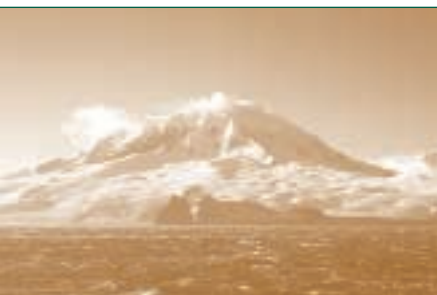




Australian Government
Director of National Parks

Director of National Parks



Annual Report

2002-03



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Director of National Parks

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Annual Report

2002-03

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Bowali Visitor Centre, Kakadu National Park – Michael Nelson
Young desert oak – Dan Hanish
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Part A

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Sand goanna – Dan Hanish
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Part D

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Part E

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Part F

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Maps

Environmental Resources Information Network

Edited by Elizabeth Hutchings Editing

Designed by Fusebox Design

Printed by Union Offset on Australian paper made from sustainable plantation timber



Australian Government

Director of National Parks

The Hon Dr David Kemp MP
Minister for the Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Minister

I have pleasure in submitting the annual report of the Director of National Parks for the year ending 30 June 2003.

The report includes a review of operations, the financial statements for the Australian National Parks Fund, and the Auditor-General's report on the financial statements.

Included also, for the first time, is a State of the Parks report setting out major features of each Commonwealth reserve, matters of national environmental significance, key issues and performance measures.

As holder of the office of the Director of National Parks, I am responsible under section 9 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* for the preparation and content of the annual report. The report has been prepared in accordance with Finance Minister's Orders.

Section 9(3) of the Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act requires you to table the report in each House of the Parliament as soon as practicable after it has been given to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Cochrane'.

Peter Cochrane
Director of National Parks

9 October 2003

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>> ABOUT THIS REPORT

The annual report of the Director of National Parks for 2002–03 consists of the following parts.

Part A: Review by the Director includes a summary of significant events, an overview of performance and the outlook for 2003–04.

Part B: Overview describes the legislative basis for the Director's work as a statutory authority within the Environment and Heritage portfolio, and the organisational structure that supports the Director.

Part C: Report on Performance includes a report against the outcome–output structure laid out in the Portfolio Budget Statements for 2002–03 and identifies other major documents that contribute to the planning, operating and reporting framework. It includes a table showing progress with implementation of management plans required under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* for each Commonwealth reserve.

Part D: State of the Parks Report includes a system-wide summary and a report for the year on each Commonwealth reserve. The report provides background information on each reserve, including information that establishes particular management responsibilities of the Director, along with reporting on major issues against key result areas. Also included in this section are case studies that provide more detailed reporting on management of specific issues.

Part E: Management and Accountability covers the areas of corporate governance, control arrangements, external scrutiny, management of human resources, consultants, purchasing and asset management, and other matters required by legislation to be reported.

The report also includes financial statements for the Australian National Parks Fund.

An index showing compliance with the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2002* is included.

Our readers

This report is presented to the Minister for tabling in the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. It also aims to meet the information needs of other people with an interest in the management of Commonwealth reserves. These include Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies, local government, non-government organisations, staff of the Department of the Environment and Heritage and the general public.

For more information

More information on the parks and reserves discussed in this report and related issues is available at www.deh.gov.au/parks.

This report is available on the Department's web site at www.deh.gov.au/parks/publications and from the Department's Community Information Unit, phone 1800 803 772.

PART A Review by the Director



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>> REVIEW BY THE DIRECTOR

This annual report includes a major change in style and content, with a more systematic focus on strategic planning, performance assessment and the management control framework. This reflects progressive steps towards meeting key recommendations from the 2001 Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) Performance Audit of the Director of National Parks.

Part D presents our first State of the Parks report. This report provides for the first time a consistent structure and reporting framework against which our performance can be assessed, and future monitoring can be planned and undertaken. This will be an important focus in future years to identify trends in performance effectiveness and more objectively review and revise priorities, resource allocation decisions and management actions.

Highlights of the financial year 2002–03 included Parks Australia staff at Christmas Island and researchers at Monash University jointly winning a prestigious Banksia Award for Environmental Leadership for the development and implementation of a major control program for the invasive yellow crazy ant on Christmas Island; the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) winning the Ecotourism category at the 2002 ACT Tourism Awards; and the Gardens' Volunteer Guide Training Program receiving the Outstanding Program Award for the ACT during Adult Learners' Week. Craig Woods, a young Anangu trainee at Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park, was a finalist in the Northern Territory Young Achievers Awards. The ANBG also received public acknowledgement for their efforts in meeting the targets set in the ACT for reduced water use in a severe drought year. Booderee National Park received a State Clean Beaches Award for 2002–03. Each of these awards is a reflection and acknowledgement of the hard work and commitment of many Parks Australia staff.

In October 2002, a major new Commonwealth marine reserve was added to the national system of marine protected areas through the declaration of the Heard Island and MacDonald Islands Marine Reserve (HIMI), which at 6.5 million hectares is the world's largest strictly protected marine reserve. The islands are on the World Heritage list for their natural values and the reserve protects a representative sample of the pristine sub-Antarctic environment including habitat for a range of seal, penguin and other seabird species. The declaration of HIMI and the consultative process leading to its siting and design, involving and supported by the local fishing industry, led to the World Wide Fund for Nature presenting the Australian Government with its highest international award, A Gift to the Earth, in 2003.

The declaration of HIMI brought the total area of Commonwealth marine reserves to just over 27 million hectares, and together with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and state reserves, means that over 6 per cent of the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone is now managed primarily for biodiversity conservation. A management plan is in preparation for HIMI, and for the first time, all other Commonwealth reserves have current management plans. Further Commonwealth marine reserves are under consideration through the development of the South-East Regional Marine Plan by the National Oceans Office. Eleven broad areas of interest in the region have been identified to provide a basis for considering potential new marine reserves through a comprehensive participatory planning process involving all major stakeholders, including fishing, petroleum, shipping and conservation interests.

Consolidation of our financial and management control framework continued, and the results reflect well on the staff responsible for this essential work. The outcome of the ANAO audit of this year's financial statements is an excellent indicator of the growing health of our financial management controls. Chief Executive Instructions were comprehensively revised and reissued during the reporting

year, and are being progressively underpinned by new policies and procedures to ensure financial management roles and responsibilities are clear, easily communicated and understood.

A range of new and revised Parks Australia policies have been developed and issued, covering risk management, vehicle use, staff housing, and fraud control. A Compliance and Enforcement Strategy was also developed and issued. Monthly incident reports are compiled (since July 2002) and are used, *inter alia*, to review and update the risk watch lists for each workplace. Each of these documents and processes helps to provide more consistent and focused guidance for parks staff and other interested parties.

These achievements, important as they are, give us comfort that we can successfully and systematically tackle management challenges, but many more challenges remain. A capital infrastructure plan is close to finalisation and will identify unfunded depreciation costs for the first time following the introduction of accrual accounting in 1998–99. The forthcoming year will include major attention on occupational health and safety systems, and how we manage fringe benefits tax and the goods and services tax. By successfully addressing these issues in 2003–04, we will have completed a major review and upgrading of all the key elements of our management systems.

Some other particular highlights for the year should be mentioned. In Booderee National Park lease renegotiations were concluded and agreement reached on a new lease schedule setting out how the delivery of park services and management would be progressively devolved to the Wreck Bay Community's business arm. This is an important step in meeting the park lease covenant to 'take all practicable steps to promote Aboriginal management, administration and control of the park'. The current park service contracts with Wreck Bay Enterprises Ltd were consolidated and provide 25 to 35 jobs for community members.

At Uluru, new support arrangements for joint management of the park were progressively implemented with the appointment of a full time Central Land Council park officer to facilitate consultation, communication and decision-making with the park's traditional owners, and to better prepare Anangu board members for their roles. A new structure for the Board of Management was negotiated and agreed, increasing Anangu representation from six to eight members, and formalising an equal membership of Anangu men and women. The park also continued to outperform all other parks in the Northern Territory through the year in terms of visitor satisfaction, ending 2002–03 with 92 per cent of visitors satisfied or very satisfied with their experience.

Good collaboration continued with the Northern Territory Bushfires Council on monitoring the effects and effectiveness of fire as a management tool in Kakadu, with positive results; and with the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission on monitoring and assessing the impacts of cane toads on Kakadu's wildlife. A major project was undertaken to relocate original fauna survey plots in Kakadu spanning the last 20 years and then resurvey them, with preliminary results suggesting the park's wildlife is generally in good shape, although specific monitoring of the impacts of cane toads triggered a precautionary measure of relocating small populations of northern quolls to several islands off north-east Arnhem Land that are cane toad free.

Considerable media interest focused on park issues from time to time in the year. Foremost amongst these were risks and impacts of a growing saltwater crocodile presence in and adjacent to a number of popular tourist destinations in Kakadu National Park which led to the controversial closure of Twin Falls over the current dry season. The tragic death of a young visitor in Kakadu through crocodile attack in late 2002 highlighted the risks. The tension between tourism industry interest in maintaining and increasing access to existing and new destinations in the park, and concern by traditional owners and

park staff about visitor safety and the protection of park values, is likely to continue into the future. New infrastructure such as boardwalks may be necessary to ensure visitors can safely access some of the park's iconic sites. Despite some media criticism and claims to the contrary, visitor numbers to Kakadu held up well in the face of an overall decline in visitor numbers to Australia in general, and the Top End of the Northern Territory in particular.

A second media focus was the film and photography guidelines at Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park. These guidelines aim to protect the park's outstanding cultural heritage by regulating the capture and use of images of the park (and Uluru and Kata Tjuta in particular) by commercial interests to prevent inappropriate use of these images. While such regulation may be conceptually simple, its implementation and administration can be complex, cumbersome, and seemingly inconsistent at times. Constructive discussions with representatives of photographer associations were held in early 2003 and created an opportunity to simplify and streamline the management of this issue to benefit all parties. Resolution of this will be a priority in 2003–04.

In the forthcoming year, the maintenance of ageing infrastructure in the parks, the need to upgrade and improve visitor facilities while minimising their impacts, continued pressure from feral animals, weeds and major new threats such as cane toads in Kakadu, and greater discipline and expectations for reporting on management performance, will continue to keep park budgets tight and focused. A range of options is under consideration for raising external revenue, including increasing park entry fees and commercial permit charges, and introducing new service or activity fees. While some 80 per cent of the expense of managing Commonwealth reserves is provided directly by the Australian Government, diversifying and increasing external income streams will also be a priority for 2003–04.

Finally I would like to thank all parks staff, members of park Boards of Management and advisory committees, and the array of volunteers who have provided their time and expertise, for their dedication, hard work and contributions over the year. This brief overview does little justice to their achievements and commitment, nor can it adequately thank those who have retired or moved on to other careers in other places. While conserving biodiversity and other natural and cultural values in our outstanding parks and reserves is a very important part of our job, it is the people who live and work in them, those who come to visit, experience and appreciate their values, and their aspirations, views, feelings and reactions, who make this position so exciting, rewarding, and challenging.

Peter Cochrane

Director of National Parks

PART B Overview



Annual Report

2002-03

MISSION

To assist the Minister and the Department of the Environment and Heritage in the conservation and appreciation of Australia's biological diversity and associated cultural heritage, through leadership and cooperation in the management of the Commonwealth's protected areas.

>> THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS

The Director of National Parks is a corporation sole established under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The corporation has a single director, the person appointed to the office of the Director of National Parks under the Act. The holder of the office is Mr Peter Cochrane.

The Director of National Parks is responsible to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, and the Act requires the Director to perform functions and exercise powers in accordance with any directions given by the Minister, unless the Act provides otherwise.

The Act provides for the proclamation and management of Commonwealth reserves. The term 'reserves' includes all the areas proclaimed under the Act with names such as national parks, marine parks, national nature reserves, marine national nature reserves, marine reserves, and botanic gardens. Thus this report generally uses the term 'reserves' to encompass all parks and reserves under the Act.

The Act also provides for the proclamation and management of conservation zones.

The Director is responsible for the management of Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones. These have been established under the Act over Commonwealth-owned land, Commonwealth marine areas, and over certain areas of Aboriginal land leased to the Director. The locations of Commonwealth reserves declared under the Act are shown at Figure 2 on page 32.

The Director is assisted in managing reserves by staff of Parks Australia, a division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage. In 2002–03 staff of the Marine and Water Division of the Department, under delegation from the Director, undertook management of reserves established in Commonwealth marine areas. From 1 July 2003, the Parks Australia South branch of Parks Australia will manage marine protected areas.

In this report, reference to Parks Australia refers to the Director of National Parks and Parks Australia staff.

>> ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

Legislative functions

The Director is responsible for the administration of Divisions 4 and 5 of Part 15 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones) and Regulations made for the purposes of those divisions. The functions of the Director of National Parks as set out in subsection 514B(1) of the Act are:

- to administer, manage and control Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones;
- to protect, conserve and manage biodiversity and heritage in Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones;
- to cooperate with any country in matters relating to the establishment and management of national parks and nature reserves in that country;
- to provide, and assist in the provision of, training in the knowledge and skills relevant to the establishment and management of national parks and nature reserves;
- to carry out alone or in cooperation with other institutions and persons, and to arrange for any other institution or person to carry out, research and investigations relevant to the establishment and management of Commonwealth reserves;
- to make recommendations to the Minister in relation to the establishment and management of Commonwealth reserves;
- to administer the Australian National Parks Fund;
- any other functions conferred on the Director under any other Act; and
- to do anything incidental or conducive to the performance of any of the functions mentioned above.

Other responsibilities of the Director

The holder of the office of Director of National Parks, Mr Peter Cochrane, has been delegated functions and powers by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage and the Secretary of the Department of the Environment and Heritage to administer programs that complement the functions of the Director. The staff involved in these programs are included within Parks Australia.

Under such delegations, the Director administers the National Reserve System Program – a program of the Natural Heritage Trust that includes the Indigenous Protected Areas Program. Outputs of the National Reserve System Program are reported in the annual reports of the Natural Heritage Trust and the Department of the Environment and Heritage. Under section 45 of the *Natural Heritage Trust of Australia Act 1997* the Director has been delegated the power to approve proposals to spend moneys within the meaning of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, in relation to the Natural Heritage Trust Reserve, to the limit of program funds approved by the Minister.

The Director also manages the Australian Biological Resources Study, a program of the Department. Outputs of the Australian Biological Resources Study are reported in the Department's annual report.

>> VALUES

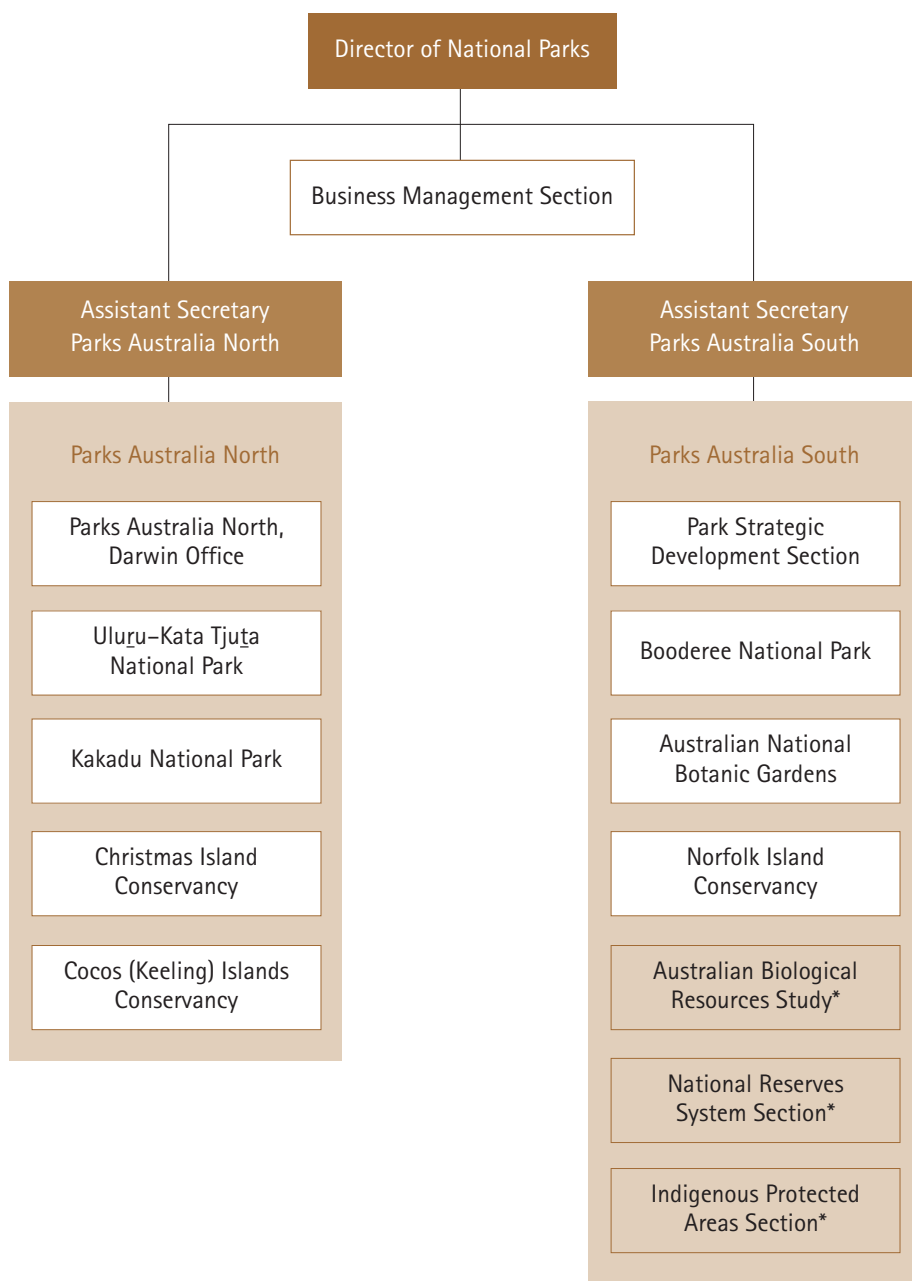
The Director of National Parks, as an authority within the Environment and Heritage portfolio, and the staff of Parks Australia as employees of the Department are committed to professionalism in serving the Government and the Minister in accordance with the values of the Australian Public Service and the following specific Departmental values:

- caring for the environment;
- respecting and responding to the values of Indigenous land owners and other partners;
- engaging with and responding to stakeholders;
- providing leadership and being active team contributors;
- being personally committed to learning and development;
- committing to excellence;
- accepting responsibility and being accountable; and
- acting with integrity and achieving results.

>> ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Details of the structure and senior management of Parks Australia as at 30 June 2003 are shown in the organisational chart (Figure 1) on page 9.

Figure 1: Parks Australia organisational chart as at 30 June 2003



* The Director of National Parks holds delegations from the Secretary and the Minister to administer these functions.

Staff of the Marine and Water Division of the Department, under delegation from the Director, undertook management of reserves established in Commonwealth marine areas. From 1 July 2003, marine protected areas will be managed through the Parks Australia South branch.

PART C Report on performance



Annual Report

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>> PLANNING, OPERATING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

The annual report is one of a number of documents in the planning, operating and reporting framework for the Director of National Parks. Other key documents include:

Portfolio Budget Statements

These documents are prepared annually by the Environment and Heritage portfolio to inform Parliament of the proposed allocation of resources to planned outputs and outcomes by agencies within the portfolio, including the Director of National Parks. They provide an explanation of appropriations and Budget initiatives and are an important element in the process of parliamentary scrutiny and public accountability.

Department of the Environment and Heritage Strategic Plan and Corporate Plan

The Department of the Environment and Heritage Strategic Plan outlines the key strategic issues for the Department and identifies agency priorities for the current year, to achieve the objectives outlined in the Department's Corporate Plan for 2001–2005. These documents provide the direction, context and purpose for the range of activities and programs supported by the Department. The strategies and objectives outlined are elaborated in more detail in division, branch, work team and individual work plans. These planning documents reflect the outcome/output structure as outlined in the Portfolio Budget Statements for the Environment and Heritage portfolio.

Parks Australia Divisional Plan

This plan includes the long-term outcomes and annual operating plans for sections of Parks Australia. It identifies specific objectives for the current year, strategies to achieve those objectives, and the performance indicators to be used to measure success. The plan is reviewed and revised annually.

Management plans

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act requires the Director (in the case of a jointly-managed park, the Director and the board of management) to prepare a management plan for each Commonwealth reserve. The Director must exercise powers and perform functions to give effect to the management plan. Management plans must provide for the protection and conservation of the reserve and state how the reserve is to be managed and how the features of the reserve are to be protected and conserved. The *Parks Australia Planning Manual* provides a systematic and rigorous guide to management planning.

Implementation schedules

These schedules identify how and when each of the requirements of a management plan will be given effect, and collectively contribute to the annual work plans and priorities for the Director and the relevant sections of Parks Australia. Qualitative and quantitative reporting on the level of achievement against these plans will increasingly become central features of performance reporting within Parks Australia.

Director of National Parks Chief Executive instructions

The Chief Executive Instructions were revised and reissued in 2002–03. They provide concise but comprehensive guidance to staff of Parks Australia in carrying out their responsibilities and roles in assisting the Director meet his statutory functions.

>> DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS INTERNAL AUDIT COMMITTEE

In addition to continuing to advise the Director on a wide range of financial issues, the Internal Audit Committee has been requested to extend its remit to include wider governance and performance management issues.

>> OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

The Director is responsible for the management of parks and reserves established under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act over Commonwealth land, Commonwealth marine areas, and over certain areas of Aboriginal land leased to the Director. The Act provides for the protection and management of the natural and cultural features of declared parks and reserves.

In meeting these responsibilities the Director contributes to the achievement of Outcome 1 (Environment) as set down in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2002–03: Environment and Heritage Portfolio. Outcome 1 is as follows:

The environment, especially those aspects that are matters of national environmental significance, is protected and conserved

The Director contributes to meeting this outcome through the sub-outcome:

Conservation and appreciation of Commonwealth reserves

There is one output identified under the sub-outcome:

Output 1.1: Parks and reserves

The following tables provide reports against performance information for the sub-outcome identified in the Portfolio Budget Statements, in two parts:

- Table 1: Overall achievement of the sub-outcome
- Table 2: Performance information for Output 1.1

>> PERFORMANCE INFORMATION AND LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT
FOR 2002–03

TABLE 1: OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SUB-OUTCOME – CONSERVATION AND APPRECIATION OF COMMONWEALTH RESERVES

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	RESULTS
<p>The extent to which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the Director's statutory responsibilities under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act are met;	<p>Management of all Commonwealth reserves was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Act and the Director's statutory responsibilities were met.</p> <p>All reserves had current management plans during the year with the exception of Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve, proclaimed on 16 October 2002. A draft plan is in preparation for this reserve.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Commonwealth reserves are managed according to national and international best practice;	<p>The Director and Parks Australia continued to strive to meet best practice standards in the management of Commonwealth reserves. Staff of Parks Australia chaired the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council Committee on National Parks and Protected Area Management. The committee is required, as one of its terms of reference, to identify and promote consistent best practice approaches to national park and protected area policy, planning and management.</p> <p>Implementation of recommendations made as a result of the performance audit carried out by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) during 2001–02 continued. The response to these recommendations is reflected particularly in the performance assessment approach taken in this annual report and in a significant focus during the year on a consistent approach to planning and performance throughout the agency.</p>

TABLE 1: OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SUB-OUTCOME – CONSERVATION AND APPRECIATION OF COMMONWEALTH RESERVES *continued*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	RESULTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the conservation of the natural and associated cultural heritage of Australia's Indigenous people is actively promoted through joint management arrangements; 	<p>On a park-by-park basis and with the active involvement of boards of management, the Director and Parks Australia staff worked closely with traditional owners to further develop joint management arrangements and increase traditional owner participation in the management of jointly managed parks.</p> <p>At Booderee National Park, an active program of contracting out to Wreck Bay Enterprises Ltd (WBEL), the enterprise arm of the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council, was pursued. During the year, contracts worth \$1.1 million, representing 14.5% of the park's total expenses budget, were awarded to WBEL.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective working arrangements are fostered through consultative and advisory forums to implement conventions and national strategies concerned with the management of national parks and other reserves; 	<p>Parks Australia staff participated in forums concerned with implementing conventions and national strategies relevant to the management of national parks and other reserves. Effective working arrangements have been established with areas of government dealing with the World Heritage, Ramsar, Biodiversity, and Apia conventions and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere program. The Director meets twice a year with his state counterparts to discuss park management issues and collaborate on matters of mutual interest.</p> <p>Marine Protected Area staff worked in partnership with the National Oceans Office to develop a representative system of marine protected areas in Australia's south-east.</p>

TABLE 1: OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SUB-OUTCOME – CONSERVATION AND APPRECIATION OF COMMONWEALTH RESERVES *continued*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	RESULTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Commonwealth participation in key protected area forums, both national and international, is effective;	<p>The Director and staff of Parks Australia and the Marine and Water Division represented the Commonwealth in international and national forums, notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the World Conservation Union's World Commission on Protected Areas and World Protected Areas Leadership Forum;the Working Group on National Parks and Protected Area Management and the Task Force on Marine Protected Areas under the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, including chairing both groups; andthe Council of Heads of Australian Botanic Gardens and Council of Heads of Australian Herbaria. <p>The Australian National Botanic Gardens continued to support and host the secretariats of the Australian Network for Plant Conservation and the Australian Cultivar Registration Authority.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">there is a better understanding and appreciation of Australia's protected areas and their natural and cultural heritage;	<p>Parks Australia continued to develop interpretive and educational materials and programs for visitors to Commonwealth parks and reserves. These materials and programs, and the information available through the Parks Australia web site, provide a wealth of detail on the natural and cultural heritage values of each park and reserve and on Australia's protected area system.</p> <p>In August 2002, National Science Week at Calperum Station took the form of a series of 'Science in the Bush' tours of the property and a day of presentations on a range of science and bush topics to 120 Riverland schoolchildren.</p> <p>The Australian National Botanic Gardens developed 'The Gardens Classroom' to provide nature-based education programs for up to 60 primary school children at any one time. Five hundred and fifty children were involved in the Term 2 pilot program and very positive feedback was obtained. (See case study on page 76.)</p>

TABLE 1: OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SUB-OUTCOME – CONSERVATION AND APPRECIATION OF COMMONWEALTH RESERVES *continued*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	RESULTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is cooperative community participation in the management of national parks and other reserves. 	<p>Direct community engagement in the management of Commonwealth parks and reserves is encouraged through the development of 'Friends' groups and other volunteer organisations. Volunteers provided a significant resource in several reserves. For example, trained volunteer guides provide a regular program of guided tours at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Similarly, there is growing use of volunteers at Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park to assist in implementing the weed control program.</p> <p>Community participation in the development of management plans for Commonwealth parks and reserves is actively promoted and encouraged. In all cases where plans are being prepared, the arrangements made to encourage and facilitate community input have significantly exceeded the statutory consultation requirements specified in the Act.</p>

**TABLE 2: PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR OUTPUT 1.1 – PARKS AND RESERVES
– MANAGING PROTECTED AREAS**

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	RESULTS
The extent to which the Commonwealth's reserves are being managed as required by the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, relevant leases and other contractual arrangements.	Management of all Commonwealth reserves was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Act. In the three national parks on Aboriginal land the provisions of the relevant leases were adhered to and lease obligations were met. Management services provided by contractors in Commonwealth parks and reserves were generally of a high standard. Continued efforts were made to contract the delivery of a range of park services to local Aboriginal-owned enterprises.
<p>The extent to which best practice management is demonstrated through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of parks with current management plans; 	At 30 June 2003 19 of the 20 parks and reserves proclaimed under the Act had management plans in effect. Two new plans covering two parks were completed and approved during the year. At the end of the year, the management plan for the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve, proclaimed on 16 October 2002, was in preparation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of parks with implementation plans; 	At 30 June 2003 implementation schedules had been completed for 18 of the 20 parks and reserves.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress on development of a park management effectiveness program. 	Significant progress was made on development of the Parks Australia Strategic Planning and Performance Assessment Framework, particularly through the development of medium-term outcomes for the agency against seven key result areas. Park profiles – key documents designed to clearly identify the conservation objectives of each reserve along with principal management issues, directions and objectives – were updated during the year along with park 'risk watch' lists. Further development was undertaken on the implementation schedules that assist with the orderly execution of prescriptions contained in management plans. This will increase the utility of the schedules in both planning work programs and reporting on progress.

TABLE 2: PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR OUTPUT 1.1 – PARKS AND RESERVES
 – MANAGING PROTECTED AREAS *continued*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	RESULTS
<p>The extent to which the Director meets his obligations under park leases through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased traditional owner participation in delivery of park management; 	<p>Aboriginal employment levels at the three jointly managed parks at the end of the year were 51% of the staff complement at Booderee, 45% at Kakadu and 38% at Uluru–Kata Tjuta.</p> <p>The interim Kakadu National Park Recruitment Guidelines were adopted at the April 2003 board of management meeting. The recruitment guidelines promote the 'merit principle' as per the Public Service Commissioner's Directions of 1999 while recognising traditional Indigenous skills, fostering the employment and promotional opportunities of traditional owners within the park and helping senior traditional owners make recruitment decisions.</p> <p>Negotiations on a service contract head agreement were held with Wreck Bay Enterprises Ltd (WBEL). The agreement will facilitate contracting of services to WBEL, clarify contracting arrangements and set guidelines for day-to-day operating arrangements between WBEL and Booderee park management. It will include, as schedules, the three existing contracts held by WBEL (entry station management, cleaning and road maintenance). During the year, WBEL employed up to 35 people from the Wreck Bay Aboriginal community on these contracts and other projects.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support to boards of management to assist in their effective operation; 	<p>The boards of management at Booderee, Kakadu and Uluru–Kata Tjuta were provided with support services that included secretariat services and training for board members.</p>

TABLE 2: PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR OUTPUT 1.1 – PARKS AND RESERVES
– MANAGING PROTECTED AREAS *continued*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	RESULTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">management of the cultural heritage of the parks;	<p>At Uluru–Kata Tjuta development of the Ara Irititja cultural heritage archive project continued. The project is compiling a photographic record of all cultural sites in the park, developing an action plan for maintenance of the sites and collecting oral histories, films and photographs in order to build a comprehensive record of the history of the people and the landscape.</p> <p>Specific cultural heritage site management plans were developed for two places around Uluru – Mutitjulu water hole and Kuniya piti.</p> <p>In July 2003 a new position at Kakadu National Park, Manager Community Participation and Partnerships, was filled. A new unit under direction from traditional owners is responsible for the management of cultural heritage, the development and implementation of Aboriginal training and the promotion of Aboriginal participation in park management. The unit, guided by relevant senior Bininj–Munnguy and the board of management, has developed a draft action plan for cultural resource management. The plan shifts emphasis from management of archaeological sites to maintenance of a living culture.</p> <p>A priority of the plan is development of opportunities for the intergenerational transfer of knowledge from senior traditional owners to their descendants. In cooperation with Kakadu Health, school holiday bush camps have been run providing opportunities for people to get together on country. Training has also been provided to staff and community members in the use of video for the collection of oral histories and traditional knowledge. The park has collected over 300 hours of video and audio material. The unit is also finalising the incorporation of Aboriginal traditional skills in the recruitment selection process.</p> <p>Work towards the establishment of a cultural centre at Booderee continued. A pre-design study in 2003 identified relevant cultural, environmental and business issues.</p>

TABLE 2: PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR OUTPUT 1.1 – PARKS AND RESERVES
– MANAGING PROTECTED AREAS *continued*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	RESULTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> timely payment of moneys due under the leases. 	<p>Payments of all moneys due to traditional owners under the provisions of the leases at Booderee, Kakadu and Uluru–Kata Tjuta were made on time.</p>

>> IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT PLANS

Section 366 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act requires that for each Commonwealth reserve the Director (or, in the case of a jointly managed reserve, the Director and the board of management) must prepare a management plan as soon as practicable after the reserve is declared. Management plans must state how the reserve is to be managed and how the features of the reserve are to be protected and conserved.

As at 30 June 2003, the Director was responsible for the management of 20 Commonwealth reserves, 19 of which had management plans in place. The plan for the remaining reserve, Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve which was proclaimed on 16 October 2002, was in preparation.

During 2002–03, work began on new management plans for Kakadu and Pulu Keeling National Parks. Parks Australia used this opportunity to review its approach to preparation of management plans to include clear performance indicators and priority actions, as recommended by the ANAO as a result of its 2001–02 performance audit of the Director.

Implementation schedules

Parks Australia now routinely prepares management plan implementation schedules to identify how and when each of the prescriptions in a management plan will be given effect. As at 30 June 2003, 18 such schedules were in effect.

The utility of the template being used for implementation schedules was further developed and refined during the year to include information that will assist in the allocation of financial and other resources to individual parks and consequently enhance longer-term planning and performance assessment.

In its performance audit, the ANAO recognised that, during the life of a management plan, some specified actions might not be able to be progressed because, for example, they have become redundant or are impractical to pursue. Given that management plans are statutory instruments, the ANAO recommended that, where actions cannot be progressed, the matter should be included in the Director's annual report to the Parliament. Preparation of implementation schedules has resulted in identification of six such matters, contained in the management plans for the Great Australian Bight Marine Park and Pulu Keeling National Park, that will not be put into operation (see Table 3).

TABLE 3: MANAGEMENT PLAN PRESCRIPTIONS NOT TO BE PROGRESSED

RESERVE	PRESCRIPTION	EXPLANATION
Great Australian Bight Marine Park	Agreements: Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) and Department of Primary Industries and Resources, SA (PIRSA) to administer fishing permits.	Not possible. AFMA advised this is not legally possible. To meet the spirit of management plan commitment, the Director now issues permits for life of current management plan, i.e. valid until 16 May 2005.
Great Australian Bight Marine Park	Agreement: Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources and the mining industry to seek the Department's advice about possible impacts of actions near the Great Australian Bight Marine Park.	Not required. Under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act any action that may have a significant impact on the Commonwealth marine environment must be referred to the Federal Environment Minister.
Great Australian Bight Marine Park	Consultation: commercial fishing, mining, tourism sectors have input to conditions/requirements of permits/approvals.	Completed except for the commercial tourism sector, which does not operate in Commonwealth waters.
Pulu Keeling National Park	Survey of land crab abundance and distribution.	Insufficient resources available given the emergence of higher priority need for surveys of yellow crazy ant infestations.
Pulu Keeling National Park	Funding for an education/information officer will be sought in order to improve Parks Australia's performance in this field.	No funding available. Could consider external funding or sharing of a position with Christmas Island National Park.
Pulu Keeling National Park	Parks Australia will develop a data collection system to monitor aspects of recreational fishing effort and catch, to evaluate the effects of recreational fishing, and determine from time to time what controls, if any, may have to be introduced.	Partially implemented. Recreational fishing effort is low (due to distance and cost of fuel). Insufficient data collected to enable evaluation.

PART D State of the Parks report



Annual Report
2002-03

>> SYSTEM-WIDE SUMMARY

Year (at 30 June)	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003
No. of land reserves	3	3	4	6	7	7
Area protected (km ²)	7486	14 415	14 489	21 284	21 312	21 312
No. of marine reserves	0	3	5	7	11	13
Area protected (km ²)	0	17 863	21 923	22 620	207 409	272 181

Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention)	5 of 15 Australian sites
Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971) (Ramsar Convention)	7 parks and reserves Total area 84 300 square kilometres
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention)	121 of the 160 Australian species 76% of listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	62 of the 81 species 77% of species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	66 of the 110 species 60% of species
No. of parks with boards/advisory committees	3 have boards, 6 have advisory or steering committees
No. of states/territories where reserves located	Within 8; adjoin and closely linked with 4 others

■ WORLD CONSERVATION UNION (IUCN) PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

	Ia Strict nature reserve	II National park	IV Habitat/species management area	VI Managed resource protected area
No. of reserves	8	7	3	2
Area (km ²) ¹	85 444	23 489	165 003	19 557

1 Parts of some reserves are of a different IUCN category from the reserve as a whole. Areas do not take account of internal zones of different classification.

No reserves proclaimed under the Act have been classified Ib (wilderness area), III (natural monument) or V (protected landscape/seascape).

■ MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS BY KEY RESULT AREAS

NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

- Control of yellow crazy ants on Christmas Island resulted from a research and management program over four years, and won a Banksia Award.
- Kakadu National Park has been kept free of Mimosa infestations whilst most suitable habitat elsewhere in the Top End of the Northern Territory, and most other similar habitats in the wet-dry tropics of the world, are now severely infested by this weed.
- Also in Kakadu National Park, improved fire management has had substantial ecological benefits. Over the last 20-year period, during which fire management has been an intensive activity, heterogeneity of vegetation has consistently increased.
- In Booderee National Park good natural heritage management outcomes on fire protection have been achieved under severe regional fire conditions of the last few years.
- Pulu Keeling National Park introduced improved methodology for conducting surveys of the red-footed booby (*Sula sula*). The park is home to one of the world's largest populations of this seabird.
- An assessment of the conservation values from the perimeter of the Lord Howe Island Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) to 30 nautical miles has been conducted.
- At Mermaid Reef Marine National Nature Reserve a monitoring program of coral reef health and species likely to be targeted was undertaken by the Australian Institute of Marine Science.
- Species targeted by Indonesian fishers were monitored at Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve in May 2003. An Indonesian official participated in this research.
- At Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve a baseline study of marine and terrestrial pest species and advice on management approaches continued.
- The Coringa-Herald National Nature Reserve, Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs Marine National Nature Reserve, and Lihou Reef National Nature Reserve were added to the List of Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention, the world's peak wetland conservation treaty, on 18 November 2002.
- Baseline information is being used to develop a performance assessment strategy for sustainable use of the Great Australian Bight Marine Park.
- Additional swath mapping of part of the Benthic Protection Zone of the Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) was undertaken by RV *Marion Dufresne*.
- Research was undertaken in Macquarie Island Marine Park to assess the long-term variability of oceanographic conditions.
- CSIRO provided advice on the Tasmanian Seamounts Marine Reserve that 'there is negligible impact on benthic communities from fishing in the pelagic zone above the reserve, and... the present very low level of (pelagic) fishing presents no detectable threat. We also conclude that the velocities of deep water currents are high enough to advect sufficient supplies of prey to the seamount demersal fish communities to sustain them, even at the very high biomass levels of orange roughy found prior to fishing in the late 1980s'.

- Closure of artificial watering points, feral animal control, revegetation activities and reintroduction of locally extinct fauna at Calperum are major measures being undertaken to redress many years of over-grazing and to rehabilitate a degraded landscape.
- A successful fox control program at Beecroft Peninsula, which commenced in 1996, has allowed recovery of populations of several small native mammal species.
- Regular surveys for new weed infestations at Beecroft and control of known infestations have successfully maintained the range's low-weed status. The focus on Weeds of National Significance and the protection of sensitive habitats such as littoral rainforest have led to the establishment of a strategic and cost-effective weed management program.

CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

- In July 2003 a new unit was established in Kakadu National Park which, under direction from traditional owners, is responsible for the management of cultural heritage, the development and implementation of Aboriginal training and the promotion of Aboriginal participation in park management.
- Guided by relevant senior Bininj-Munnguy and the board of management, Kakadu National Park has developed a Draft Action Plan for Cultural Resource Management. The plan shifts emphasis from management of archaeological sites to maintenance of a living culture. A priority of the plan is development of opportunities for the intergenerational transfer of knowledge from senior traditional owners to their descendants.
- The traditional Aboriginal owners of Kakadu National Park are increasingly involved in applying Indigenous approaches to fire management through the Garribolk-nah-nan and Uwagi projects, the latter commencing during the year.
- Using video, three-dimensional images and interactive computer technology, significant progress was made in Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park on the development of major documentation, storage and training projects for rock art conservation, and documentation of traditional owner life stories. The training provided for traditional owners focused on access, use and the exercise of control over the content and accessibility of the project materials.

JOINT MANAGEMENT

- Approximately 45 per cent of Kakadu National Park staff, 38 per cent of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park staff and 51 per cent of Booderee National Park staff are of Aboriginal descent.
- In Kakadu National Park, Aboriginal participation in conducting walks and talks as part of the seasonal visitor interpretation program reached its highest level.
- Traditional Aboriginal owners had a significantly increased level of participation in development of the fifth Kakadu National Park Management Plan.
- Significant progress was achieved in Booderee National Park in lease renegotiations, an improving relationship with the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community, and contracting park functions out to the commercial arm of the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community.
- Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park improved local Indigenous employment and capacity building outcomes.

- In Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park substantial progress was made in working with the Mutitjulu community and planning for transfer of essential services responsibilities to local government and Northern Territory agencies within a five- to ten-year timeframe.
- A 'bottle neck' in traditional owners' approval of development projects was resolved in Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park.
- The Junior Ranger program in Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park has been important in engaging at-risk youth in environmental work.

VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

- A new campground at Garnamarr, near Jim Jim Falls in Kakadu National Park, was constructed and brought into operation during 2002–03 (see case study on page 80).
- More than 42 000 people (over 20 per cent of visitors) participated in the Kakadu National Park seasonal visitor interpretation program.

STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- In 1994 Australia and Indonesia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the operations of Indonesian traditional fishermen in areas of the Australian Exclusive Fishing Zone and continental shelf. Recent formation of an MOU Box Management Committee by Australia and Indonesia and development of an MOU Box Management Strategy Framework with the aim of improving management of the traditional Indonesian fishery in the MOU Box have been significant for Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve and Cartier Island Marine Reserve.
- The Tourism Consultative Committees of Kakadu and Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Parks met quarterly through the year, with discussions including entry fee charges, access to sites, visitor safety and park operational issues.
- At Booderee National Park, the board of management was restructured to include a representative from the Navy training facility HMAS *Creswell*, the major neighbouring land and sea user.
- The extensive involvement of volunteers at Calperum and Taylorville has been a major factor in the success of conservation efforts to date.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

- Chief Executive Instructions were reviewed and reissued. Preparation of associated policies and procedures commenced.
- The Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve was declared on 16 October 2002.
- The Australian National Botanic Gardens commenced development of a new energy-efficient nursery on the northern perimeter to replace the existing 34-year-old facility which has permanent structural and efficiency problems.
- All work in Booderee National Park has been refocused to give effect to the management plan which commenced in April 2002.
- A number of long-standing staffing issues at Booderee National Park were resolved during the year.

