

## UPDATE

### *Plan of Management for Darwin Harbour and its catchment*

March 2003

## Topics

- 1 Charting a Course to a Healthy Harbour
- 2 The Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee - What will it do?
- 3 "Airing Harbour Views" Public Forums
- 4 "Values and Uses" - Summary of outcomes from Public Submissions and Workshops
- 5 Keeping you informed
- 6 Important Dates

Contact the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee on (08) 89994473 for more information.

*"Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee Guiding the management of Darwin Harbour and its catchment - A community, stakeholder & government partnership"*

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# Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

## 1. "CHARTING A COURSE TO A HEALTHY HARBOUR"

Over 200 scientists and stakeholders gathered in Darwin recently to discuss the current condition of Darwin Harbour and its catchment and the management issues faced by the region.

The series of public seminars was hosted by the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee, which will be developing a Plan of Management for Darwin Harbour over the coming months.

"It is imperative that scientific knowledge is taken into account when developing the Darwin Harbour Plan of Management. It is also important that new research is focussed toward the issues faced by the community to support effective management of this valuable resource" Mr Bailey, chairman of the advisory committee said.

In a series of presentations to the community, scientists and managers outlined the condition of the harbour and its catchment and the potential for impacts upon that condition by increasing use of the harbour.

Overall, Darwin Harbour is a healthy ecosystem with a wide variety of marine plants and animals. Current research



suggests that the water and sediment quality of the harbour is generally good and that the harbour supports populations of dugongs, turtles and dolphins, as well as relatively undisturbed mangrove communities.

Scientists cautioned however that urban and industrial developments are starting to have localised impacts in the harbour and future uses and developments will need to be managed appropriately to maintain harbour condition.

Outcomes of presentations will provide the scientific basis for the Plan of Management. The plan will provide recommendations and actions for maintaining the condition of Darwin Harbour into the future.

For further information, contact (08) 89994473 or visit [www.ipe.nt.gov.au](http://www.ipe.nt.gov.au)

## 2. THE DARWIN HARBOUR ADVISORY COMMITTEE - WHAT WILL IT DO?

The Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee is a community based reference group established by government to oversee the development and subsequent implementation of a Plan of Management for Darwin Harbour and its catchment. The committee has also been established to guide the Minister on matters relating to the maintenance of conservational, recreational, cultural and commercial values of the harbour and catchment. The committee comprises NT community and government representatives involved in the planning and management of the coastal and marine environment. The Darwin Harbour Plan of Management will provide strategic direction and advice on the management of water and land-based activities that would affect the range of values and uses of the harbour and its catchment. It will incorporate a number of goals, strategies and actions to manage the use of the harbour and catchment.

## 3. "AIRING HARBOUR VIEWS" PUBLIC FORUMS

Darwin 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003 - CASUARINA LIBRARY, Casuarina 5.30pm - 7.30pm

Palmerston 6<sup>th</sup> March 2003 - PALMERSTON COUNCIL CHAMBERS 5.30pm - 7.30pm

Litchfield Shire 11<sup>th</sup> March 2003 - FREDS PASS RESERVE (Lakeview Hall) 6.30pm - 8.30pm

Cox Peninsula 13<sup>th</sup> March 2003 - MANDORAH HOTEL 6.30pm - 8.30pm

# OUR HARBOUR - VALUES AND USES

## 4. Summary of outcomes from Public Submissions and Workshops

The Darwin Harbour Public Presentations held during February examined scientific knowledge and understanding of Darwin Harbour and its catchment, as well as highlighting the social and economic importance of the region and the values held by the community and stakeholders. The public, through submissions to the advisory committee and through technical workshops, have also expressed a range of values for the harbour and its catchment. A summary of the values and uses identified for Darwin Harbour catchment to date is listed below, and will be used in the development of the Plan of Management for Darwin harbour.

### Environmental

- Freshwater, estuarine and marine water quality/quantity
- Ground water quality/quantity
- Air quality
- Ecological health and biodiversity
- Flora, fauna and habitats of conservation significance and cultural significance
- Ecosystem function and processes

### Economic

- Economically and ecologically sustainable industry and agriculture (including uses such as general industrial development; commercial development; tourism; shipping/port activities; fishing; aquaculture; extractive industries/mining; agriculture and horticulture; defence and communication; water extraction; indigenous uses)
- Viable communities and cities
- Individual economic wellbeing and opportunities

### Social/Cultural

- Aesthetics
- Indigenous and cultural heritage
- Historic values
- Lifestyle and recreation (including fishing, boating, walking, hunting etc)
- Human health
- Community capacity for participation
- Public awareness and education
- Access to the environment
- Legislation that supports the vision and values for the environment
- Coordinated monitoring and management



*A focus group discusses the values and uses of Darwin Harbour at technical workshops.*

## 5. Keeping You Informed

Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee aims to keep the community and stakeholders informed about the plan of management and its progress. If you would like more information or to be kept up to date on the project please call (08) 8999 4473 or E-mail [DarwinHarbourAdvisoryCommittee@nt.gov.au](mailto:DarwinHarbourAdvisoryCommittee@nt.gov.au)

## 6. Important Dates!

- Closing date for written submissions is the **31<sup>st</sup> March 2003**
- Public Forums **March 4th, 6th, 11th & 13th 2003**. Watch for advertisements!
- Public Hearings will be held in April 2003. Call (08) 89994473 for more details.

## CATCHMENT FACTS



### Harbour boundary

The catchment boundaries for the plan of management include Shoal Bay and the Howard River Catchment, with the boundary stretching between Charles Point and Gunn Point. For further details, see [www.ipe.nt.gov.au](http://www.ipe.nt.gov.au)



### Marine fauna

Darwin Harbour currently supports at least 123 species of corals, 3 species of dolphins, 6 species of turtle and 20 species of marine snakes.



### Mangroves

The Darwin Harbour region contains over 25,000 hectares of mangroves and includes 36 mangrove species, 6 of which are common. Mangrove ecosystems contain an abundance of invertebrate fauna, as well as supporting other important harbour species by acting as feeding grounds and nursery habitats.



### Fishing

In excess of one million hours of fishing is undertaken in the harbour each year, by more than 42,000 people. Over 750,000 fish and other aquatic animals are caught every year in the harbour, with the most common type of fish caught being tropical snappers.

## Have your say!....

Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee  
C/O Goyder Centre  
PO Box 30

Palmerston NT 0831

Or

E-mail:

[DarwinHarbourAdvisoryCommittee@nt.gov.au](mailto:DarwinHarbourAdvisoryCommittee@nt.gov.au)

Submissions Close: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003

Visit our web link from the Dept of Infrastructure,  
Planning and Environment Website

<http://www.ipe.nt.gov.au>