



Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

MINUTES FOR MEETING 30

Friday 15th May 2009

8:45 AM to 12 Noon

Darwin City Council Chambers

1. Welcome And Apologies

Present

Name

Bill Stuchbery

Lyn Allen

Greg Bicknell

Alastair Black

Melanie Bradley

Greg Constantine

Tom Harris

Chris Makepeace

Mark Meldrum

Kate Roll

Sue Sultana

Bob Wasson

Representing

Independent Chairperson

Executive Director - Environment, Heritage and the Arts, NRETAS

Chamber of Commerce NT

Darwin Port Corporation

Environment Centre NT

Larrakia Development Corporation

NT Horticultural Association

Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT

Manager, Strategic Planning and Policy, Department of Planning and Infrastructure

A/Project Coordinator, Environment, Heritage and the Arts, NRETAS

Tek Ventures Diving (Community rep)

Charles Darwin University, Chair Ecosystem Research Group

Guests

Roger Bluett

Senior Policy Officer - Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)

Juanita Croft

Executive Director - EPA

Ken Gardner

Project Officer – Major Projects, Department of Planning and Infrastructure

Kylie Harvey

Senior Environmental Officer, Regional Estate Support, Defence Support NT/Kimberley

Sean Kildare

General Manager, External Affairs, INPEX

David Parry

Australian Institute of Marine Science

Phill Piper

Director – Major Projects Infrastructure, Department of Planning and Infrastructure

Andrew Tupper

Chair - Environmental Protection Authority

Apologies

Luccio Cercarelli

LGANT

Peter Dummett

Perkins Shipping

David Jan

Greening Australia NT

Graeme Lewis

Tourism Top End

Donna Odegaard

Larrakia Radio (Community rep)

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

2. Introductions

3. Acceptance of previous minutes, financial report and correspondence registers

The Committee agreed that the minutes from the previous meeting be accepted. Financial reports and correspondence registers were circulated for review.

4. Review of the previous meeting's actions

5. Update from DHAC Chair on public consultations

Public consultations on the draft Darwin Harbour Regional Management Strategic Framework 2009-2013 (the Strategic Framework) concluded on 15 May 2009. Meetings in Wagait and Howard Springs went well, despite low turnout. There were no participants in Batchelor. By contrast, over 40 people attended in Darwin. The Chair appreciated the support and participation of representatives from DHAC, NRETAS and the EPA.

Action

6. Update from A/Project Coordinator on WQPP and Water Allocation

Water Quality Monitoring: This element of the WQPP is under development. A draft was presented to the EMG, and Aquatic Health is now working on the strategy and receiving feedback. A final draft should be released in July.

Water Quality Objectives (WQOs) and Beneficial Uses: The Objectives have been signed off on by the EMG, and they are now entering the formalization phase, specifically declaring the Objectives under the NT *Water Act*. This process is slated to begin in May with the submission of the WQOs to the Minister. This is an opportunity for DHAC to express its support. The hope is that the Declaration of the WQOs and the Beneficial Uses will be gazetted in July, and potentially presented for Cabinet endorsement in August. The WQPP website is ready to go online.

Report Cards: The project team is in the process of developing the template for report cards on the health of Darwin Harbour; these would include DHAC branding and a message from the Chair. The team would like to present these designs to DHAC at the next meeting.

Water Allocation: The Water Allocation planning is progressing slowly and a Water Allocation Committee may be announced in early August.

DHAC members queried about whether the monitoring program would look at both point source and non-point source pollution.

Action

Prof Robert Wasson has requested a copy of the WQPP monitoring plan. To be obtained by Ms Julia Fortune by A/Project Coordinator.

Action

Invite Aquatic Health to present Report Card program and designs at the 7 July 2009 DHAC meeting. A/Project Coordinator to contact Ms Julia Fortune.

7. Update from Mr Phill Piper (DPI) on development of East Arm Wharf and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)

The expansion of East Arm Wharf will be preceded by eight studies. These include:

- Concept design
- Gap analysis (both environmental and engineering aspects)
- Notice of Intent
- Environmental studies (to be based on gap analysis and NOI)
- Risk analysis
- Hydrodynamic model of effects on the harbour
- Cyclone surge and sea level rise study
- Geo-technical study

The first of these studies is to commence at the by the beginning of June 2009, with the hope of having a significant amount of work completed in mid-June/July. DPI has received a commitment from Cabinet for 1.5 million AUD in small studies, with other avenues for funding possible. 50 million AUD has been allotted in the Federal Budget for the extension of East Arm Wharf.