- The first management plan for the Lord Howe Island Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) came into operation in September 2002. The first annual business agreement has been successfully negotiated and a delegation of permitting powers has been implemented to provide consistency between permitting procedures across NSW and Commonwealth jurisdictions.
- The second management plan for Ningaloo Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) came into operation on 3 July 2002.
- The draft of the second management plan for Pulu Keeling National Park is nearing completion and will be released for public comment late in 2003.
- The management plan for the Solitary Islands Marine Reserve (Commonwealth Waters) has been in operation since April 2001. In that time 19 of the management strategies have been implemented.
- To assist in management of Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve, 39 Australian Customs Service officers have been appointed as wardens under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act to date.
- Three suspected contraventions of section 354 of the Act in the Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) were investigated and civil proceedings in the Federal Court of Australia were commenced for two of these.
- Increased and targeted surveillance of the Marine Mammal Protection Zone of the Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) has been undertaken by Coastwatch, Yalata Land Management, and the SA National Parks and Wildlife Service.

■ FORMAL RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENTS

- The 2003 Banksia Award for Environmental Leadership in Protecting Bush, Land and Waterways was awarded in recognition of the work of Parks Australia and Monash University in controlling the invasive yellow crazy ant (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*) on Christmas Island.
- The Australian National Botanic Gardens won the Ecotourism category at the 2002–03 Australian Tourism Awards (ACT Division).
- The Gardens' Volunteer Guide Training Program receiving the Outstanding Program award for the ACT during Adult Learners Week in September 2002.
- Booderee National Park was awarded a State Clean Beaches Award for 2002–03.
- Anangu Tours, which is based in Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park, was inducted into the Tourist Hall of Fame.

■ EXPLANATION OF THE STATE OF THE PARKS REPORT

The State of the Parks report presents fundamental background information on each reserve under the Act, and the two additional areas (Beecroft and Calperum–Taylorville), in a consistent format.

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) protected area management category is identified for each reserve, and internal zones of different categories are indicated where relevant. The IUCN categories are formally assigned under the Act, and Schedule 8 to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations defines the Australian IUCN reserve management principles applying to each category.

Biogeographic context is described for each reserve. Where possible this is by reference to the national biogeographic regionalisations – terrestrial (Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA)) and marine (Interim Marine and Coastal Regionalisation for Australia (IMCRA)).

The report summarises the relevance of international agreements to each reserve recognising both the international significance of the reserves and the Director's legal responsibility to take account of Australia's obligations under each agreement.

The report also summarises the occurrence in each reserve of species listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act as threatened, migratory and marine, as well as the status of recovery plans where appropriate.

The report provides information by key result area on major issues, outputs and performance results for 2002–03.

Also included in this section are case studies that provide more detailed reporting on management of specific issues.

TABLE 4: NATIONAL PARKS AND RESERVES PROTECTED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999							
Area name	Area (ha)	Year declared*	2002-03 net operating cost (\$ million)	2002-03 capital expenditure (\$ million)	2002-03 revenue raised (\$ million)	2002-03 payment to traditional owners (\$ million)	
TERRESTRIAL PARKS AND RESERVES							
Australian National Botanic Gardens (page 33)	90	1991	7.11	2.52	0.27		
Booderee National Park (page 38)	6 312	1992	5.95	0.82	0.82	0.44	
Christmas Island National Park (page 43)	8 719	1980	2.03	0.12	0.04		
Kakadu National Park (page 47)	1 980 400	1979	16.47	4.01	2.99	1.13	
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden (page 53)	656	1986	0.91	1.02	0.02		
Pulu Keeling National Park (page 57)	2 602	1995	0.67	0.40	0.03		
Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park (page 61)	132 566	1977	11.12	2.56	5.47	1.37	

Shaded areas are jointly managed with traditional owners

TABLE 4: NATIONAL PARKS AND RESERVES PROTECTED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999
continued

Area name	Area (ha)	Year declared*	2002-03 net operating cost (\$ million)	2002-03 capital expenditure (\$ million)
MARINE PARKS AND RESERVES				
Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve (page 66)	58 300	1983	0.47	0.20
Cartier Island Marine Reserve (page 70)	17 200	2000	0.05	
Coringa—Herald National Nature Reserve (page 73)	885 000	1982	0.07	
Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs Marine National Nature Reserve (page 77)	188 000	1987	0.04	
Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) (page 81)	1 940 000	1998	0.20	
Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve (page 86)	6 460 000	2002	0.055	
Lihou Reef National Nature Reserve (page 91)	843 000	1982	0.007	
Lord Howe Island Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) (page 94)	300 000	2000	0.14	
Macquarie Island Marine Park (page 98)	16 200 000	1999	0.007	
Mermaid Reef Marine National Nature Reserve (page 100)	54 000	1991	0.036	
Ningaloo Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) (page 103)	218 000	1987	0.19	
Solitary Islands Marine Reserve (Commonwealth Waters) (page 107)	15 680	1993	0.065	
Tasmanian Seamounts Marine Reserve (page 110)	38 900	1999	0.015	

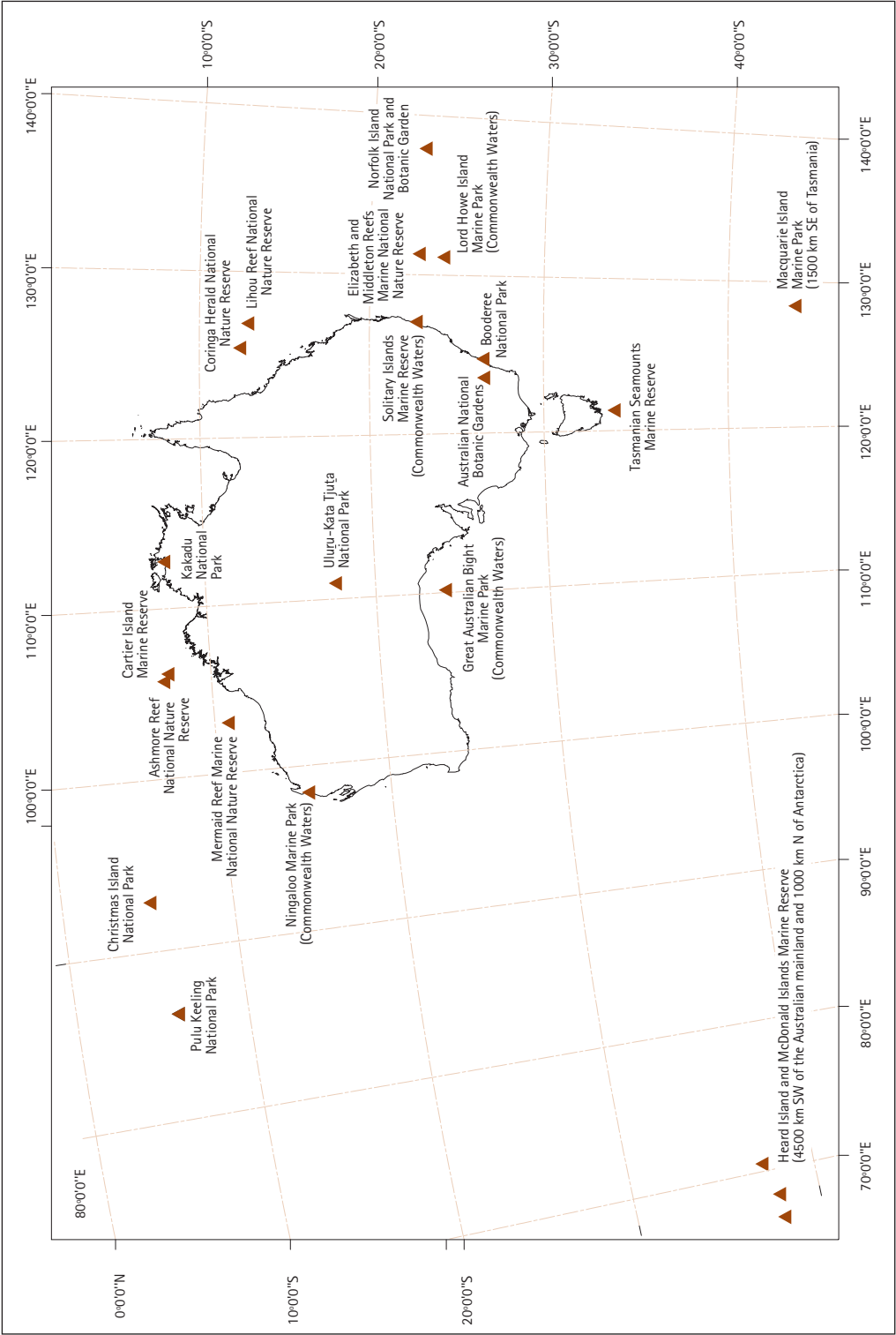
In addition to the expenditure shown for each marine reserve, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

* Year in which the area was first declared under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* or the former *National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975*

The Director has responsibilities in relation to two other areas not proclaimed under the Act:

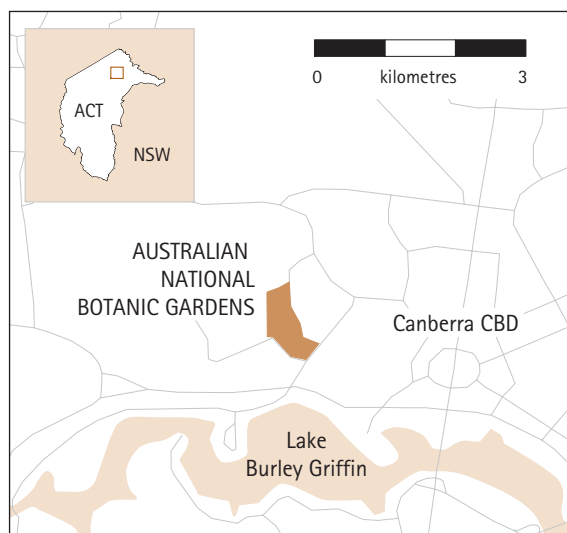
- Royal Australian Navy Weapons Range – Beecroft Peninsula (page 113)
- Calperum and Taylorville Stations (page 117)

Figure 2: Locations of national parks and reserves protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*



AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

<http://www.anbg.gov.au/anbg>



Special features

The Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) is a major scientific, educational and recreational resource. It was one of the first botanic gardens in the world to adopt the study and display of indigenous species as a principal goal. One-third of the known flowering plant species that occur in Australia are represented.

The ANBG contributes to Australia's role in promoting the objectives of various international environment conventions. In particular, the Convention on Biological Diversity recognises the importance of botanic gardens in *ex situ* conservation, in situ conservation, research, training, plant

identification and monitoring, public awareness raising, access to genetic resources and global cooperation in relation to sustainable use of plant biodiversity.

Location	Latitude 35°18' South, Longitude 149°08' East
Area	90 hectares
Proclamation date	17 September 1991
IUCN category	IV
Biogeographic context	Houses plants from a vast range of biogeographic regions – alpine to tropical, coastal to central desert
Management plan status	Current plan expires 9 January 2009
Other significant management documents	Management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule; ANBG Masterplan (National Capital Authority); Capital Works and Maintenance Plan 2002–2005; ANBG Fire Procedures 2002–03; kangaroo and wallaby management plans; ANBG Marketing Plan 2002–03; ANBG Education Service Policy; ANBG Photograph Collection Policy; Agreement for the Establishment and Operation of the Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research (CPBR) between the Director of National Parks and Wildlife and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO); CPBR Strategic Plan 2000–2004

Financial	Operating	\$7.11 million
	Revenue	\$0.27 million
	Capital	\$2.52 million
Visitors	377 000	
Commercial permits	4 permits for commercial activities; 35 wedding site/photography licences; 235 licences to publish photos from collection	

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

World Heritage Convention	Supports Australia's World Heritage sites through research, plant collections, horticultural and educational programs
Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	Supports Australia's obligations under the Ramsar Convention through access to data on aquatic plants in the Australian National Herbarium
Other agreements	Collaborative links with international organisations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• International Association of Botanic Gardens• International Association of Plant Taxonomists• International Plant Propagators Society• International Union of Biological Sciences Taxonomic Databases Working Group• Global Biodiversity Information Facility• International Organisation for Plant Information World Vascular Plant Checklist Project• International Society for Horticultural Science

■ CENTRE FOR PLANT BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH

The Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research is a joint venture between the ANBG and CSIRO Plant Industry under a ten-year agreement signed by their parent bodies, the Director of National Parks and CSIRO. The Australian National Herbarium is part of this facility, housing the voucher specimens for plants in the ANBG with data supporting both the living and herbarium collections. The herbarium is a major contributor to the national Australia's Virtual Herbarium project.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Water management
- Infrastructure

Outputs

- Increase efficiency of water use
- Improve propagation facilities

Performance results 2002–03

- Developed strategy to meet a water use reduction of 15 per cent
- Negotiated voluntary agreement with ActewAGL to reduce water use
- Commenced construction of replacement nursery (value \$4 million over two years) due for completion in 2004

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Interpretation
- Education

Outputs

- Provide interpretation and education programs for all sectors of the community

Performance results 2002–03

- Hosted three major exhibitions: 'The Plant Underworld – Cryptogams'; Helen Leitch's 'Nature Personified'; and Robyn Stacey's 'At First Site'
- Established the Gardens Classroom, an interactive botanical and environmental education program
- Jointly presented the Birrigai education program following Canberra's bushfires

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Visitor management in emergencies

Outputs

- Develop a visitor safety plan

Performance results 2002–03

- Developed a safety plan for the annual summer concerts, covering issues such as parking, visitor access, fire safety

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Friends of the ANBG

Outputs

- Enhance the partnership between the ANBG and the Friends

Performance results 2002–03

- The Friends operated the annual summer concert series, provided volunteer guided walks each day and provided \$20 000 in funding for specified projects

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Safety
- Organisational change

Outputs

- Improve staff and visitor safety
- Improve use of resources

Performance results 2002–03

- Commenced development of improved Safety Management System
- Reorganised areas of management to more effectively apply resources
- Gross revenue 1% above target
- Costs on target

KEY RESULT AREA: BIODIVERSITY KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Australian National Herbarium
- Integrated Botanical Information System
- ANBG–Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research web site

Outputs

- Make botanical data, information and expertise available to the national and international botanic community
- Continue enhancement of the plant biodiversity knowledge base in the herbarium and associated databases

Performance results 2002–03

- 35 500 specimens were databased and contributed to Australia's Virtual Herbarium
- Considerable scientific and technical expertise was contributed to the Global Biodiversity Information Facility
- About 15 000 web pages were accessed each day
- A new fungi web site was developed

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Water management will remain a key issue with Canberra facing continued and tighter water restrictions due to the continuing drought and restricted water supply. Fire protection will also take on added emphasis in the coming summer, depending on weather patterns.

Completing the major nursery development on budget and on time will be an important focus for 2003–04. Plans for the redevelopment of the old nursery site will be completed.

Work on Australia's Virtual Herbarium will continue, with the project reaching the halfway point during 2003–04.

The living, herbarium and photograph components will be integrated in the ANBG's botanical database during 2003–04.

Maintaining the ANBG's growing role as a tourist attraction will remain a key focus. Continued provision of interesting visitor attractions, like the Friends' summer concerts, and providing guided tours will be important.

>> CASE STUDY: Aerial campaign controls crazy ants on Christmas Island

The world-renowned red crab (*Gecarcoidea natalis*) is found only on Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean. About eight years ago the introduced yellow crazy ant (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*), which had been on the island since the 1930s in low numbers, suddenly began to increase. Vast supercolonies formed that killed red crabs and all other animals in their way.

Before the crazy ants began to increase there were approximately 45 million red crabs on the island making up most of the island's terrestrial animal biomass and dominating the forest floor ecosystem. It soon became clear that the red crab and many other island endemics were facing possible extinction in the wake of the crazy ant's population explosion.

The crisis was averted by a sustained cooperative research and control effort by Parks Australia North and scientists from Monash University which trialled baits and poisons, and non-target species impacts, culminating in a highly effective aerial baiting exercise that reduced crazy ant numbers by 99 per cent. But a heavy price was paid: some 20 million red crabs have been killed and the counter-offensive has cost more than \$1 million. An unknown number of other native animals have also been destroyed and the long-term impacts on the island's ecosystem will only gradually become apparent. The research project was supported by a three-year Australian Research Council grant, and assistance from the supplier of the bait.

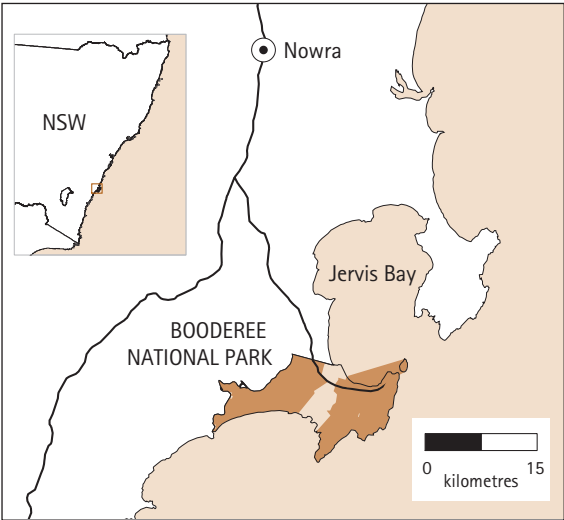
Much has been learnt about controlling this pernicious pest that is threatening other ecosystems in Australia and other parts of the world. But the biggest challenge still lies ahead. The ant remains widespread on the island and could erupt again. While control has been shown to be possible it is expensive. And control is not eradication – which may in fact prove impossible. Secure funding for an ongoing control program will require continued commitment.



Helicopter with a hopper of bait
Photo: Peter Green

BOODEREE NATIONAL PARK

<http://ea.gov.au/parks/booderee/>



Special features

Booderee National Park protects most of the Bherwerre Peninsula, Bowen Island, and the waters and seabed (875 hectares) in the southern part of Jervis Bay. More than 100 prehistoric Aboriginal sites have been recorded on the Bherwerre Peninsula.

Jervis Bay is one of the major biogeographic nodes in Australia that contains a variety of relatively undisturbed marine and terrestrial habitats.

The park protects a significantly large area of species-rich coastal heath, wetlands, and salt marshes. It also protects one of the largest *Posidonia* seagrass meadows along

the NSW coast. Vegetation communities found in the park include relict rainforest, littoral rainforest, forest, woodland, wet and dry heath, coastal scrub and grassland communities. The park is floristically rich with more than 625 native plant species recorded.

