **13. REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY**

Ms Nicky D'Antoine, Assistant Director, Land Information, Department of Planning and Infrastructure briefed the committee on the status of a regional waste management facility.

She said three local councils were involved: Litchfield Shire Council, Darwin City Council and Palmerston City Council. Two sites had been narrowed down from a number of sites considered initially: Howard Peninsula and Sunday Creek.

Ms D'Antoine said that councils and government agencies had met on 29 September and had agreed in principle that Howard Peninsula would be the chosen site. She provided a map of the site, which included two lots of Crown Land.

The next stage was to obtain Government endorsement to undertake a feasibility study. She said the area would be used for the next 100 years so a feasibility study was required to ensure the site was suitable.

A consultant would be engaged to assess the site and, providing the site was suitable, the proposal would go to DHAC for formal comment.

She gave indicative timeframes of:

- |                                 |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Preparation of project brief | October 2005  |
| 2. Consultant engaged           | December 2005 |
| 3. Feasibility study completed  | March 2006    |
| 4. Consultation with DHAC       | April 2006    |

Ms D'Antoine said that waste disposal facilities developed on the site was the responsibility of the local government councils.

#### **14. AQUACULTURE BRIEFING – MARINE HARVEST**

Mr Craig Foster, Managing Director of Marine Harvest and Mr Greg Schipp from the DPIFM Aquaculture Centre gave a briefing on a proposed barramundi nursery site in Darwin Harbour.

Mr Foster said that the site would function as a nursery with 10g hatchlings being reared until they were 200g and then transported to the main production site. The hatchlings that did not grow quickly would remain and grow to plate size at around 1kg. The site was partially chosen because logistically the site was suitable for transferring fish from the hatchery site.

Members were told that it takes 1.4kg of fish meal dry weight to grow 1 kg of barramundi.

Mr Foster said that the following issues would be addressed:

- The long term sustainability of fish meal would be addressed through an EIS.
- Native Title

Mr Bailey said that Marine Harvest should also contact the chairs of the ERG and the EMG regarding monitoring and research work to see whether it was possible to coordinate efforts.

Mr Foster said that the facility at Port Hird was planning to be opened for inspection on the 22 November 2005 and an invitation would be sent to DHAC members so they could gain a better understanding of Marine Harvest's operations.

Comments raised by committee members were that:

- The wet ratio of fish to grow 1 kilogram of barramundi is high and it takes more fish from the ocean in kilograms to produce less kilograms of farmed fish
- The fate of nutrients, especially Nitrogen and Phosphorous, was discussed
- The committee noted the tabling of the joint Australian Marine Conservation Society and Environment Centre of the NT submission regarding aquaculture proposals in the region.

**Action: The Project Coordinator will provide the details of Prof Wasson and Dr Townsend to Mr Foster.**

## **15. INRM MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM**

Mr Makepeace reported on the meeting he had attended to arrange a coordinated approach for funding proposals. He said that the prescriptive project briefs and process made it very difficult to obtain funding.

## **16. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **16.1. Funding priorities**

Members agreed that those who were able will meet at 10am, 31 October at Meeting Room 1, Darwin City Council, to discuss funding priorities and proposals for next financial year.

### **16.2. Cultural survey progress report**

The progress report by Dr Lorraine Williams from Charles Darwin University was tabled.

### **16.3. Newspaper advertisement**

Mr Bailey drew attention to the newspaper advertisement recently placed in the NT News to increase the numbers of people on the mailing list who wanted information about the implementation of the Plan of Management.

### **16.4. Presentations**

During the meeting on 31 October presentations to the community on work that had been supported by the committee would also be discussed. Presentations would be made in February but needed to be organised prior to the Christmas break.

## **17. NEXT MEETING**

Monday 21 October 2005.