DPI has been in discussions with NRETAS concerning dredging in Darwin Harbour.

The Darwin Harbour WSUD Strategy is the culmination of three years of work. The aim is for WSUD to become part of the NT Planning Scheme, pending the development of a WSUD strategy for the Centre. DHAC Chair noted that there are significant opportunities to link the Darwin Harbour WSUD Strategy and DHAC's work.

Action

DHAC to integrate the Darwin Harbour WSUD Strategy into the draft Strategic Framework.

Action

DHAC to provide comment on the Darwin Harbour WSUD Strategy website and suggest increasing linkages.

8. Update on current Environmental Impact Assessment matters from Ms Lyn Allen, NRETAS

NRETAS is currently working on the EIS from BHP Billiton. NRETAS has also recently issued an amended license for Conoco Philips activities.

The Middle Arm Gap Analysis has been completed. Priorities for studies to cover both East and Middle Arm include:

- Marine habitat mapping, monitoring and baseline measurements
- Extending WQ monitoring into Elizabeth River estuary
- Baseline groundwater study
- Hydrodynamic modelling
- Water management planning
- Potential Acid Sulphate Soils mapping

Action

DHAC Chair to discuss potential role for EMG in preliminary studies with NRETAS.

9. Briefing on proposed INPEX project by Sean Kildare

Mr Sean Kildare provided a presentation to DHAC on the progress of the proposed INPEX LNG facility for Middle Arm. At the moment, the INPEX team is in the final stages of preparing the draft EIS and INPEX has commenced the onshore and offshore front end engineering design (FEED) process.

Action

DHAC A/Project Coordinator to follow up on a presentation by INPEX upon the release of its EIS.

10. Update from Environmental Protection Authority

Dr Ander Tupper and Ms Juanita Croft updated DHAC on the EPA's recently announced review of the legislative and policy frameworks concerning the management and use of the Darwin Harbour region. At present, the EPA is mapping existing frameworks, and the Environmental Defenders Office will lead Stage One of the review, which maps out who is making decisions about Darwin Harbour.

The EPA expressed appreciation for DHAC's vision for the future of Darwin Harbour region. The EPA will look to support improved regulatory processes.

Other initiatives:

- The EPA is seeking to establish Northern Territory principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD). Draft principles have been released and the public comment period remains open.
- The EPA is reviewing the Environmental Impact Assessment process, and a discussion paper to be released at the end of May 2009. Outcomes could potentially include suggestions for amendments to the

EIA Act, which would focus on updating it and including new measures for social impacts.

Action

DHAC notes and appreciates the EPA's work on the harbour; EPA initiative to be highlighted in revised Strategic Framework.

11. General discussion

Members noted that important research and monitoring activities in the harbour are being carried out or planned by a wide range of government, NGO and industry actors (including INPEX); suggestion that these groups "sit down together."

Dr David Parry noted that Charles Darwin University is planning a symposium on Charles Darwin that may feature some research related to the harbour.

Ms Kylie Harvey, noted that the Department of Defence has collected data on the Harbour, and it would be interested in discussing contributions to the EMG. Mr Bill Stuchbery and Prof Robert Wasson raised the possibility of reviewing EMG and ERG membership and Terms of Reference.

Action

A/Project Coordinator to provide Ms Kylie Harvey with Ms Julia Fortune's contact information.

Action

EMG and ERG Chairs to meet and discuss potential changes to the structure and membership of the EMG and ERG.

12. Presentation by Dr David Parry of AIMS on the Caring for Country grant application and the Port Curtis Integrated Monitoring Program (PCIMP) model

The proposed project, if funded, will develop and implement a comprehensive monitoring, evaluation, reporting program for the coastal and marine ecosystems and biodiversity of Darwin Harbour. This will include (1) water quality and biological monitoring; (2) improved eco-hydrological modelling; (3) habitat mapping; (4) monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the overall 'ecological health' of the harbour (using a customised decision support tool, VPSSIR); and (5) the development of a cooperative 'sea country' management framework (and investment plan) to support the full engagement of indigenous managers and traditional owners in the management of Darwin Harbour.