Location	Latitude 35°03' South, Longitude 150°30' East		
Area	6312 hectares		
Proclamation date	4 March 1992		
IUCN category	II Botanic gardens IV		
Biogeographic context	IBRA region: Sydney Basin		
Management plan status	Current plan expires 3 April 2009		
Other significant management documents	Management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule; fire and weed management plans		
Financial	Operating	\$5.95 million	
	Capital	\$0.82 million	
	Revenue	\$0.82 million	
	Paid to traditional owners	\$0.44 million	
Visitors	400 000		
Commercial permits	24 (10 for land tours, 7 for boat tours, 4 for scuba diving and 3 for other commercial purposes)		

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	Nomination in preparation
Bonn Convention	45 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	21 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	22 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	4 endangered 14 vulnerable 57 migratory 39 marine Significant penguin colony
	Recovery plans	2 being implemented (grey nurse shark, eastern bristlebird)
Listed flora	Species	1 endangered
	Recovery plans	None in preparation or completed

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE PARK

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Amphibians	Fish	Plants
26	200	17	15	308	625

■ BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Booderee Board of Management has 13 members, seven of whom are representatives nominated by the Wreck Bay Community Council. The board oversees the management of the park and botanic gardens, and the preparation of management plans.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- 13 known introduced terrestrial vertebrate pest species in the park. Fox greatest threat
- Bitou bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera*) is the most significant weed in Booderee
- Protection of little penguin nesting habitat from Kikuyu grass
- Fire-prone vegetation communities require management

Outputs

- Manage feral fauna control program with emphasis on regional fox control in 2003
- Control or remove weeds and restore the managed areas
- Spray kikuyu and plant suitable native species
- Implement ecological/safety fire management program

Performance results 2002–03

- Successful fox baiting was demonstrated by an increase in small native mammal numbers (long-nosed bandicoot)
- 200 hectares of bitou were sprayed in an aerial program, and a further 100 hectares ground sprayed
- Native species which support penguin nesting replaced Kikuyu in targeted areas (approximately 1 hectare)
- The fire management program was updated using the latest data
- Prescribed burns were completed

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Maintaining the cultural values of the park
- Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council and the park develop and deliver a well-accepted cultural heritage education program

Outputs

- Register cultural sites on geographic information system and database; determine protection measures
- Offer summer interpretation program with increased focus on cultural interpretation
- Plan for new cultural centre

Performance results 2002–03

- 60 previously identified sites were reassessed and mapped, and protection measures recommended
- 200 visitors took part in the cultural interpretation program. Visitor surveys showed a high level of satisfaction. On-demand programs continued at the botanic gardens
- Cultural centre negotiations continued. A pre-design study commenced which will identify relevant cultural, environmental and business issues in 2003

KEY RESULT AREA: JOINT MANAGEMENT**Major issues**

- Lease is successfully negotiated and administered; contracting arrangements between the park and Wreck Bay Aboriginal community are agreed and implemented
- Management plan is fully implemented, and cultural centre is progressed

Outputs

- Negotiate, sign and implement new lease
- Negotiate services contract for provision of park services by Wreck Bay Aboriginal community
- Prepare implementation schedule and report progress to the board of management

Performance results 2002–03

- Lease negotiations reached the final stage. The lease is providing a framework for improving employment opportunities for traditional owners, including employment in the park and contracted work on roads maintenance, the entry station, cleaning, cultural heritage assessment, select building maintenance, and signage
- The services contract negotiations concluded satisfactorily
- The implementation schedule took effect and progress was reported to the board

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE**Major issues**

- Increased public awareness of the conservation and cultural values of the park through education and interpretation programs
- Provision of infrastructure to facilitate appropriate use of the park, while protecting conservation values

Outputs

- Include conservation themes in summer interpretation program
- Maintain campgrounds and facilities
- Implement zoning plan

Performance results 2002–03

- 500 visitors (including school students) took part in interpretation programs with conservation themes
- The Green Patch rehabilitation program was completed in 2003
- 7 moorings were installed in park waters to protect seagrass communities

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Close cooperative arrangements (reciprocal authorisations, joint research projects and monitoring, joint control programs) between the park and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, the marine park and Defence are developed
- Strong cooperative arrangements with universities are developed

Outputs

- Commence integrated management programs in key areas
- Support research in conservation areas identified in the Booderee Management Plan
- Support cooperative undergraduate and post-graduate programs

Performance results 2002–03

- Integrated management programs in key areas commenced with the park taking the lead role in regional pest management
- 16 research permits in post-graduate conservation fields consistent with the management plan were issued. Cooperative undergraduate programs operated with Wollongong and Canberra universities. Research areas include whales, dolphins, rats, fox ecology, bitou, and seagrass ecology

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- In accordance with Investors in People, staff have all the skills necessary to do their jobs

Outputs

- Increase emphasis on training identified in personal development plans

Performance results 2002–03

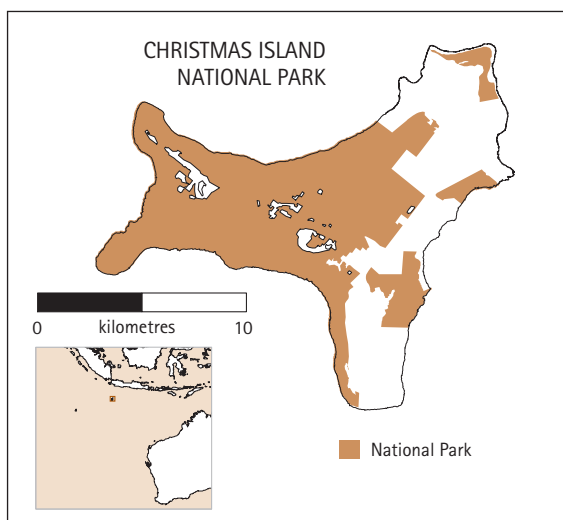
- A training calendar derived from personal development plans was prepared and training offered
- Emphasis was placed on fire training
- Gross revenue was 1% below target
- Costs were 1% below target

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Challenges for 2003–04 include developing a business case for the cultural centre, better measurable protection of biodiversity values from key threats (bitou and foxes), development with the Wreck Bay Aboriginal community of cultural heritage programs, and implementing the Marine Zoning Plan requirements.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND NATIONAL PARK

<http://www.deh.gov.au/parks/christmas>



Special features

Christmas Island is home to a unique rainforest ecosystem that supports the last remaining nesting habitat of the Abbott's booby, many endemic species of plants and animals, and the world's largest remaining population of the robber crab. The diversity and abundance of the island's land crabs is unmatched anywhere else in the world. The island is renowned for its annual migration of millions of red crabs.

Location	Latitude 10°25' South, Longitude 105°40' East
Area	8719 hectares
Proclamation dates	21 February 1980, 31 January 1986 and 20 December 1989
IUCN category	II
Biogeographic context	Christmas Island is a coral encrusted emergent summit of a submarine mountain in the Indian Ocean at the southern edge of the equatorial low pressure belt that moves north and south of the equator during the year
Management plan status	Current plan expires 13 March 2009
Other significant management documents	Christmas Island Rainforest Rehabilitation Program; Invasive Ants on Christmas Island Action Plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule
Financial	Operating \$2.03 million Revenue \$0.04 million Capital \$0.12 million
Visitors	Not available
Commercial permits	2 photography permits

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	A small inland area near Hosnie's Spring (containing a stand of mangroves) and The Dales are listed as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention
Bonn Convention	6 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	21 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	23 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	4 endangered 7 vulnerable 23 migratory 12 marine
	Recovery plans	5 being revised, 3 in preparation, 5 being partially implemented
Listed flora	Species	2 endangered 1 vulnerable
	Recovery plans	3 in preparation, none being implemented

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE PARK

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
3	95	6 1 freshwater	575 marine,	>264	213

■ ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Christmas Island National Park Advisory Committee comprises the Director of National Parks and representatives of the local community. The committee advises the Government Conservator on implementation of the management plan, and advises the Shire of Christmas Island and the Director on matters relevant to the Christmas Island National Park. The structure, function and effectiveness of this committee are currently under review.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- 21 weed and 8 feral animal species are continuing management challenges
- Rehabilitation of disused phosphate mining sites

Outputs

- Ensure effective control of the yellow crazy ant on Christmas Island
- Eradicate or control high priority weeds in the national park
- Secure ongoing funding for mine site rehabilitation (the Christmas Island Rainforest Rehabilitation Program)

Performance results 2002–03

- Yellow crazy ant density has reduced by 98% since September 2002
- An invasive species team was established to control crazy ants and high priority weeds
- Ongoing negotiation continued with the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services about future mine site rehabilitation arrangements. A Memorandum of Understanding on these is being negotiated

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Effective management of cultural heritage sites within the park

Outputs

- Ensure ongoing site protection, with sites accessible and enjoyed by the public as appropriate

Performance results 2002–03

- Cultural heritage sites were effectively protected and enjoyed as appropriate

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Inhospitable terrain and dirt roads have the potential to pose safety risks

Outputs

- Ensure that tourists are made aware of potential safety risks and behave accordingly

Performance results 2002–03

- There were no significant accidents within the park

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Need to minimise the impacts of development projects on the island's environmental values
- Need to better harness local community support for environmental management programs

Outputs

- Provide effective environmental advice to Christmas Island Administration, Shire of Christmas Island and mine management
- Increase engagement with the local community

Performance results 2002–03

- Environmental issues were effectively addressed in planning decisions made by Christmas Island Administration, the Shire of Christmas Island and the managers of Christmas Island's phosphate mine
- Regular public meetings to discuss environmental issues were well attended
- The Shire of Christmas Island erected a plaque to recognize the achievement of control of yellow crazy ants and the partnership between Parks Australia and the Christmas Island community
- Staff participated in community committees, formed the Red Crab Management Advisory Committee, and contributed regular articles to the local paper

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Isolation restricts training opportunities

Outputs

- Effectively train staff

Performance results 2002–03

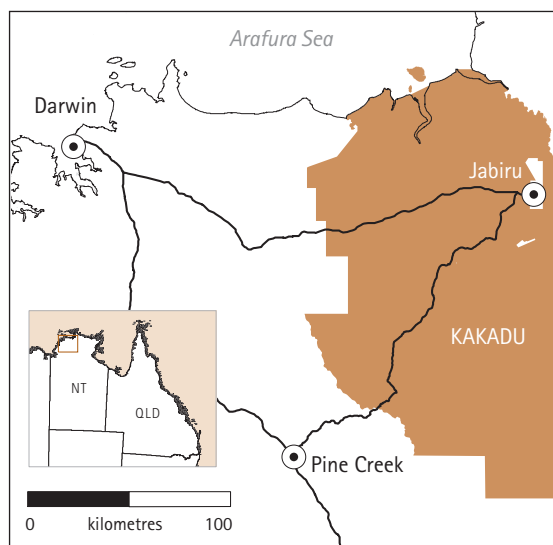
- Staff have remained effectively trained, via the delivery of training both on- and off-island
- Gross revenue was 1% above target
- Costs were 35% below target

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Although yellow crazy ant densities have been dramatically reduced the ant remains widespread and may require continuing intensive control effort to prevent the formation of new super-colonies. Potential future developments such as new mining leases, the construction of a new immigration reception centre and a satellite launching facility potentially impact upon Christmas Island frigate bird nesting colonies, Abbott's booby nesting success and the containment of invasive weeds. Another challenge will be completing negotiations with the Department of Transport and Regional Services about future mine site rehabilitation arrangements.

KAKADU NATIONAL PARK

<http://www.deh.gov.au/parks/kakadu>



Special features

Archaeological evidence suggests that humans have lived in the Kakadu region continuously from around 50 000 years ago. That period of continuous occupation is one of the most important aspects of the cultural significance of the park. Kakadu's cultural heritage includes Aboriginal knowledge, beliefs, customs and practices and tangible evidence of these such as artefacts, rock art and other archaeological sites, historic sites and sites of significance. Of the estimated 15 000 rock art sites in the park, 5000 have been recorded.

The park contains an entire major river catchment (South Alligator River) and is a

large representative sample of the wet-dry tropics of northern Australia. Major landforms and habitats within the park include the sandstone plateau and escarpment, extensive areas of savanna woodlands and open forest, rivers, billabongs, floodplains, mangroves and mudflats. The area is richly diverse biologically, ecologically and culturally.

Location	Latitude 13° South, Longitude 132° East	
Area	1 980 400 hectares	
Proclamation dates	5 April 1979, 28 February 1984, 12 June 1987, 22 November 1989 and 24 June 1991	
IUCN category	II	
Biogeographic context	IBRA regions: Darwin Coastal, Arnhem Plateau, and Pine Creek Kakadu is located in the wet-dry tropics	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 8 March 2004; a new plan is in preparation	
Other significant management documents	Fire management plan, weed control strategy, feral animal strategy, area plans	
Financial	Operating	\$16.47 million
	Revenue	\$2.99 million
	Capital	\$4.01 million
	Paid to traditional owners	\$1.13 million

Visitors	Estimated total 189 134 in 2002 Tickets sold 144 330 – note children are not charged; seasonal tickets are not included
Commercial permits	Tour operator 107, camping 575, photography 45, filming 30
Visitor satisfaction	For 2002, 55% of visitors to Kakadu were 'very satisfied' and 21% 'satisfied' (from the Commercial Accommodation Survey, a component of the NT Travel Monitor) The average satisfaction level of visitors to Kakadu (assessed from the most recent Kakadu visitor survey (Sept. 2000 – Aug. 2001)) was 6 (where 1 = very dissatisfied and 7 = very satisfied)

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

World Heritage Convention	Listed under cultural criteria (i) and (vi) and natural criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv), recognising the park's outstanding natural and cultural values
Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	683 000 hectares of wetlands in Kakadu are listed under the Ramsar Convention
Bonn Convention	86 of 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	50 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	46 of the 110 listed species
Other agreements	Tri National Wetlands Conservation Project links Kakadu, Wasur National Park (Indonesia) and Tonda Wildlife Management Area (Papua New Guinea)

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	1 critically endangered 5 endangered 9 vulnerable 88 migratory 58 marine
	Recovery plans	1 (Gouldian finch) in preparation; 5 at consultation stage with Minister to be briefed; 1 (turtle) being implemented
Listed flora	Species	6 vulnerable
	Recovery plans	None in preparation or completed

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE PARK

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Amphibians	Plants
77	271	132	>60	27	1 586

■ BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The board has 15 members, ten of whom are appointed as representatives of the traditional owners of the park area. All members are appointed to the board by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage. The Bininj-Mungguy representation on the board covers the geographic spread of Aboriginal people in the region as well as the major language groupings.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Apparent decline of small mammal populations in the park
- 98 naturalised alien plant species identified in Kakadu
- Eight known introduced terrestrial vertebrate pest species
- Cane toads spreading rapidly

Outputs

- Monitor small mammal populations as part of a park-wide fauna monitoring program
- Undertake significant control of serious weeds focusing on giant sensitive plant (*Mimosa pigra*); salvinia (*Salvinia molestra*); mission grass (*Pennisetum polystachium*); gamba grass (*Andropogon gayanus*); and olive hymenachne (*Hymenachne amplexicaulis*)
- Develop a comprehensive feral animal strategy in consultation with relevant Aboriginal people
- Monitor spread and effect of cane toads, minimise effect if possible

Performance results 2002–03

- Interim results are inconclusive as to changes in fauna populations. A significant decline in the northern quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) population appears associated with the arrival of cane toads (*Bufo marinus*), which are now well established in the southern part of the park
- The successful Mimosa control program continued
- District weed control plans were developed
- A new program for control of more serious grass weeds was introduced with positive results
- There was good progress towards development of the feral animal strategy
- Small populations of northern quoll have been relocated to toad-free habitat on offshore islands

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Continuity of the living culture of traditional owners of the park
- Protection of material culture (all sites of significance)

Outputs

- Establish a new Community Participation and Partnerships Manager position to facilitate broader engagement of traditional owners in park work programs
- Develop the Action Plan for Cultural Heritage in conjunction with senior traditional owners and the board of management
- Undertake digitisation of cultural heritage material to ensure long-term preservation
- Continue ongoing collection of oral history material
- Provide opportunities for intergenerational transfer of knowledge

Performance results 2002–03

- A Community Participation and Partnerships Manager was appointed and consultation with traditional owners commenced
- The Action Plan for Cultural Heritage was implemented, with over 5000 cultural sites registered
- The Register of Oral History Audio and Video Material continued to be developed
- The digitisation of audio and video material held by the park commenced
- Video training was conducted for staff and relevant Aboriginal people
- Over 300 hours of audio and video material has now been collected
- A school holiday camp was run in conjunction with Kakadu Health for approximately 50 Bininj-Mungguy participants

KEY RESULT AREA: JOINT MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Capacity building of relevant Aboriginal people to fulfill lease and management plan commitments
- Development of the park's fifth management plan

Outputs

- Implement affirmative action towards Aboriginal engagement through recruitment and contract arrangements. Indigenous Skills Assessment Guidelines in draft form to be adopted by the board of management
- Conduct regular briefings of the board of management with 4 formal meetings and at least 1 consultation with each of the 117 traditional owners
- Support traditional land management projects
- Undertake formal management plan consultations with traditional custodians

Performance results 2002–03

- 45% of park staff are of Aboriginal descent
- Traditional skills are recognised in the recruitment process
- There was Bininj-Mungguy participation in career development workshops in Canberra and Brisbane
- There is an increasing level of trust and commitment to joint management decision-making
- Indigenous fire management projects progressed: the Garribolk-nah-nan project (second year) and Uwagi project (first year)
- Over 120 relevant Aboriginal people were personally consulted in regard to the management plan

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Quality of visitors' experience
- Visitor safety: exposure to attack by crocodiles; and management of risks on the sandstone plateau and escarpment

Outputs

- Increase Aboriginal participation in visitor programs
- Review and document crocodile management procedures
- Conduct routine inspections and maintenance of visitor facilities
- Revise risk management and implement additional protection for visitors from attack by crocodiles
- Implement Comcare recommendations in regard to management of risks on the sandstone plateau and escarpment

Performance results 2002–03

- Over 42 000 people participated in the season visitor program which is >20% of total visitation
- There was a high level of visitor satisfaction (76%)
- The new \$1.8 million Jim Jim Falls campground was brought into operation
- There is a high level of crocodile awareness amongst staff and visitors
- There is a high level of risk awareness amongst staff and visitors

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Relationships with tourism industry

Outputs

- Attend quarterly meetings of Kakadu Tourism Consultative Committee and other meetings with tourism interests, including Tourism Top End, the peak tourism body for the northern section of the NT

Performance results 2002–03

- The relationship with the tourism industry improved

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Decline in revenue (park use fees)

Outputs

- Review fee structure; cooperate with tourism interests in investigating alternative means of raising revenue

Performance results 2002–03

- Good cooperation has been established with key tourism stakeholders
- Gross revenue was 2% above target
- Costs were 6% above target

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are support for Indigenous languages from the Kakadu region, maintaining language as part of a living culture; expanding the rock art maintenance program across the park; capacity building of Bininj-Mungguy staff and support for their move into senior management roles; successful completion of the fifth management plan; controlling weed infestations in an environment of increasing external pressure; trying to meet expectations and aspirations of traditional owners in increasing their control and management of traditional lands, and the tourism industry in maintaining and increasing access to sites in the park as visitor destinations; and managing visitor safety in an environment of increasing crocodile risk.

>> CASE STUDY: Rare Cocos clams boosted by Parks Australia

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands have three species of clam, *Tridacna gigas*, *T. maxima* and *T. derasa*.

The largest of the clam species (*T. gigas*), which can grow up to one metre across, is under threat of local extinction. Only three individuals are known to exist in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Territory and they are reproductively isolated. The possibility of breeding from these three individuals to restock the local waters is being investigated. *T. maxima* (which grows to 35 centimetres) remains common and is heavily harvested by the local subsistence fishing community. *T. derasa*, the second-largest clam species with a shell length of up to 60 centimetres, was once common in this area, judging from the huge volume of shells that covers parts of the lagoon bed. Historic overexploitation, possibly combined with periodic natural deoxygenation events, has reduced the local population to probably fewer than 1000 individuals.

In December 2002 Parks Australia released 10 000 young *T. derasa* clams into the waters surrounding the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. Breeding stock removed from the lagoon were successfully bred in the local clam farm. Parks Australia bought most of this stock of *T. derasa* and released them into the waters around Cocos. They were between two and three years of age and varied in size from two to ten centimetres.

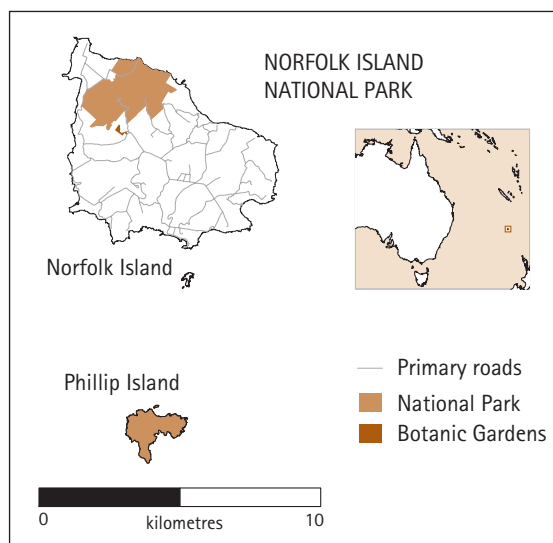
The clams were returned to a variety of habitats both inside and outside protected waters. Those put in the deep water of the 'blue holes' and in the protected areas will become self-perpetuating breeding stock while the clams put in shallower waters will be big enough to be harvested by the local community within two or three years.



Clams being raised at the Cocos clam farm
Photo: Robert Thorne

NORFOLK ISLAND NATIONAL PARK AND BOTANIC GARDEN

<http://www.deh.gov.au/parks/norfolk>



Special features

The Norfolk Island National Park protects most of the remaining natural vegetation of the island. The park and the Norfolk Island Botanic Garden are the refuge of some 40 species found only on the island, including the entire populations of 13 of the 15 flora species considered to be critically endangered.

Of the 15 species and subspecies of birds once found only on Norfolk Island, only seven definitely remain (of the remaining species, two have not been sighted for some time and may be extinct). The park provides important habitat for native bird fauna.

Phillip Island, which is free of introduced predators, is an important seabird breeding area. The only reptile species found in the Norfolk Group – *Christinus guentheri* and *Pseudemoia lichenigera* – are considered extinct on Norfolk Island but still occur on Phillip Island.

