



Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

August 2003

UPDATE

Public Release – Draft Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management

The Draft Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management is now available for public comment and feedback.

The Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (DHAC) was appointed in August 2002 and charged with the duty of overseeing the development and implementation of the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management. Members of this community based reference group have provided an ongoing conduit for community values and issues to be recognised in the formulation of the Plan.

This Regional Plan of Management provides us with a vision for the future and a framework for managing, protecting and enhancing our valuable harbour and catchment. The plan addresses critical issues for management and continues to build on achievements of the past.

While the harbour and its catchment encompass a range of distinctive and unique environments that require protection, the region is subject to pressures and conflicts of use, which present a major challenge to government, industry and community. These ever so present complexities require a robust yet adaptive management framework. This regional plan of management offers a coordinated and integrated approach to management and planning within the harbour and catchment.

Goals of the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management

Five management goals have been identified in the Plan. For each goal, there is a range of outcomes, which the plan will aim to achieve. Section 3 of the Plan lists the actions to achieve the Plan's outcomes and overall goals.

The five goals of the plan are:

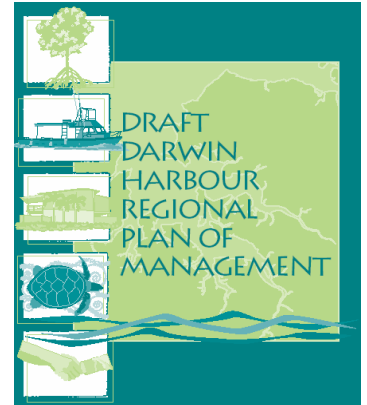
GOAL 1. To maintain a healthy environment

Maintain and improve water quality and ecological health of the marine, freshwater and terrestrial environments in the region. Improve our understanding of our

environment, through research and monitoring, to inform management.

GOAL 2. To support recreational use and enjoyment of the environment

Manage and enhance the quality of our leisure time, and promote community pride through the maintenance of our scenic values and the region's unique character.



GOAL 3. To encourage ecologically and economically sustainable development

Sustain and manage the demands and impacts of tourism, transport, aquaculture, horticulture, urban development and other commercial uses of the harbour and catchment.

GOAL 4. To protect cultural values and heritage

Maintain and protect cultural uses, and sites of cultural and heritage value. Acknowledge that indigenous interests, values and concerns are innately connected with custodial and spiritual obligations and responsibility to the region.

GOAL 5. To foster community ownership and participation in management

Ensure the participation of the community in the development, and implementation, of the Plan. Inform the public of current management actions, issues, and the health of the environment.

A range of key strategies and actions has been developed to realise the vision for the harbour and its catchment. These include:

- ❑ Actions to improve our understanding and knowledge of the region's environments, notably monitoring and research.
- ❑ Protecting and enhancing freshwater, estuarine and marine water quality through a range of management measures.
- ❑ Protecting the health and functioning of ecosystems and conserving biodiversity. Importantly, identifying and managing significant species and ecosystems.
- ❑ Protecting and enhancing recreational amenity and opportunity.
- ❑ Promoting ecologically sustainable harvesting and fishing. Improving our knowledge of recreational and traditional fishing activities and fisheries to ensure sustainability.
- ❑ Protecting the diverse range of aesthetic values of the region.

- ❑ Effectively planning and managing future development, and enhancing public participation in the process.
- ❑ Supporting sustainable economic development.
- ❑ Promoting ecologically sustainable use of freshwater in the Darwin Harbour region.
- ❑ Managing sites of cultural, spiritual and heritage significance. Managing cultural, spiritual and heritage values, and promoting these values as part of our rich cultural diversity and lifestyle.
- ❑ Improving public awareness of Darwin Harbour regional values, issues and management, and improving public participation in the management and monitoring of the region.

Public Consultation

Public contribution to the development of the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management is vital to ensure the Plan adequately reflects the interests and activities of all stakeholders in the long term. Identifying issues, priorities and developing and endorsing strategies in partnership with the community is imperative. Community aspirations and values remain central underpinning principles in developing a sound framework for management. The ongoing role of the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee will focus primarily on community involvement, ensuring that participation in the planning and implementation process continues.

Public comments and submissions on the draft plan are now being sought. This phase of consultation will be primarily centred on the draft document.

A number of valuable reference documents have also been produced in association with the first phase of public consultation undertaken from November 2002 to April 2003. These documents include:

Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (2003). Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management: Public Consultation Phase 1. *Public Hearings – Transcript of Proceedings*. Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, Darwin.

Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (2003). Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management: Public Consultation Phase 1. *Summary of outcomes from public forum consultation*. Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, Darwin.

Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (2003). Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management: Public Consultation Phase 1. *Written Submissions for the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management*. Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, Darwin.

Working Group to the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (2003). *Proceedings: Darwin Harbour Region: Current knowledge and future needs*. Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, Darwin.

Working Group to the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (2003). *Proceedings: Technical Workshops for the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management: Current knowledge and future needs*. Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, Darwin.

Working Group to the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (2003). *Management Issues for the Darwin Harbour Region*. Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, Darwin.

All documents are currently available on the Committee's website. <http://www.ipe.nt.gov.au/divisions/dhac>.

Catchment Facts



One of the reasons that Larrakia people are known as 'saltwater people' is because of their extensive harvesting of sea and marine resources. (*Larrakia: Language group name for Aboriginal Traditional Owners of the region*).



Darwin Harbour supports in excess of 3000 marine invertebrate species, including sponges, hard and soft corals, crabs, prawns, marine worms, seastars, jellyfish, mussels, marine snails, seasquirts and seawhips. These animals live on a variety of surfaces, including on mud, sand, gravel and rocks and amongst seagrass beds and mangroves.



There was more than 1.58 million visitors to the Territory in 2001, with 703,000 people visiting the Top End. Visitors to the NT are primarily from interstate (46%) or overseas (36%) with the remainder being Territorian tourists.



Of all recreational fishing undertaken in the Northern Territory, 45% occurs in Darwin Harbour. Within Darwin Harbour, 55% of fishing is undertaken from boats, with 45% undertaken from the shore.

Copies of the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management can be obtained by contacting 89994473 or 89994478. Copies are available in CD format or you can download the document from the Advisory Committee's website at <http://www.ipe.nt.gov.au/divisions/dhac>

Comments and Submissions can be sent to:

The Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

C-/O PO Box 30

PALMERSTON NT 0831

Or

E-mail: dhac@nt.gov.au

For further information or assistance contact (08) 89994473 or (08) 89994478