The project will support the implementation of the WQPP and involve the Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation Sea Rangers program.

DHAC would have a role in support of the Healthy Harbour Partnership Steering Committee as well as take part in the development of a reporting system, such as Harbour health report cards.

PCIMP is a cooperative integrated monitoring approach; it is based on a user pays system, which involves 15 organizations in Port Curtis, QLD. Participants contribute varying amounts and receive individual reports on their section of the harbour. The monitoring program is not extensive, with a limited range of indicators, both physical and biological. The Program is only 3 years old and still developing.

Other models include that used in Moreton Bay, Healthy Waterways Program, which is also based on a user pays system and is managed through collaboration between community, government and industry.

Currently there is no fee for doing business in Darwin Harbour. A user pays system for the Harbour would allow for the sustained funding of monitoring programs and reduce dependence on government and/or grants funding.

Action

DHAC thanks Dr Parry for his valuable work developing a monitoring program for the Harbour.

Action

DHAC to further explore options for a user-pays monitoring programs, such as the PCIMP model, for Darwin Harbour.

13. Discussion of proposed Arafura Harbour Development

Action

Members agreed to wait until more detailed plans are made available before having further discussions.

Next regular meeting is to be held on 7 July 2009, 9-12 noon, Meeting Room I, Darwin City Council.

Meeting closed 12 noon.

Action Sheet
Meeting 30, 15 May 2009

Agenda Number	Agenda Item Title	Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
6	Update from A/Project Coordinator on WQPP and Water Allocation	Prof Robert Wasson has requested a copy of the WQPP monitoring plan. To be obtained by Ms Julia Fortune by A/Project Coordinator.	KR	Before 07/07/09 meeting	Pending revision of draft strategy.
6	Update from A/Project Coordinator on WQPP and Water Allocation	Invite Aquatic Health to present Report Card program and designs at the 7 July 2009 DHAC meeting. A/Project Coordinator to contact Ms Julia Fortune.	KR	Before 07/07/09 meeting	Completed; JF to present on 07/07/09
7	Update from Mr Phill Piper, DPI on development of East Arm Wharf and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)	DHAC to integrate the Darwin Harbour WSUD Strategy into the draft Strategic Framework	BS, KR	Before 07/07/09 meeting	Completed
7	Update from Mr Phill Piper, DPI on development of East Arm Wharf and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)	DHAC to provide comment on the Darwin Harbour WSUD Strategy website and suggest increasing linkages	BS, KR	Before 07/07/09 meeting	Pending reply from DPI and Equatica
8	Update on current Environmental Impact Assessment matters from Ms Lyn Allen, NRETAS	DHAC Chair to discuss potential role for EMG in preliminary studies with NRETAS	BS, LA	Before 07/07/09 meeting	Ongoing; BS met with LA on 17/06/09
9	Briefing on proposed INPEX project by Sean Kildare	DHAC A/Project Coordinator to follow up on a presentation by INPEX upon the release of its EIS	BS, KR	Following release of draft EIS	Pending public release of draft EIS

10	Update from Environmental Protection Authority	DHAC notes and appreciates the EPA's work on the harbour; EPA initiative to be highlighted in revised Darwin Harbour Strategy	BS, KR	Before 07/07/09 meeting	Completed: draft Darwin Harbour Strategy pending finalization
11	General Discussion	EMG and ERG Chairs to meet and discuss potential changes to the structure and membership of the EMG and ERG.	BS, RW	Before 07/07/09 meeting	Completed: Meeting held on 19/06/09. Merged to form EMRG.
11	General Discussion	A/Project Coordinator to provide Ms Kylie Harvey with Ms Julia Fortune's contact information	KR	ASAP	Completed
12	Presentation by Dr David Parry of AIMS on the Caring for Country grant application and the Port Curtis Integrated Monitoring Program (PCIMP) model	DHAC thanks Dr Parry for his valuable work developing a monitoring program for the Harbour	-	-	-
12	Presentation by Dr David Parry of AIMS on the Caring for Country grant application and the Port Curtis Integrated Monitoring Program (PCIMP) model	DHAC to further explore options for a user-pays monitoring programs, such as the PCIMP model, for Darwin Harbour	BS, KR	Ongoing	Ongoing
13	Discussion of proposed Arafura Harbour Development	Members agreed to wait until more detailed plans are made available before having further discussions.	-	-	Suspended