Location	Latitude 29°02'South, Longitude 167°57'East
Area	National park 650 hectares total: 460 hectares on Norfolk Island, 190 hectares on Phillip Island Botanic garden 5.5 hectares
Proclamation dates	National park 31 January 1986, 24 January 1996 Botanic garden 31 January 1986, 2 June 1993
IUCN category	Norfolk Island II Phillip Island IV Botanic garden IV
Biogeographic context	Isolated small islands of volcanic origin (2 to 3 million years old) in the South Pacific Ocean. Prior to European settlement, Norfolk Island was almost entirely covered by sub-tropical rainforest
Management plan status	Current plan expires 28 June 2007
Other significant management documents	<i>Norfolk Island Public Reserves Act 1997</i> ; Norfolk Island Plan; Phillip Island Rehabilitation Strategy; native forest rehabilitation strategy; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule

Financial	Operating	\$0.91 million
	Revenue	\$0.02 million
	Capital	\$1.02 million
Visitors	Not available	
Commercial permits	4 for commercial tours of Mount Pitt section, 1 for Phillip Island tours	

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Bonn Convention	1 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	1 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	6 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	2 endangered 5 vulnerable 5 migratory 12 marine
	Recovery plans	4 in preparation; 1 (Norfolk Island morepork) exempted; 1 (green parrot) in approval process; 1 being implemented
Listed flora	Species in listing process	15 critically endangered 16 endangered 15 vulnerable
	Recovery plans	None in preparation or completed

■ ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The formal mechanism for Norfolk Island residents to provide guidance to the Director in the management of the national park and botanic garden is the Norfolk Island National Park Advisory Committee.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Fauna and flora pest species management
- Lack of resources for research and survey required to build knowledge

Outputs

- Remove weed species and control or eliminate feral fauna
- Database existing knowledge

Performance results 2002–03

- Monthly rodent and feral cat control programs continued
- Staff cleared and maintained approximately 10 hectares of weeded areas
- Existing records were added to spatial information systems

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Road to summit of Mount Pitt has been unusable
- Some access tracks are not suitable for current visitor demographic
- Lack of high quality interpretive signs and pamphlets

Outputs

- Fund and manage reconstruction of the Mount Pitt road
- Review current access tracks focusing on high visitation areas
- Establish requirements and allocate resources within existing priorities

Performance results 2002–03

- Mount Pitt Road is scheduled to be opened in September 2003
- The botanic gardens boardwalk was completed
- Handrails were installed on steep sections of botanic gardens paths
- The link track was completed from Bird Rock to Bridle Track
- New interpretive signage was installed at the Mount Pitt summit
- A new series of pamphlets was completed

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Need to work with tourism operators

Outputs

- Hold regular meetings with tourism industry representatives

Performance results 2002–03

- Management developed a stronger relationship with Norfolk Island Tourism

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Construction of Mount Pitt road

Outputs

- Complete road construction

Performance results 2002–03

- Road construction project was not completed by 30 June 2003 (anticipated completion was October 2002)
- Gross revenue was 1% above target
- Costs were 6% above target

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges will be managing completion of the Mount Pitt Road reconstruction project, continuation of weed and feral fauna control, the continued rehabilitation of Phillip Island and the expansion of endangered species programs.

>> CASE STUDY: The advance of cane toads into Kakadu National Park

Cane toads (*Bufo marinus*) entered the Northern Territory in the early 1980s and advanced to the southern end of Kakadu National Park in 2001 through the Katherine River drainage system. They are now well established in the upper reaches of the East Alligator, South Alligator and Mary rivers. Since May 2003, a few individual cane toads have been found around the town of Jabiru, as far north as Mudginberri and as far west as Coinda.

In Kakadu, park staff, scientists, traditional owners and the local community have been developing a range of monitoring and education programs. Kakadu staff are also working closely with experts across the Top End to develop collaborative approaches to minimise cane toad impacts.

Fauna surveys in the park found that northern quolls (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) disappear from an area very soon after cane toads invade. As a precautionary measure, a representative sample of northern quolls were moved to cane toad-free islands off Arnhem Land to safeguard the species while research continues into controls. So far, 50 quolls have been moved to three islands, where it is hoped they will thrive and breed. Encouragingly, no change has been found in some species in Kakadu including bandicoot, dingo, many bird species and most frogs.

The Commonwealth Government has provided a further \$489 000 in Natural Heritage Trust funding for CSIRO research into a long-term, scientific solution to cane toads. This is in addition to nearly \$1 million provided under the Natural Heritage Trust since 2000. This funding will allow the CSIRO to continue its search for a gene that can prevent a cane toad from reaching the reproductive stage.

PULU KEELING NATIONAL PARK

<http://www.deh.gov.au/parks/cocos>



Special features

Pulu Keeling National Park's most outstanding feature is its intact coral atoll ecosystem. With the widespread global decline of similar coral island habitats and their associated reefs due to human interactions, the conservation and protection of the park and its wildlife is a matter of international importance.

The park, which makes up the whole of North Keeling Island, is an internationally significant seabird rookery. The breeding colony of the dominant bird species, the red-footed booby, is one of the largest in the world. The island is the main habitat of the endangered Cocos buff-banded rail

(*Gallirallus philippensis andrewsi*), found only on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The critically endangered Round Island petrel (*Pterodroma arminjoniana*) is also believed to breed there.

Location	Latitude 11°50'South, Longitude 96°49'East	
Area	2602 hectares: 1200 hectares land, marine area extending 1.5 kilometres around North Keeling Island	
Proclamation date	12 December 1995	
IUCN category	II Note: IUCN category not yet formally assigned, as current management plan was prepared prior to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act	
Biogeographic context	Isolated atoll in the Indian Ocean formed atop an old volcanic seamount	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 8 March 2004; new plan in preparation	
Other significant management documents	Visitor access, boating, diving and fishing strategies; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule	
Financial	Operating	\$0.67 million
	Revenue	\$0.03 million
	Capital	\$0.40 million
Visitors	168	
Commercial permits	5 commercial tour operator permits	

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	Entire park listed
Bonn Convention	8 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	8 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	9 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	1 critically endangered 4 endangered 4 vulnerable 17 migratory 21 marine
	Recovery plans	1 interim plan being implemented; 5 plans in preparation
Listed flora	None	

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE PARK

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
0	25	6	Not known	Not known	31

■ MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Pulu Keeling National Park Community Management Committee comprises the Director or his nominee, three other persons nominated by the Director and six community representatives nominated by the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Illegal entering of park
- Illegal harvesting of wildlife
- Monitoring of red-footed boobies

Outputs

- Conduct surveillance, boat patrols and education
- Conduct regular surveys

Performance results 2002–03

- Remote surveillance equipment was located in the park to provide more effective detection of illegal park entry and poaching. Staff spent 94 days on patrols. Ongoing patrols are believed to be effective at deterring poaching. No breaches were detected in the park but several occurred on the main atoll
- Some bird surveys were conducted (all planned surveys could not be conducted due to vessel unavailability)

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Shipwreck is a popular diving site
- Visitors to Malay gravesites

Outputs

- Ensure access to sites is managed appropriately

Performance results 2002–03

- Cultural heritage sites were effectively managed

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Potential for introduction of exotic species by park visitors

Outputs

- Implement quarantine procedures
- Prevent introduction of any alien species

Performance results 2002–03

- Visitors' equipment and clothing was inspected prior to swimming ashore in the park. No evidence was found that new species have been introduced

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Dissatisfaction with the park management due to perceived lack of obvious benefits to the community

Outputs

- Promote benefits of the park (including employment, tourism, local expenditure)

Performance results 2002–03

- Some recent positive feedback suggests a growing local understanding of the current and future employment, tourism and financial benefits of the park

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Isolation restricts training opportunities
- Management planning

Outputs

- Effectively train staff
- Audit progress in implementation of current management plan
- Prepare new management plan

Performance results 2002–03

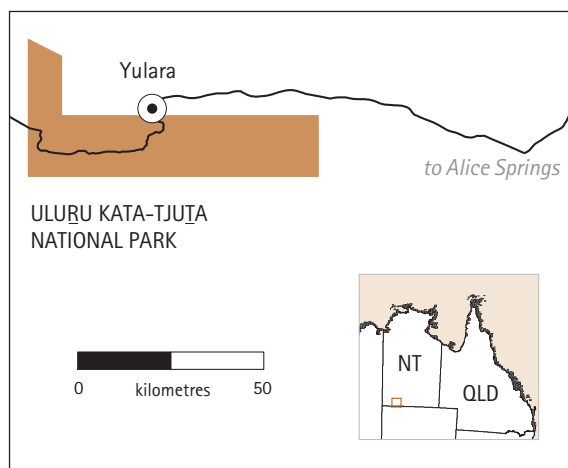
- Staff have remained effectively trained, via the delivery of training both on- and off-island
- The audit reported 81 of the 89 prescriptions for the first management plan were implemented to a satisfactory standard
- Drafting of the new management plan was substantially completed with the draft expected to be circulated early in 2003–04
- Gross revenue was 41% above target
- Costs were 8% above target

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are preparation of the second Pulu Keeling National Park management plan, to be completed in 2003–04, and maintaining effort on compliance and enforcement focused on seabird poaching.

ULURU-KATA TJUṬA NATIONAL PARK

<http://www.deh.gov.au/parks/uluru>



Special features

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park contains outstanding examples of the habitats of rare desert flora and fauna as well as the major geological features of Uluru and Kata Tjuta. It is an international icon, and a place of great spiritual and cultural importance to its traditional Aboriginal owners, Anangu. As a cultural landscape, the park represents thousands of years of change by both nature and Anangu, who employ traditional land management methods. The park is a significant place of two-way learning between Indigenous and

non-Indigenous Australians, with joint management arrangements representing an excellent example of practical reconciliation.

Location	Latitude 25°20' South, Longitude 131°East	
Area	132 566 hectares	
Proclamation dates	24 May 1977, 28 October 1985	
IUCN category	II	
Biogeographic context	IBRA region: Great Sandy Desert	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 28 June 2007	
Other significant management documents	Visitor infrastructure masterplan; staff development plan; species reintroduction plan; weed control plan; feral species control plan; fire management plan; cultural heritage management plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule.	
Financial	Operating	\$11.12 million
	Revenue	\$5.47 million
	Capital	\$2.56 million
	Paid to traditional owners	\$1.37 million
Visitors	388 046 adult paying visitors	
Commercial permits	120 tour operator permits; 146 filming and photography permits	
Visitor satisfaction	Rated highest satisfaction park in the NT by a Tourism Commission survey for the 12 months ending March 2003; 93% of visitors rated satisfaction with the park as 'satisfied to very satisfied'	

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

World Heritage Convention	Listed under cultural criteria (v) and (vi) and natural criteria (ii) and (iii), recognising the park's outstanding natural and cultural values and its significance as a cultural landscape
Bonn Convention	1 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	1 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	2 of the 110 listed species
Other international agreements	Listed as one of 440 biosphere reserves under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere Program

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	1 endangered 3 vulnerable 2 migratory 2 marine
	Recovery plans	1 being implemented
Listed flora	None	

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE PARK

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
21	170	73	None	Unknown	>400

■ BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Uluru–Kata Tjuta Board of Management includes a majority of Aboriginal traditional owners. The board oversees the management of the park and the preparation of management plans. Through joint management of the park Anangu and Piranpa (non-Aboriginal people) work together to manage the park's natural and cultural values.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- 42 common weeds; major expanding buffel grass infestation
- 7 fauna pest species
- Effective threatened species management

Outputs

- Establish control over weeds and pest fauna
- Develop weed management strategy
- Ensure that environmental assessment processes consider threatened species
- Monitor some key fauna and flora species at regular survey sites

Performance results 2002–03

- Significant progress was made in mapping the park's major weed, buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*). Control measures included removal from high priority sites around Uluru.
- The report on the annual vertebrate pest survey was received. Ongoing control has reduced vertebrate pest numbers
- There is no evidence of adverse impacts on the park's threatened species
- The sixth park-wide fauna survey was conducted, concluding that the park's fauna is in good condition

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Documentation of traditional culture and practices, and their integration into contemporary park management practices
- Improved management of intellectual and cultural property by traditional custodians

Outputs

- Conduct a substantial program that involves a broad range of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in order to capture key cultural material and make it available to current and future Indigenous generations
- Implement major documentation, storage and training projects (under way)
- Develop specific cultural heritage management site plans
- Review Indigenous intellectual and cultural property rights (review under way)

Performance results 2002–03

- A diverse range of men's and women's traditional life stories were documented, including information about traditional land management strategies, fire control and patterns and rock art
- Ongoing training continued for Anangu staff on information collection, documentation and storage
- There was extensive consultation with Anangu and key stakeholders regarding Indigenous intellectual and cultural property rights

KEY RESULT AREA: JOINT MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Suitable working arrangements to facilitate engagement for a widely dispersed group of traditional custodians

Outputs

- Establish new joint management support arrangements following the winding up of the Office of Joint Management

Performance results 2002–03

- There was improved liaison with and more efficient approvals by traditional owners (e.g. for infrastructure development). A full-time officer was appointed to facilitate and organise traditional owner consultations

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Inadequate infrastructure to effectively manage increasing visitor numbers

Outputs

- Upgrade key area facilities, extend boardwalks over fragile areas, expand education program for visitors, improve sunrise viewing area and seating on base of climb walk

Performance results 2002–03

- Negotiation with traditional owners and the tourism industry, and technical work, is well advanced to deliver major infrastructure upgrading (Uluru toilets and boardwalks) in 2004

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Improved public representation of park values

Outputs

- Improve liaison with the tourism industry
- Improve public education campaigns

Performance results 2002–03

- Ongoing tourism industry workshops were delivered, and increased involvement of tourism representatives in key park management planning and decision-making processes
- There were regular and improved presentations at the park Cultural Centre by Anangu
- Revised visitor guides and Park Notes were made available to the public

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**Major issues**

- Non-core functions absorb too much of the budget (e.g. provision of essential services to park residents)
- Inadequate staff housing

Outputs

- Build business case to transfer essential service delivery to a more appropriate agency
- Provide more houses, required to house existing staff establishment

Performance results 2002–03

- A task force of officials and community representatives was established
- Options for improved housing were researched
- Gross revenue was 4% below target
- Costs were 4% above target

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

The challenges for 2003–04 include ensuring that new visitor infrastructure is completed including boardwalks and toilets at the base of Uluru. A new board of management will be established and effectively supported. Improvements to joint management arrangements that commenced in 2001–02 will continue to be bedded down. Bringing to conclusion negotiations to hand over the delivery of Mutitjulu Community essential services to an appropriate agency will be a priority, as will be improving relationships between traditional owners and industry regarding filming and photography in the park. Parks Australia will also continue to work with Commonwealth and NT agencies to address issues associated with the health, wellbeing and future of the Mutitjulu Community.

>> CASE STUDY: Orchids and a fungus – a partnership in evolution

Scientists at the Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research are looking at the relationship between a particular group of orchids and a fungus that grows on the orchids' roots.

Orchid–fungi associations are of great significance in the ecology of orchids, with all species partly or fully dependent on root fungi, particularly during germination and early establishment.

A three-year study supported with outside funding is being undertaken to research this complex biological and evolutionary relationship between two completely different organisms.

Recent studies of the orchid genus *Pterostylis* have led to new understanding of the evolution of this group of orchids and have opened up new opportunities for scientists to study the corresponding evolution of the orchids' root fungi. The research aims to determine the extent to which evolution of the orchids and of the fungi have depended on their interaction.

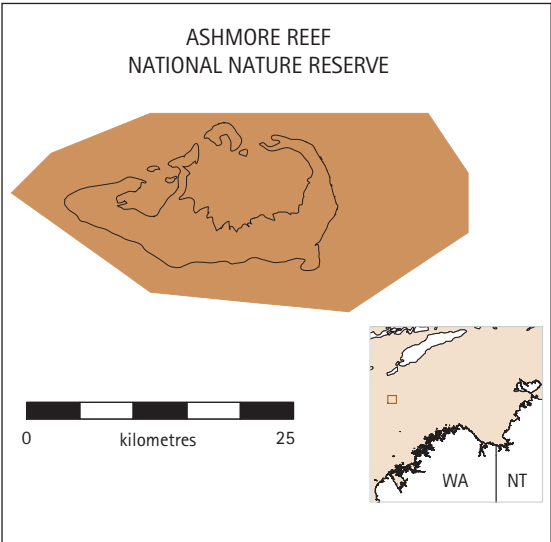
The research could have important long-term consequences for conservation, as it could lead to better methods of *in vitro* propagation of endangered species of these orchids, and to improving revegetation techniques in rehabilitation areas.



Pterostylis taurus, Mark Clements

ASHMORE REEF NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/ashmore>



Special features

Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve is notable for its overall high biological diversity. The reserve contains a variety of marine habitats including extensive seagrass meadows, sandflats, reef flats and lagoons.

Ashmore Reef has the highest known diversity and density of sea snakes in the world, with 14 species recorded. It has a high diversity of fish, corals, molluscs and other invertebrates, and is important breeding and feeding habitat for threatened species including dugongs, green turtles, loggerhead turtles and hawksbill turtles.

The reserve contains three small sand islands with a combined area of 112 hectares. The

islands support some of the most important seabird rookeries on the North-west Shelf and the reserve is an important staging point for migratory wetland birds, especially waders. At Ashmore Reef more than 78 species have been recorded, 43 of which are listed in international agreements for the conservation of birds and their habitats. Colonies of sooty terns and common noddies number up to 50 000 breeding pairs.

Location	Latitude 12°15'South, Longitude 123° East	
Area	58 000 hectares	
Proclamation date	16 August 1983	
IUCN category	Ia 55 000 hectares; II 3300 hectares	
Biogeographic context	IMCRA region: Oceanic Shoals	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 25 June 2009	
Other significant management documents	Memorandum of Understanding with Indonesia; compliance and enforcement plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule; service level agreement with the National Marine Unit of the Australian Customs Service	
Financial	Operating	\$466 501*
	Capital	\$200 000
	Revenue	Not applicable

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

Visitors	Not known
Permits	1 permit was issued for a bird watching trip

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	The entire reserve is listed
Bonn Convention	26 of the 160 Australian listed species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	38 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	38 of the 110 listed species
Other international agreements	Memorandum of Understanding with Indonesia (MOU Box)

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	1 endangered 2 vulnerable 46 migratory 60 marine
	Recovery plans	None approved
Listed flora	None	

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE RESERVE

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
1	78	17	720	1265	40

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Illegal fishing
- Measuring health of the reserve
- Increasing knowledge of the natural environment
- Introduction of pest species

Outputs

- Enforce access and fishing restrictions
- Undertake strategic monitoring of reef
- Encourage and facilitate research and monitoring
- Cooperate with Indonesian officials to improve management of the MOU Box fishery
- Progress consultancy to provide baseline data on pest species and advise on management

Performance results 2002–03

- The Australian Customs Service provided on-site management at Ashmore Reef throughout the year
- Customs officers actively enforced access and fishing restrictions. Fishing vessels in the area were boarded and advised of restrictions. Suspected illegal activities were investigated and warnings issued
- The Australian Institute of Marine Science completed a strategic monitoring program under contract
- The Ashmore Research Group met to discuss progress and future priorities. Research was undertaken on migratory shorebirds and seabirds, geomorphology, echinoderms, sea snakes, turtles and dugong. Scientific data was also collected by on-site Customs managers, including regular counts of turtle tracks and water sampling
- A pest species consultancy neared completion

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Anchor damage
- Illegal fishing

Outputs

- Install moorings
- Monitor visitation

Performance results 2002–03

- A contract was let for installation of moorings in 2003–04
- Visitors to Ashmore included traditional Indonesian fishers, recreational yachts, and research groups

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS**Major issues**

- Illegal fishing

Outputs

- Develop and implement an integrated management approach for illegal fishing

Performance results 2002–03

- A contract using AusAID funding, entitled A Socio-economic Study of Traditional Indonesian Fishers to the MOU Box, was completed
- A consultancy was commenced to assess the most feasible alternative livelihoods for Indonesian fishers
- Consultation was undertaken with Indonesian officials and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to address overfishing issues in the MOU Box on a regional and cooperative basis. An MOU Box Management Committee was formed and produced an MOU Box Management Strategy Framework

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**Major issues**

- Effective management of contract with management service provider

Outputs

- Manage the service level agreement with the Australian Customs Service

Performance results 2002–03

- Regular meetings and consultation were held with Customs
- Warden training was provided for Customs officers

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

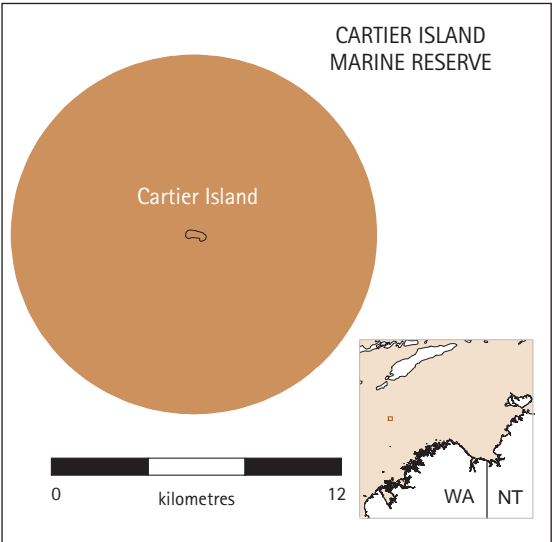
The Australian Customs Service carried out on-site management of the reserve. Coastwatch provided regular flights over Ashmore. Departmental staff visited the reserve in December 2002 and March 2003 to provide training to Customs officers and assistance with visitor management, and to assess the effectiveness of reserve management.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are enforcement of fishing and access restrictions; installation of moorings; the review of the service level agreement with the Australian Customs Service; the research and monitoring program; and application of the recommendations from the pests consultancy.

CARTIER ISLAND MARINE RESERVE

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/cartier>



Special features

Cartier Island Marine Reserve is notable for high biodiversity values, with many fish species, corals, sponges, echinoderms, molluscs and other invertebrates. The reserve provides significant habitat for an unusually high diversity and density of sea snakes, some of which are endemic to the region. It supports populations of feeding, breeding and nesting sea turtles, and may support dugongs.

Location	Latitude 12°30' South	Longitude 123°30' East
Area	17 200 hectares	
Proclamation date	21 June 2000	
IUCN category	Ia	
Biogeographic context	IMCRA region: Oceanic Shoals	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 25 June 2009	
Other significant management documents	Memorandum of Understanding with Indonesia; compliance and enforcement plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule	
Financial	Operating	\$46 620*
	Capital	Not applicable
	Revenue	Not applicable
Visitors	Not known	
Commercial permits	0	

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Bonn Convention	4 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	No
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	No
Other international agreements	Under a Memorandum of Understanding with Indonesia, traditional Indonesian fishers are allowed access to an area that includes the reserve

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	1 endangered 1 vulnerable 4 migratory 17 marine
	Recovery plans	None approved
Listed flora	None	

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Overfishing
- Measuring health of the reserve

Outputs

- Close the reserve
- Enforce fishing restrictions
- Conduct strategic monitoring of the reef

Performance results 2002–03

- A determination for closure of the reserve under Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 12.23 was published on 28 May 2003
- Regular patrols were undertaken by Coastwatch and Customs. Indonesian vessels in the area were boarded and advised of restrictions. Suspected illegal activities were investigated and warnings issued
- The Australian Institute of Marine Science completed a strategic monitoring program under contract

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Safety has been an issue because of the area's history as a Defence Practice Area

Outputs

- Close the reserve

Performance results 2002–03

- Closure was published on 28 May 2003

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Illegal Indonesian fishing

Outputs

- Develop and implement an integrated management approach for Indonesian fishing

Performance results 2002–03

- A contract using AusAID funding, entitled A Socio-economic Study of Traditional Indonesian Fishers to the MOU Box, was completed
- A consultancy was commenced to assess the most feasible alternative livelihoods for Indonesian fishers
- Consultation was undertaken with Indonesian officials and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to address overfishing issues in the MOU Box on a regional and cooperative basis. An MOU Box Management Committee was formed and produced an MOU Box Management Strategy Framework

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

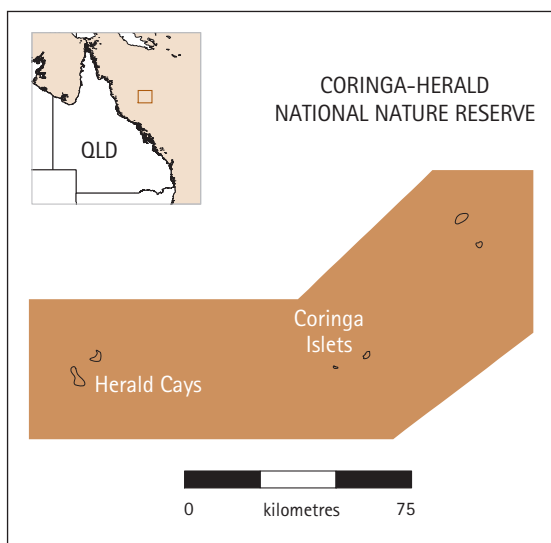
The Australian Customs Service stationed at Ashmore Reef carried out on-site management of the reserve.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are enforcement of fishing and access restrictions; training of Australian Customs Service officers; and development of procedures for prosecuting repeat offenders.

CORINGA-HERALD NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/coringa>



Special features

The islets and cays of Coringa-Herald National Nature Reserve include the only forested cays in the Coral Sea Islands Territory. Five islets in the reserve are vegetated, predominantly by widespread tropical shoreline plants of the Indo-Pacific region. The *Pisonia grandis* forest ecosystem, which occurs on two islets in the reserve, has intrinsic conservation significance and is important habitat for nesting seabirds. The forested islets are critical for the survival of seabirds which go there from an extensive oceanic area. Many of the bird species are migratory and breed mainly on small isolated islands.

The reef habitats support marine benthic flora and fauna that are distinct from those of the Great Barrier Reef. The green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) breeds in the reserve and dolphins and whales occur in the area.

An historic shipwreck, the *Coringa Packet*, is located off Chilcott Islet. The Coringa Islets were named after the *Coringa Packet*, which sank in 1845.

Location	Latitude 16° South, Longitude 149° East	
Area	885 000 hectares	
Proclamation date	16 August 1982	
IUCN category	Ia	
Biogeographic context	Tropical waters of the Coral Sea Islands Territory	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 4 September 2008	
Other significant management documents	Compliance and enforcement plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule	
Financial	Operating	\$72 420 *
Visitors	None recorded	
Permits	3 permits to conduct commercial tours	

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	The entire reserve is listed
Bonn Convention	8 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	14 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	15 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	2 endangered 8 vulnerable 15 migratory 51 marine
	Recovery plans	1 (great white shark) being implemented
Listed flora	None	

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE RESERVE

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
30	27	~ 5	> 342	>1000	16

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Possible illegal fishing
- Disturbance of nesting birds and turtles
- Scale insects affecting *Pisonia* trees
- Localised depletions or extinctions through adverse natural events and limited recruitment potential
- Coral bleaching
- Cyclone damage
- Crown-of-thorns starfish
- Introduction of pests

Outputs

- Enforce fishing restrictions
- Minimise disturbance to nesting birds and turtles
- Control scale insects

- Monitor natural impacts on the coral reef
- Implement a strategic reef monitoring program
- Encourage and facilitate research and monitoring projects

Performance results 2002–03

- Coastwatch flights and occasional patrols were undertaken. No offences were detected
- Visitation to the reserve is minimal resulting in low level disturbance to birdlife and turtles
- The scale insect control program continued with the introduction of a biological control organism
- The Australian Institute of Marine Science completed strategic monitoring under contract
- Live coral cover is less than 5% for suitable habitat in the reserve
- Volunteer research activities continued on seabirds, turtles, pest monitoring and marine debris

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Anchor damage

Outputs

- Monitor visitation and identify any anchoring issues

Performance results 2002–03

- Visitation is minimal
- Impacts from anchoring are not currently considered critical

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Awareness of reserve management prescriptions among stakeholders

Outputs

- Consult key stakeholders on issues
- Make visitors aware of restrictions and minimal impact practices

Performance results 2002–03

- Liaison with Coastwatch, relevant researchers and tour operators continued
- An advisory brochure was distributed on the islands in the reserve in brochure holders and log book holders, at Coastwatch meetings and with permits and the management plan

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Australian Customs Service provided surface transport and logistical assistance for Departmental staff patrolling the reserve and Coastwatch provided regular aerial surveillance.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are continued monitoring of coral health given past bleaching events; monitoring for possible illegal activities; and scale insect control.

>> CASE STUDY: The Gardens Classroom – a new approach to botanic gardens education

The Australian National Botanic Gardens has developed a new program, the Gardens Classroom, a nature-based education service for local primary schools.

The program complements the self-guided and Explainer-led services that primarily target interstate visitors.

The Gardens Classroom involves use of greenhouse and outdoor propagation areas and the Banks Garden, which has been redeveloped for educational use. Some special resources that students can use (which are not generally available to them in their schools) include an extensive collection of unusual craft materials and tools, stereo microscopes, a flex-camera, propagation equipment and an outside story circle.

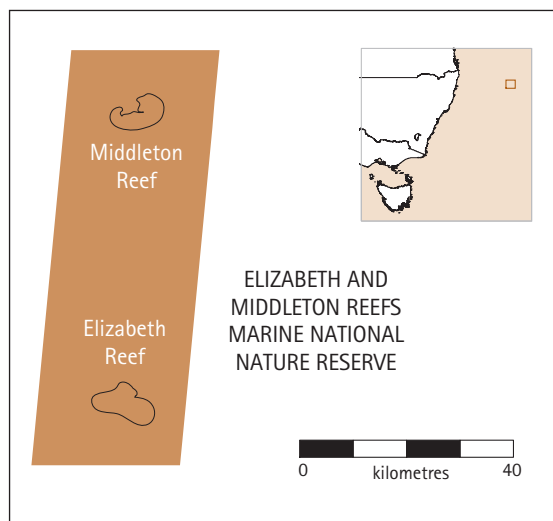
Teachers prepare their day's activities and can bring up to 60 students at a time. The all-day program can include any of the self-guided and Explainer-led activities, art and craft from the 'Gardens in a Box' resources, and special activities, like plant propagation and looking at life in freshwater, which are presented by Gardens' staff and other experts.

To date three teacher accreditation workshops have been held to familiarise teachers with the program and facilities, and to provide hands-on experience with the resources.

A leading education consultant has been engaged to assist in the development and evaluation of the program. A very successful pilot program involving 550 children was run in Term 2, and sponsorship is being sought to fund teacher-presenters who can also help develop new activities and learning resources.

ELIZABETH AND MIDDLETON REEFS MARINE NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/elizabeth>



Special features

Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs Marine National Nature Reserve is located at the transition between tropical and temperate climates. The reefs are therefore home to a unique assemblage of marine organisms, many of which are either at or near the northern or southern limit of their distribution. A number of species are also considered to be endemic to the reefs or to the south-western Pacific region.

The available information on marine plants indicates a rich and diverse algal flora. The coral communities contain a unique assemblage of tropical species at or near the southern limits of their distribution,

and subtropical species that are rare or absent from tropical reefs.

The diversity of fish species is considered to be relatively low, but at least seven previously undescribed species may be endemic to the reserve. The reserve also supports two of the few known populations of the black cod (*Epinephelus daemeli*). Black cod were once common along the NSW coast, but are now considered rare. The reserve is a feeding ground for green turtles and marine mammals such as bottlenose dolphins and pilot whales.

Location	Latitude 30° South, Longitude 159° East
Area	188 000 hectares
Proclamation date	23 December 1987
IUCN category	Ia
Biogeographic context	Offshore warm temperate waters in the south of the Coral Sea Islands Territory
Management plan status	Current plan expires 23 March 2004; new plan being prepared
Other significant management documents	Compliance and enforcement plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule

Financial	Operating	\$43 420*
	Capital	Not applicable
	Revenue	Not applicable
Visitors	None recorded	
Permits	0	

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	The entire reserve is listed
Bonn Convention	8 of 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	3 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	6 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	13 vulnerable 10 migratory 7 marine
	Recovery plans	1 (great white shark) being implemented
Listed flora	None	

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Possible illegal fishing
- Monitoring reef health

Outputs

- Enforce fishing restrictions
- Plan a strategic reef monitoring program
- Conduct Coastwatch flights and occasional patrols
- Produce an advisory brochure

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

Performance results 2002–03

- Coastwatch flights detected no illegal fishing incidents
- A contract was signed for strategic monitoring during 2003–04
- An advisory brochure was distributed to fishing industry stakeholders and residents of Lord Howe Island

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Possible interference with shipwrecks

Outputs

- Enforce protection of shipwrecks

Performance results 2002–03

- Coastwatch flights and occasional patrols detected no interference with shipwrecks

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Anchor damage

Outputs

- Monitor visitation and identify anchoring issues

Performance results 2002–03

- Visitation was minimal
- Impacts from anchoring are not currently considered critical

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Awareness of reserve management prescriptions among stakeholders

Outputs

- Consult with key stakeholders

Performance results 2002–03

- Staff liaised with Coastwatch, relevant scientists and tour operators

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Coastwatch surveillance flights were undertaken, some with Departmental staff on board.

Royal Australian Navy and Customs vessels conducted surface visits.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are implementation of strategic monitoring of reef health; monitoring for possible illegal activities; and production of the new management plan.

>> CASE STUDY: New campground at Jim Jim helps protect rare riparian forest

A new campground has been opened near Jim Jim Falls in Kakadu National Park at a cost of about \$1.8 million.

The campground replaces the former camping area, located in a relatively rare area of riparian forest, which had been used by increasing numbers of visitors since the 1970s.

Closure of the old campground, that had become degraded and increasingly overcrowded, will enable restoration of the riparian forest. Environmental impacts such as weed infestations, soil compaction and effluent run-off into the creek will be reduced or eliminated. In addition, the new campground is further away from crocodile habitats for greater visitor safety. Traditional owners are also satisfied that the new location will minimise visitor impact on the cultural and natural values of this area.

The new campground can accommodate up to 200 people and is fully serviced with water points, formed access roads and two large ablution blocks that provide visitors with hot showers and washing areas. The campground layout and buildings have been sensitively designed in a similar style to other campgrounds in the park to reduce environmental impacts and to provide a better experience for visitors.

Staff accommodation has been provided to help service the area and facilitate field work in the area, especially at the start of each tourist season.

The tourism industry was consulted about their business needs and the operation of the new campground. Many suggestions were applied including those concerning the general use of the area and the location of campsites and fireplaces. The tourism industry will continue to be consulted on any ongoing management issues that arise.

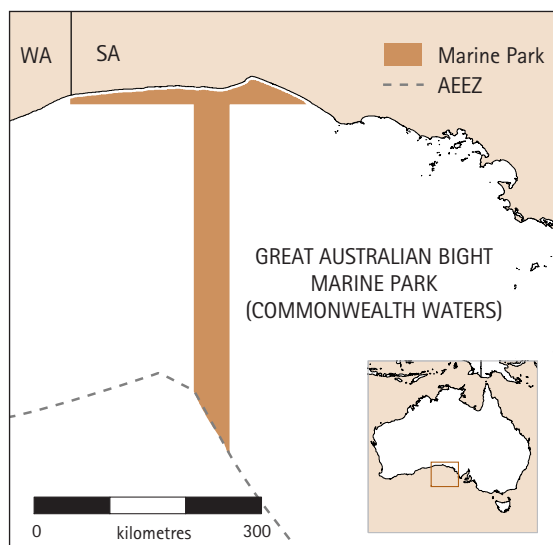
The campground has operated well during the 2003 dry season with many visitors enjoying the improved facilities at one of the park's most popular tourist destinations.



Jabiru and egret
Photo: Michael Nelson

GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT MARINE PARK (COMMONWEALTH WATERS)

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/gab>



Special features

The Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) extends SA protection of habitat for marine mammals, notably the endangered southern right whale (*Eubalaena australis*) and protected Australian sea lion (*Neophoca cinerea*) to Commonwealth waters. The marine park is adjacent to the Head of Bight, the most important breeding aggregation for southern right whales in Australia and one of the most important, discrete breeding aggregations for the species in the world. It also affords unique opportunities for observation of the species in a pristine environment.

The marine park protects a transect of the wide continental shelf of the Bight, which is remarkable for its high levels of invertebrate endemism and diversity. At present this constitutes the largest representative sample of the southern continental margin of Australia in a reserve.

The marine park provides for sustainable uses of natural resources, including commercial fishing and mineral exploration, subject to those uses being consistent with the protection of its special features.

Location	Latitude 32° South, Longitude 130°30' East
Area	1 940 000 hectares
Proclamation date	22 April 1998
IUCN category	Overall: VI. Includes two zones: Marine Mammal Protection Zone Category VI (387 500 hectares); Benthic Protection Zone Category VI (1 608 500 hectares) Note: Area of overlap of above zones = 56 000 hectares
Biogeographic context	IMCRA regions: Eucla Bioregion (IMCRA 3.3 mesoscale regionalisation); Great Australian Bight Biotone and associated continental slope (IMCRA 3.3 demersal provinces and biotones); Southern Pelagic Province (IMCRA 3.3 pelagic provinces and biotones)
Management plan status	Current plan expires 16 May 2005 and a planned review is under way

Other significant management documents	Draft compliance and enforcement plan; draft research plan; draft communications plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment; service level agreement and subsidiary annual business agreements between the Commonwealth and SA Governments		
Financial	Operating Capital Revenue Paid to traditional owners	\$196 420* Not applicable Not applicable Nil	
Visitors	Not known		
Permits	1 scientific research permit issued; 37 commercial fishing permits current until 16 May 2005		

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Bonn Convention	12 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	1 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	4 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	5 endangered 9 vulnerable 12 migratory 37 marine
	Recovery plans	2 being implemented (great white shark and albatross)
Listed flora	None	

■ BOARD/ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The joint Commonwealth–SA Steering Committee currently has four government members (one Commonwealth, three state). A consultative committee currently comprising 12 community representatives advises the steering committee on management issues.

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Lack of information
- Marine debris
- Lack of regular surveillance

Outputs

- Establish initial baselines
- Develop research plan covering:
 - monitoring of impacts on values of known pressures
 - assessment of vulnerability of values to uses
 - assessment of vulnerability of values to debris and other identified risks
- Measure performance of marine park
- Collect debris
- Conduct regular surveillance

Performance results 2002–03 (in cooperation with SA Government)

- Initial baseline studies of benthos were completed
- Management facilitated regional southern right whale and Australian sea lion population studies
- A draft research plan was developed
- Assessment was made of potential sensitivity of mammals to mining in the Marine Mammal Protection Zone
- Ad hoc debris collection continued
- Irregular surveillance was conducted

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Illegal fishing
- Community understanding and appreciation of the park's values

Outputs

- Conduct surveillance and review surveillance plans
- Implement draft compliance and enforcement plan
- Develop and implement communications plan

Performance results 2002–03 (in cooperation with SA Government)

- Annual closures were advertised
- Land patrols and 6 aerial patrols were completed
- Civil proceedings were initiated for 2 incidents and 1 other incident was investigated
- Input was provided to a review of compliance and enforcement procedures
- A draft communications plan was developed

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Partnership with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority and Yalata Land Management

Outputs

- Negotiate and implement the annual agreement with Yalata Land Management
- Develop compliance monitoring arrangements with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Performance results 2002–03 (in cooperation with SA Government)

- The annual agreement with Yalata Land Management was renewed
- Discussions were held with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority and industry sectors about monitoring compliance

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Complex administrative structures

Outputs

- Establish clear understanding regarding roles of individuals and committees

Performance results 2002–03 (in cooperation with SA Government)

- A new park manager was engaged and communication among stakeholders improved

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The marine park is jointly managed by the Commonwealth and SA Governments, with a park manager employed by the Department of Environment and Heritage, SA administering the Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth waters and SA waters) as a single unit.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are identifying options to assess the performance of the marine park; increasing the effectiveness of compliance strategies, including improving the fishing industry's contribution to reporting on compliance; and coordinating the review of the current management plans for the Commonwealth waters and SA components of the marine park and the process for drafting the next management plans.

>> CASE STUDY: Fauna and fire – working together

We are often reminded about the vital role of fire in the Australian landscape, yet there are few studies over a long enough time and large enough area to show whether management actions are having the desired outcomes.

Booderee National Park is one of the few locations with a fire history going back 40 years (including a detailed fire history record kept since 1972 when most of the park was burnt by severe fires) and fine-scale mapping of vegetation communities.

A major long-term study by park management, the Australian National University's Centre for Research and Environmental Studies and independent researchers commenced in 2002–03.

The team is measuring distribution and abundance of vertebrate fauna taking into account the time elapsed since burning, the severity of the burning and the different vegetation types.

The study includes a rigorously designed, large-scale, combined retrospective and prospective design with powerful statistical assessment capability.

The study uses the most advanced statistical models for studying patterns of vertebrate species distribution. These models are adapted specifically to examine the effects of fire on changes in distribution. The study tests the role of prescribed burning as a tool to maintain biodiversity in coastal ecosystems which have evolved with fire, and identifies the taxa likely to be least and most vulnerable to burning in different coastal vegetation communities.

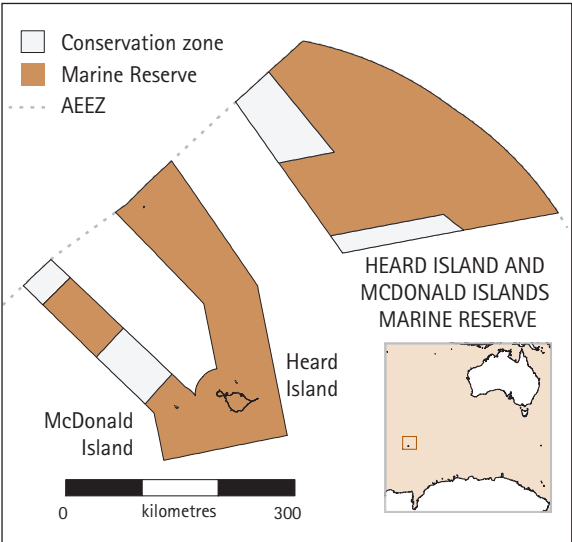
A daunting sampling regime will be used, consisting of 110 random transects each 100 by 50 metres. The study has just commenced, but has already produced a more accurate fauna survey than previously existed. The study is expected to take five years and its results will greatly improve understanding of the effect of fire on biodiversity in the park and throughout Australia.



Bandicoot numbers have increased significantly in the last year in Booderee, due to greater emphasis on predator control. Photo: Paul Meek

HEARD ISLAND AND MCDONALD ISLANDS MARINE RESERVE

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/heard/>



Special features

The Heard Island and McDonald Islands (HIMI) Marine Reserve includes the World Heritage listed islands and territorial sea plus a marine protected area, including the seabed and subsoil to a depth of 1000 metres, extending in parts to the 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone boundary. Covering an area of almost 6.5 million hectares, the reserve is the world's largest fully protected marine reserve.

The Heard Island and McDonald Islands Conservation Zone, comprising four marine areas adjoining the HIMI Marine Reserve covering approximately 1 170 000 hectares, was proclaimed under the Act to

allow further assessment of its conservation significance and fishing resource potential before a decision is made about inclusion in the reserve.

Key conservation values include largely intact ecosystems with negligible modification by humans and only two known alien species; highly productive nutrient-rich areas due to the confluence of key oceanographic fronts such as the Antarctic Circumpolar Current; prime foraging areas for a number of land-based marine predators, including threatened albatross and seal species; diverse and distinctive benthic habitats supporting a range of slow growing and vulnerable benthos such as corals and sponges; several endemic fish and benthic species; and nursery areas for a range of fish stocks including commercially harvested Patagonian toothfish.

Location	Latitude 53°05' South, Longitude 73°30' East
Area	6 460 000 hectares
Proclamation date	16 October 2002
IUCN category	1a
Biogeographic context	Sub-Antarctic area IMCRA region: Kerguelen Province
Management plan status	First plan for the reserve being prepared. Notice of intent to prepare draft plan published 19 March 2003, with public comment period closed 19 May 2003

Other significant management documents	Draft cultural heritage management plan for the Atlas Cove area; Antarctic Science Strategic Plan 2000-2005; report being prepared on the risk of introduction of alien organisms	
Financial*	Operating Revenue Capital	\$55 000 Not applicable Not applicable
Visitors	104 in total (49 went ashore at Heard Island, 55 remained on ship)	
Commercial permits	2 (1 tour operator, 1 fishing operator for refuge from weather)	

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

World Heritage Convention	Yes, under natural criteria (i) and (ii), recognising its outstanding natural values	
Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	Nomination is being considered by the Department and Australian Antarctic Division	
Bonn Convention	9 of the 164 listed Australian species	
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	1 of the 81 listed species	
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	3 of the 110 listed species	
Other international agreements	Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels	

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	1 endangered 5 vulnerable 10 migratory 39 marine
	Recovery plans	1 being implemented (albatrosses and giant petrels)
Listed flora	None	

* There was no Australian Antarctic Division expedition to the reserve in 2002–03. The figures given do not include costs of planning for the 2003–04 expedition which will involve scientific research and logistical support, which contribute to the management of the reserve.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Human introduction of non-native species
- Need for better baseline data for conservation values in the reserve

Outputs

- Prepare comprehensive management strategies for the prevention of introductions, for incorporation in the Heard Island and McDonald Islands (HIMI) Marine Reserve Management Plan
- Improve datasets of HIMI biodiversity and increase knowledge of ecological interactions

Performance results 2002–03

- An independent expert undertook interviews and a review of documentation at the Australian Antarctic Division in June 2003 to inform a forthcoming risk assessment report on the possible introduction by human means of alien organisms that may pose a threat to the natural plant and animal life of HIMI
- Planning of science, logistics and approvals is on track for a major scientific expedition to HIMI in summer 2003–04

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Loss or degradation of cultural heritage relating to Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) (1947–54) and pre-ANARE (sealing) periods of occupation

Outputs

- Prepare cultural heritage management plan recommendations for the Atlas Cove ANARE station area at Heard Island for incorporation as cultural heritage management strategies in the HIMI Marine Reserve Management Plan

Performance results 2002–03

- The cultural heritage management plan for the Atlas Cove ANARE station area is completed and ready for publication. Recommendations are to be incorporated into the new management plan as strategies for cultural heritage management

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE**Major issues**

- Presenting the reserve to the Australian community by remote means and ensuring that visitation is safe and environmentally appropriate

Outputs

- Improve information and measures for on-site visitation and off-site presentation

Performance results 2002–03

- One tourist ship visited HIMI during 2002–03. The voyage was considered to be very successful by the tour operator management and staff, the expeditioners and the HIMI inspector alike. Improved information and measures for on-site visitation and off-site presentation will be incorporated in the management plan for the reserve

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS**Major issues**

- Maintaining good relations with key stakeholders from industry and conservation groups on issues surrounding the management of the world's largest no-take marine protected area

Outputs

- Open consultation with key stakeholders in the process of preparing the management plan

Performance results 2002–03

- Stakeholders have indicated ongoing support for declaration of the reserve as evidenced in submissions received during the public comment period (19 March to 19 May 2003) on the Australian Antarctic Division's proposal to prepare a draft management plan for the reserve

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Administration of the marine reserve is the responsibility of the Australian Antarctic Division, under delegation from the Director of National Parks.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are:

- to successfully plan and undertake a substantial science expedition to HIMI during the 2003–04 summer to:
 - examine interactions between key predators and prey, the ocean and benthic environment and commercial fisheries
 - increase knowledge of the terrestrial and limnetic biodiversity of the HIMI region and its response to climate change

- investigate the Heard Island glacial systems as an indicator of climate change and variability
- establish baseline information on the distribution and abundance of seabirds on Heard Island
- remove past wastes from the Atlas Cove station site;
- to finalise a draft management plan for the reserve, for public comment and provision to the Minister for approval by mid-2004;
- to develop a comprehensive implementation plan for management strategies detailed in the management plan, with timely and effective implementation of identified actions; and
- to complete the assessment of the conservation values and fisheries resource potential of the HIMI Conservation Zone.

>> CASE STUDY: Bitou bush – a new approach

Bitou bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera*) is arguably the most serious environmental threat to Booderee National Park and is listed as a Weed of National Significance.

It has displaced native dune communities and coastal woodlands over significant areas of the park.

Bitou was planted on the dunes of Bherwerre Beach in the 1960s to help stabilise the dunes, which were exposed to heavy wind erosion following overgrazing by cattle. Despite considerable control efforts (currently costing \$280 000 each year) it continues to spread.

The heaviest infestations are immediately north of Bherwerre Beach. In this area bitou forms an impenetrable understorey beneath a woodland of Eucalyptus and *Banksia integrifolia*.

In 2002–03 efforts to control bitou involved three full time staff who concentrated on satellite infestations and about one day a week of two other staff. It involved ground-based herbicide spraying and an ultra low volume aerial spraying program aimed at reducing the main Bherwerre Beach infestation.

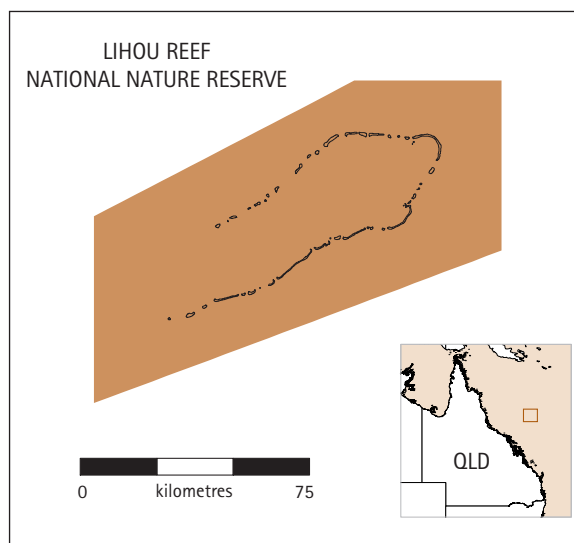
In 2003–04 the focus will change to protecting the park's biodiversity values, rather than the unrealistic goal of eradication. The park management team will:

- revise the strategic plan for the control of bitou in Booderee National Park, setting milestones, criteria for success, and costed options;
- investigate possible sources of external funding for bitou control in an attempt to expand the program;
- establish the regeneration potential of controlled sites by determining the residual native seed bank in controlled blocks; and
- establish a seed bank of local area native plant species to assist in regeneration.

This new approach will guide more effective use of resources and will result in better management of this extremely invasive weed.

LIHOU REEF NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/lihou>



Special features

Lihou Reef National Nature Reserve and its associated sandy coral cays and islets encompass the largest reef structure in the Coral Sea. The reef habitats support marine benthic flora and fauna that are distinct from those of the Great Barrier Reef. A diverse range of marine organisms has been recorded in the reserve. The green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) breeds in the reserve and a number of species of dolphins and whales are known to occur in the area. Five islets in the reserve are vegetated, predominantly by widespread tropical shoreline plants of the Indo-Pacific region.

The reserve contains extensive and regionally significant seabird colonies. The buff-banded rail (*Gallirallus philippensis*) is the only species of land bird that breeds in the reserve.

Several well-documented wrecks, and a number of wrecks whose origins have not yet been established, are located on Lihou Reef.

Location	Latitude 17° South, Longitude 152° East	
Area	843 000 hectares	
Proclamation date	16 August 1982	
IUCN category	Ia	
Biogeographic context	Tropical waters of the Coral Sea Islands Territory	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 4 September 2008	
Other significant management documents	Compliance and enforcement plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule; performance report	
Financial	Operating	\$7420*
	Capital	Not applicable
	Revenue	Not applicable
Visitors	128 visitor days recorded from 2 commercial tours	
Permits	3 permits were issued for commercial tours	

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	The entire reserve is listed
Bonn Convention	8 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	12 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	15 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	2 endangered 8 vulnerable 15 migratory 51 marine
	Recovery plans	1 being implemented (great white shark)

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE PARK

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
30	24	5	>342	>1000	~7

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Possible illegal fishing
- Measuring health of the reef

Outputs

- Enforce fishing restrictions
- Plan a strategic reef monitoring program

Performance results 2002–03

- Coastwatch flights detected no illegal fishing incidents
- Planning commenced for strategic monitoring during 2003–04

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Anchor damage

Outputs

- Monitor visitation and identify anchoring issues

Performance results 2002–03

- Visitation is minimal
- Impacts from anchoring are not currently considered critical

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Awareness of reserve management prescriptions among stakeholders

Outputs

- Consult with key stakeholders

Performance results 2002–03

- Management liaised with Coastwatch, relevant scientists and tour operators

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

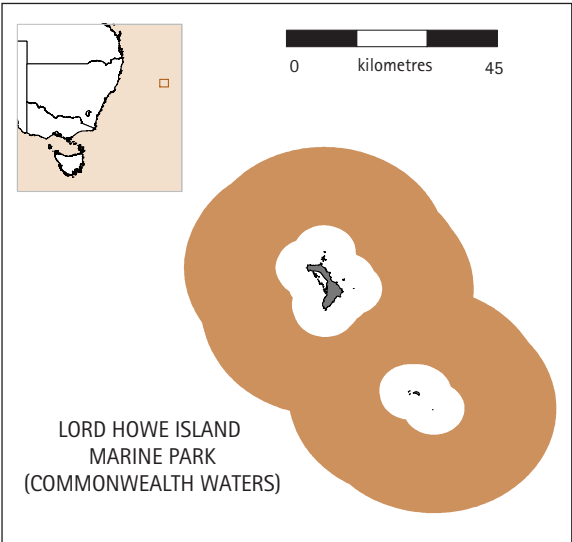
The Australian Customs Service provided surface transport and logistical assistance for Departmental staff patrolling the reserves and Coastwatch provided regular aerial surveillance of the reserve.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are implementation of strategic monitoring of reef health and monitoring for possible illegal activities.

LORD HOWE ISLAND MARINE PARK (COMMONWEALTH WATERS)

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/lordhowe>



Special features

The park protects the unique and vulnerable ecosystems of the Lord Howe Island region. It protects and conserves the complex and regionally unique set of deep-sea structures, benthic habitats and flora and fauna associated with the Lord Howe Island seamount system, while ensuring that the natural resources important for food, income and recreation are protected and used in an ecologically sustainable manner.

Location	Latitude 31°40' South, Longitude 159°10' East	
Area	300 000 hectares	
Proclamation date	21 June 2000	
IUCN category	IV	
Biogeographic context	Waters surrounding oceanic islands on seamounts; biota combine tropical and temperate taxa; east of Central Eastern Province Pelagic Biotone	
Management plan status	Commenced 25 September 2002, expires 24 September 2009	
Other significant planning documents	Management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule	
Financial	Operating	\$135 420 *
	Capital	Not applicable
	Revenue	Not applicable
Visitors	Not known	
Permits	0	

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

World Heritage Convention	Listed for its outstanding natural universal values; criteria (iii) and (iv)
Bonn Convention	10 of the 160 listed Australian species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	2 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	3 endangered 10 vulnerable 15 migratory 20 marine
	Recovery plans	1 being implemented (albatross)
Listed flora	Species	None
	Recovery plans	None

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE RESERVE

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
4	11	Not known	447	536	Not known

■ COMMITTEES

The Lord Howe Island Marine Park Advisory Committee and the Lord Howe Island Steering Committee provide forums for cooperative planning and management of the adjacent state and Commonwealth parks with the NSW Marine Parks Authority and the local community.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Illegal longline fishing within the park

Outputs

- Enforce fishing restrictions
- Train and authorise enforcement staff

Performance results 2002–03

- Coastwatch conducted regular aerial surveillance. NSW Marine Parks Authority conducted surface patrols
- One possible incident was investigated
- The NSW Marine Parks Authority manager was trained and appointed as a warden

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

No issues of concern

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Cooperation with the community and NSW Marine Parks Authority
- Community support for management plan

Outputs

- Actively participate in the advisory and steering committees
- Improved public perception of management plan

Performance results 2002–03

- Staff attended advisory committee and steering committee meetings
- A presentation on the management plan was made and copies distributed

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**Major issues**

- Continued assistance from NSW Marine Parks Authority

Outputs

- Implement annual business agreement with NSW Marine Parks Authority

Performance results 2002–03

- The annual business agreement was successfully implemented

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The NSW Marine Parks Authority conducts on-ground management of the park on behalf of the Department under a Memorandum of Understanding.

The Australian Customs Service continued to conduct Coastwatch flights over the Lord Howe Island area and to report on vessel activity. NSW Water Police have also conducted surface patrols from the mainland.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are implementation of strategic monitoring to gain a better understanding of conservation values of the park and to assess management performance in protecting the values; and monitoring for possible illegal activities.

>> CASE STUDY: Rat control in Norfolk Island National Park

Rats have long been a significant threat to the native fauna and flora of Norfolk Island.

Both the ship rat (*Rattus rattus*) and the Polynesian rat (*Rattus exulans*) are believed to be a major cause of the decline and extinction of bird species, invertebrates and even plants whose seeds and seedlings are favoured food. Rats threaten the survival of endangered species such as the green parrot and the scarlet robin.

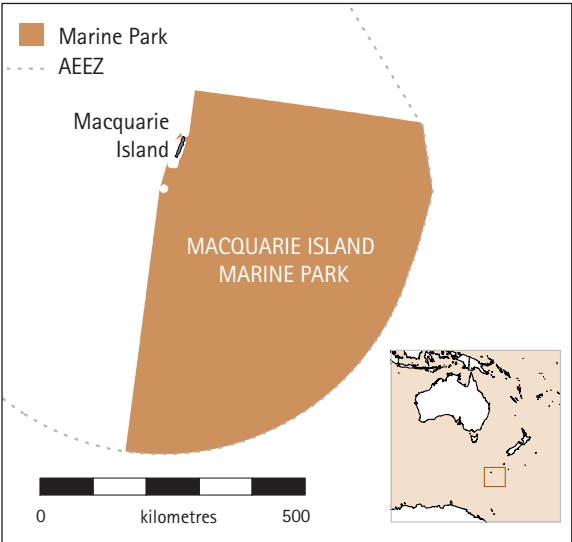
Park staff have undertaken a rat baiting program in Norfolk Island National Park continuously since 1992. The baiting provides a valuable degree of control, but cannot eradicate rats from the national park because rats are common elsewhere on the island.

The bait used in the national park for the last five years, Racumin, was considered the safest for non-target species, particularly the morepork owl. A recent independent review of the rat control program suggested trying a different control approach as the rats could develop some tolerance to Racumin.

Initially, to provide information on rat numbers before and after baiting, a monitoring program focusing on tracking tunnels and/or snap traps will be undertaken. Alternative control measures will be considered in the light of information gained from this work.

MACQUARIE ISLAND MARINE PARK

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/macquarie>



Special features

Macquarie Island and the surrounding area are unique in their geological characteristics. This is the only known location where oceanic crust from a normal mid-ocean ridge has been lifted above sea level in a major oceanic basin.

Several species found in the region are under threat, including five albatross, four penguin and two seal species.

Location	Latitude 56° South, Longitude 161° East		
Area	16 200 000 hectares		
Proclamation date	27 October 1999		
IUCN category	IV 10 500 000 hectares; 1a 5 700 000 hectares		
Biogeographic context	IMCRA region: Macquarie Province		
Management plan status	Current plan expires 25 September 2008		
Other significant management documents	Management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule		
Financial	Operating	\$7420*	
	Capital	Not applicable	
	Revenue	Not applicable	
Visitors	0		
Permits	0 (Limited to one vessel at any one time. Remote location with no permits to date.)		

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

World Heritage Convention	Macquarie Island (part of Tasmania and managed by the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service) plus surrounding state waters out to 3 nautical miles, plus the marine park waters out to 12 nautical miles, was listed as a World Heritage area in 1997
Bonn Convention	8 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	1 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	3 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	2 endangered 9 vulnerable 4 migratory 46 marine
	Recovery plans	1 being implemented (albatross)
Listed flora	None	

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Illegal fishing by foreign fishing vessels
- Lack of regular surveillance

Outputs

- Enforce fishing restrictions
- Conduct regular surveillance

Performance results 2002–03

- Anecdotal reports were received of illegal activities
- No surveillance was conducted

KEY RESULT AREAS: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT, VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE, STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

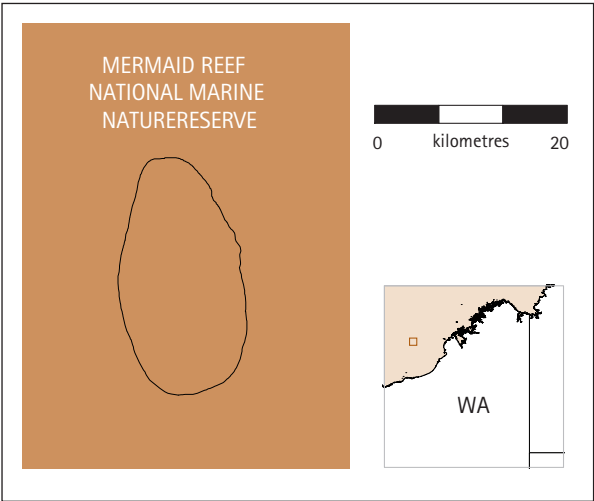
No issues of concern

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are development of a monitoring strategy and monitoring for possible illegal activities.

MERMAID REEF MARINE NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/mermaid>



Special features

Mermaid Reef is the most northerly of the three reefs in the Rowley Shoals. The reef is totally submerged at high tide and hence falls under Commonwealth jurisdiction. Clerke Reef and Imperieuse Reef, the two southerly reefs of the Rowley Shoals, include permanent sand cays above the high water mark. Together they were incorporated into the Rowley Shoals Marine Park, declared under WA legislation on 25 May 1990.

The three reefs of the Rowley Shoals have been described as the most morphologically perfect examples of

shelf-edge reefs occurring in Australian waters. Each reef includes spectacular and unusual underwater topography and life forms that have attracted recreational divers from all over the world. An exceptional 233 species of coral and 688 species of fish inhabit the shoals, including many species not found on nearshore coral reefs. As well as being inhabited by a number of species found nowhere else, the coral and fish communities of the Rowley Shoals are unique in their composition, and in the relative abundance of species.

Location	Latitude 17°05' South, Longitude 119°40' East	
Area	54 000 hectares	
Proclamation date	10 April 1991	
IUCN category	Ia	
Biogeographic context	IMCRA region: Oceanic Shoals	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 16 May 2007	
Other significant management documents	Memorandum of Understanding with Fisheries WA and WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM); compliance and enforcement plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule	
Financial	Operating	\$36 120*
	Capital	Not applicable
	Revenue	Not applicable

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

Visitors	Approximately 200
Commercial permits	1 for commercial filming/photography; 9 commercial tour permits

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Bonn Convention	12 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	13 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	8 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Fauna	Species	2 endangered 7 vulnerable 13 migratory 48 marine
	Recovery plans	1 being implemented (great white shark)
Flora	None	

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE RESERVE

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
13	19	18	688	Not known	No land plants

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Anchor damage in the reserve
- Measuring health of the reserve

Outputs

- Determine anchoring area
- Investigate mooring installation
- Conduct strategic monitoring of the reef

Performance results 2002–03

- A determination was made under Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 12.56 to require vessels to anchor in defined areas to reduce damage to vulnerable parts of the lagoon
- Possible mooring sites were investigated
- The Australian Institute of Marine Science completed a strategic monitoring program under contract

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Anchor damage from visiting yachts

Outputs

- Advise visitors on anchoring requirements in the reserve

Performance results 2002–03

- The determination made under the Act was well publicised with tour operators and information was published in yachting magazines and distributed at Christmas Island and Broome ports

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Effective management of the reserve by the management service provider

Outputs

- Train and appoint WA CALM staff as wardens

Performance results 2002–03

- WA CALM staff were trained and 21 WA officers have now been appointed as wardens

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

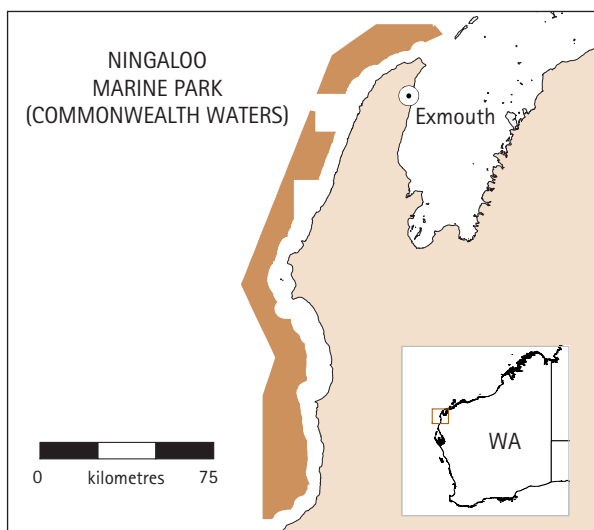
The reserve is managed in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding between the Director of National Parks, WA CALM and Fisheries WA. These agencies cooperate in issuing permits for commercial tours of the Rowley Shoals.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are investigation of installation of moorings at Mermaid; monitoring for possible illegal activities; and ensuring that the conservation values and management prescriptions of the reserve are understood by private visitors.

NINGALOO MARINE PARK (COMMONWEALTH WATERS)

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/ningaloo>



Special features

The Ningaloo Reef tract is unique in its proximity to an arid part of the continental land mass. Unlike the Great Barrier Reef and other reefs off the northern coast of Australia, it is not separated from the coast by a wide intervening expanse of water.

Ningaloo Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) abuts the WA marine park which covers the waters out to three nautical miles, and protects the whole of the deep-water environment fringing the reef including the open waters and the seabeds of the continental slope and shelf.

The reefs that comprise the reef tract are extremely variable, with coral cover and species richness changing within short distances. The coral communities contain many of the species typical of the tropical Indo-Western Pacific region that do not occur further south and temperate species that are at the northern limit of their distribution in WA.

The reef contains a wide range of habitats and a very high diversity of marine fauna. The fish fauna of the complete reef ecosystem is very rich, but little is known about the fish fauna of the deeper Commonwealth waters. It is an important area for marine mammals, particularly whales. The green turtle is very common all along the coast, with several breeding rookeries. Of particular note is the whale shark which is the world's biggest species of fish.

Location	Latitude 22°30' South, Longitude 113°40' East
Area	218 000 hectares
Proclamation date	20 May 1987, 5 August 1992
IUCN category	II
Biogeographic context	IMCRA region: Ningaloo
Management plan status	Commenced 3 July 2002; expires 2 July 2009
Other significant management documents	Memorandum of Understanding with WA CALM and Fisheries WA; annual business agreement; compliance and enforcement plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule

Financial	Operating Capital Revenue	\$191 420 * Not applicable Not applicable
Visitors	Not available	
Permits	16 permits to carry out commercial charter fishing tours; 1 for scientific research (whale shark tagging)	

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Bonn Convention	12 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	9 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	9 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	4 endangered 12 vulnerable 17 migratory 59 marine
	Recovery plans	1 being implemented (great white shark)
Listed flora	None	

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE PARK

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
20	34+	18+	Not known	Not known	Not known

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Management of charter fishing tours
- Monitoring the natural heritage of the reserve
- Increasing knowledge of the natural environment

Outputs

- Ensure compliance of permits and conditions by commercial charter tour operators
- Liaise with Fisheries WA and WA CALM on educational and compliance and enforcement activities
- Conduct strategic monitoring of the reef
- Encourage and facilitate research and monitoring

Performance results 2002–03

- A brochure was prepared and distributed to inform commercial fishers and charter fishing tour operators of the arrangements under the new management plan
- Arrangements were made under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act for further WA Government officers to be appointed as wardens to carry out compliance and enforcement activities on behalf of the Director
- Fisheries WA and CALM officers patrolled the reserve regularly as part of their normal surveillance operations
- Coastwatch conducted aerial surveillance in the vicinity
- A contract was signed with the Australian Institute of Marine Science for assessment of deep-water habitat during 2003–04
- Research and monitoring of turtles and whale sharks was conducted by CALM with financial and personnel support from the Director
- Funds were provided for a CALM marine conservation officer to visit Mon Repos Conservation Park in Queensland to learn the latest techniques in turtle research and in the management of visitor–turtle interactions

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Retrieval of long-lines from the park

Outputs

- Negotiate a protocol with industry in relation to long-lines which accidentally drift into the park during commercial fishing operations

Performance results 2002–03

- Progress was made in negotiation of a protocol

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Planning process under way for the state component of the park

Outputs

- Participate in the planning process

Performance results 2002–03

- Discussions were held with WA officials regarding the planning process

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Effective management of contracts with management service providers

Outputs

- Negotiate and implement annual business agreements

Performance results 2002–03

- Annual business agreements are in place. Management services provided included surveillance, marine operations, research, visitor management, education and compliance and enforcement

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

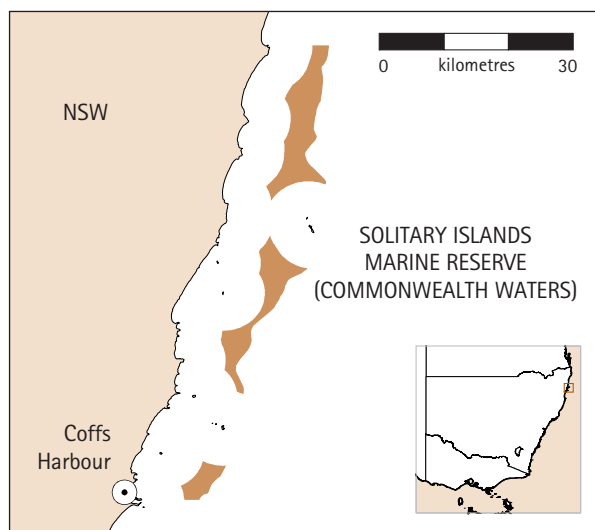
WA CALM and Fisheries WA, on behalf of the Department, conduct on-ground management of the reserve under a Memorandum of Understanding.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are to ensure compliance with park management prescriptions; continue environmental monitoring; and improve consistency between state and Commonwealth planning processes.

SOLITARY ISLANDS MARINE RESERVE (COMMONWEALTH WATERS)

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/solitary>



Special features

The reserve is located in a mixing zone between tropical and temperate environments, and many species in the reserve are at, or close to, their southern and northern geographical extents. It is home to a number of species which are listed as endangered or vulnerable under Commonwealth legislation or international agreements, including dolphins, the humpback whale, grey nurse shark, black cod, Bleekers devil fish, little tern and other seabirds.

The reserve and the adjacent state park were listed on the Register of the National Estate in 1995. Values noted on

the register include outstanding marine biodiversity; mixture of communities; diversity of coral, algal and fish species; abundance of giant anemone and clownfish associations; little penguin and muttonbird nesting areas; and overall diversity and beauty.

Location	Latitude 30°00' South, Longitude 153°22' East	
Area	15 680 hectares	
Proclamation date	3 March 1993	
IUCN category	VI; (Ia 80 hectares, IV 3700 hectares, VI 11 900 hectares)	
Biogeographic context	IMCRA region: Manning Shelf	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 3 April 2008	
Other significant management documents	Management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule; service level agreement with the State of NSW; annual business agreements	
Financial	Operating	\$65 420*
	Capital	Not applicable
	Revenue	Not applicable
Visitors	Not known	
Commercial permits	20 (tours 13; fishing 5; commercial photography 2)	

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Bonn Convention	14 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	9 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	11 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	4 endangered 4 vulnerable 24 migratory 33 marine
	Recovery plans	3 being implemented (great white shark, grey nurse shark, albatross)
Listed flora	None	

■ NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED IN THE PARK

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Invertebrates	Plants
25	42	Not known	Not known	Not known	0

■ COMMITTEES

The Solitary Islands Marine Park Steering Committee of government agency representatives oversees management and planning arrangements, and the Solitary Islands Marine Park Advisory Committee provides a forum for stakeholders to contribute to planning for the adjacent state park and the reserve. The Department is represented on both committees.

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Illegal fishing within the Sanctuary Zone

Outputs

- Enforce fishing restrictions

Performance results 2002–03

- Coastwatch conducted regular aerial surveillance. NSW Marine Parks Authority provided surface support to Coastwatch surveillance and conducted surface patrols as required

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Managing impacts of diving in the Sanctuary Zone

Outputs

- Manage diving operations

Performance results 2002–03

- 4 diving permits were issued. No infringements of conditions were detected

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Ongoing engagement by community and government representatives

Outputs

- Participate in the advisory and steering committees

Performance results 2002–03

- Participation in the advisory and steering committees, largely to monitor issues and consult on initiatives

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Continued assistance from NSW Marine Parks Authority

Outputs

- Endorse and manage the annual business agreement with NSW Marine Parks Authority

Performance results 2002–03

- The annual business agreement was successfully implemented

■ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

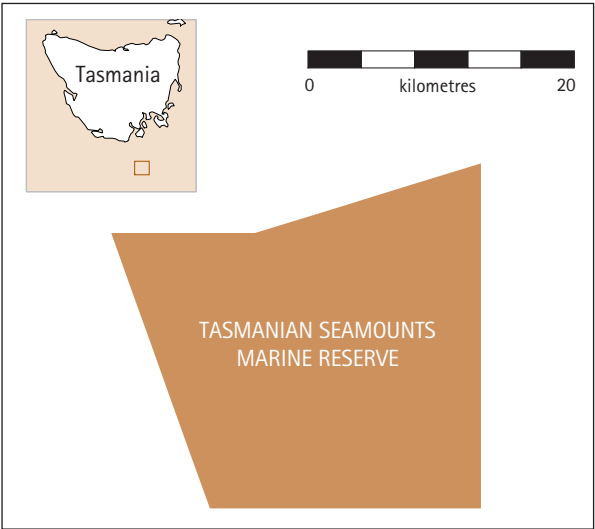
The NSW Marine Parks Authority, on behalf of the Department, conducts on-ground management of the reserve under a Memorandum of Understanding. The Department worked with the NSW Marine Parks Authority on issues affecting both the NSW park and the Commonwealth reserve.

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are implementation of strategic monitoring and monitoring for possible illegal activities.

TASMANIAN SEAMOUNTS MARINE RESERVE

<http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/seamounts>



Special features

The Tasmanian Seamounts Marine Reserve protects about 70 seamounts that arise from water depths of between 1000 and 2000 metres on the continental slope off southern Tasmania. Remnants of extinct volcanoes, these seamounts are typically cone-shaped, 200 to 500 metres high and several kilometres across at their base.

This field of seamounts is a distinctive geological feature not known elsewhere on the continental margin of Australia. It supports a distinct benthic (bottom-dwelling) community of animals, many of which are native to the Tasmanian

Seamounts and do not occur anywhere else on earth. The primary purpose of the reserve is to protect a sample of this unique benthic community.

Research has found that 24 to 43 per cent of species in the reserve are new to science. At least eight genera new to science have been discovered.

Location	Latitude 44°20' South, Longitude 147°20' East	
Area	38 900 hectares	
Proclamation date	19 May 1999	
IUCN category	Overall Ia; below a depth of 500 metres is a highly protected zone (Ia); upper 500 metres is a managed resource zone (VI)	
Biogeographic context	Cold temperate waters offshore of the Tasmanian (demersal) Province and the Southern Pelagic Province	
Management plan status	Current plan expires 25 June 2009	
Other significant management documents	Compliance and enforcement plan; management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule	
Financial	Operating	\$15 420*
	Capital	Not applicable
	Revenue	Not applicable

* In addition, \$170 238 was spent across the 12 marine reserves managed by the Marine Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage on training wardens, travel expenses (on matters pertaining to management of the whole estate), workshops and conference attendance.

Visitors	0
Commercial permits	0

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Bonn Convention	12 of the 160 listed Australian species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	1 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	4 endangered 15 vulnerable 16 migratory 14 marine
	Recovery plans	1 being implemented (albatross)
Listed flora	None	

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Illegal fishing by commercial fishers
- Lack of regular surveillance
- Need for better information on ecological processes

Outputs

- Enforce fishing restrictions
- Conduct regular surveillance
- Obtain better information on eco-processes

Performance results 2002–03

- Coastwatch aerial surveillance was requested on a regular basis. Surveillance was provided occasionally. No illegal activities were detected.
- A consultancy and report, Links Between Pelagic and Benthic Deep-water Ecosystems, were completed and reported that 'there is negligible impact on benthic communities from fishing in the pelagic zone above the reserve, and that the present very low level of (pelagic) fishing presents no detectable threat. We also conclude that the velocities of deep-water currents are high enough to advect sufficient supplies of prey to the seamount demersal fish communities to sustain them, even at the very high biomass levels of orange roughy found prior to fishing in the late 1980s'. This reinforces the management regime under the current management plan

KEY RESULT AREAS: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT, VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE, STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

No issues of concern

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Major challenges are development of a strategic monitoring strategy and monitoring for possible illegal activities.

>> CASE STUDY: Woody weed control in Norfolk Island National Park

Prior to its declaration as a national park, much of the area of Norfolk Island National Park was severely infested by woody weeds.

The major weed species are cherry guava (*Psidium littorale*), African olive (*Olea europaea Africana*) and Hawaian holly (*Schinus terebinthifolius*). Weed control has been a major focus of park management, with early advice from scientists of the Alan Fletcher Research Station in Brisbane.

Measures vary depending on the degree of invasiveness, terrain and the relative abundance of native species. Where native species are reasonably numerous, the weeds are treated individually with herbicide. In areas dominated by weeds, machinery such as slashers, bulldozers or excavators is used. Broadscale clearing has been successful but requires good follow-up to ensure that the destroyed weeds are replaced by native species, not more weeds. Weed control in the park will continue to require a broad spectrum of approaches relying significantly on herbicides such as Garlon and Roundup.

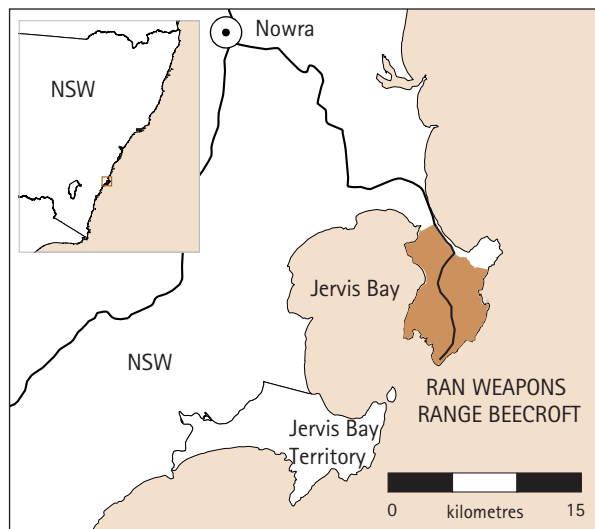
Biological control of weeds has been tried unsuccessfully and is not used in the park.

The fruits of cherry guava and African olive are a food source for many of Norfolk's bird species so, as the bird populations recover, their capacity to act as vectors for the weed seeds increases. The value of the weeds as food for native bird species, and the problem of those native birds spreading weed seeds, add complexity to the issue of weed control. Broadscale clearing of pure weed stands and rehabilitation planting of native species have yielded encouraging results, but must be carried out with a long-term perspective and commitment.



Endangered green parrots feed on guavas and olives
Photo: Michael Nelson

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY WEAPONS RANGE – BEECROFT PENINSULA



Special features

Beecroft Weapons Range occupies most of Beecroft Peninsula, the northern peninsula of Jervis Bay in NSW. The peninsula offers a wide range of experiences for visitors, including spectacular views from rugged cliffs, wide expanses of flowering heath, patches of remnant rainforest, secluded beaches and beautiful bays. The area is also home to several threatened plant and animal species and is used by migratory species. Art and occupation sites of cultural significance to local Aboriginal people have been recorded and the Point Perpendicular Lighthouse

has heritage significance. The area's generally low weed status, due in part to its history of limited disturbance and public access, is an important feature.

When not being used for Defence purposes, Beecroft Weapons Range is open to the public. The range is popular with campers and other recreational users including rock-climbers, whale-watchers and fishers and is also used for scientific research.

Location	Latitude 35° South	Longitude 151° East
Area	4020 hectares	
Status	Commonwealth land within the State of NSW used by the Department of Defence for training and weapons testing. Declared a public area under the <i>Defence Act 1903</i> on 28 October 1987	
IUCN category	Not applicable	
Biogeographic context	IBRA region: Sydney Basin	
Management arrangements	Services for the management of natural and cultural heritage and management of visitors are provided by the Director via a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Defence, due to expire on 30 June 2004	
Implementation schedule	Beecroft Peninsula Environmental Management Plan is the principal policy document for management. A works program is agreed annually pursuant to the plan	
Other significant management documents	Fire management plan; weed control strategy; vertebrate pest control strategy; risk assessment and management schedule	

Financial	Operating Revenue	\$0.55 million
	Capital	\$0
		\$0.02 million
Visitors	54 777	
Commercial permits	Not applicable	

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Bonn Convention	9 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	6 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	4 of the 110 listed species

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	1 endangered 5 vulnerable 36 migratory 5 marine
	Recovery plans	None in preparation; 1 being implemented for the eastern bristlebird (<i>Dasyornis brachypterus</i>)
Listed flora	Species	3 vulnerable
	Recovery plans	None in preparation or being implemented

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Fire management
- Vertebrate pests management
- Vegetation management

Outputs

- Conduct hazard reduction and prescribed burning
- Implement fox control and fox and rabbit monitoring program
- Progress wildlife management and recovery
- Conduct weed control and monitoring program

Performance results 2002–03

- The fire management plan was completed but implementation was delayed due to adverse weather and resource constraints
- The fox control program was completed within budget
- Wildlife surveys were completed on schedule
- The weed management strategy was reviewed and weed control undertaken in line with the strategy

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Art site management

Outputs

- Monitor and protect identified art sites

Performance results 2002–03

- Art sites were not assessed due to resource constraints

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Track management
- Campground management
- Incident management

Outputs

- Conduct erosion control and track monitoring and maintenance
- Manage and maintain the campground
- Manage wildfire suppression and emergency response

Performance results 2002–03

- The track management plan was finalised and high priority track work completed on schedule
- The camping ballot was completed with a high level of camper satisfaction. Campground maintenance was completed on schedule
- All wildfire events and emergency incidents were attended promptly

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Ongoing liaison with the Department of Defence and Jerrinja Land Council

Outputs

- Consult on management activities

Performance results 2002–03

- 2 meetings were held with Jerrinja Land Council plus regular phone liaison
- Frequent meetings were held with Defence personnel and consultants

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Management of Defence funding

Outputs

- Implement financial and contract management

Performance results 2002–03

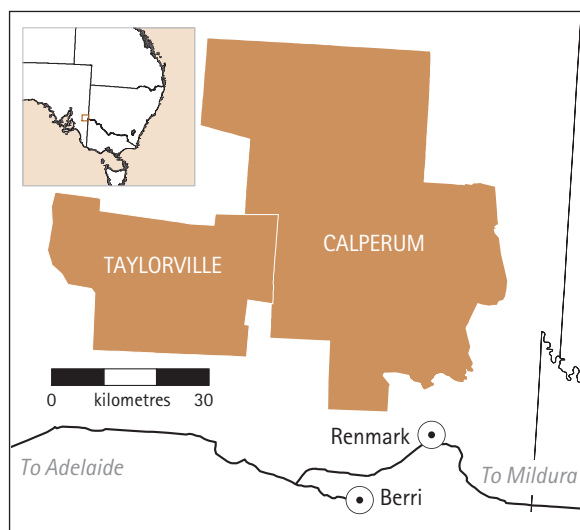
- Budget management was within 1% of target
- Sub-contracted activities were delivered satisfactorily

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

In May 2003, the Department of Defence advised its intention not to renew the current Memorandum of Understanding and that future environmental management of Beecroft Peninsula would be undertaken by Defence directly. The successful implementation of the 2003–04 operations/works plan and the smooth transfer of management arrangements in the period leading up to the conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding will be major priorities for 2003–04.

CALPERUM AND TAYLORVILLE STATIONS

<http://ea.gov.au/parks/biosphere/bookmark>



Special features

Calperum and Taylorville stations are adjacent pastoral leases in the Riverland area of SA. Both properties are key components of the Bookmark Biosphere Reserve which has a total area of 900 000 hectares. The Bookmark Biosphere Reserve forms part of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Program, which includes areas chosen to be representative of the world's biodiversity.

Calperum and Taylorville are important locally, nationally and internationally through their wetlands and related species, their intact mallee vegetation and the presence of several threatened bird

species. Taylorville is key habitat for the nationally endangered black-eared miner (*Manorina melanotis*).

While conservation of biodiversity guides management of both properties, each has somewhat different management objectives. The development of Calperum as a model for environmentally sustainable development including tourism is an explicit environmental objective. Taylorville, by contrast, is managed primarily for conservation of old growth mallee and its dependent species.

Location	Latitude 34° South, Longitude 141° East
Area	337 800 hectares
Status	Pastoral leases in SA owned by the Commonwealth through the Director of National Parks. Calperum was acquired in 1993, Taylorville in 2000.
IUCN category	Calperum – not applicable Taylorville – IV
Biogeographic context	IBRA region: Murray–Darling Depression
Management plan status	Management plan for both properties to be developed by December 2003
Management arrangements	Management by Austland Services Pty Ltd (a company established by the Australian Landscape Trust) under contract to the Director of National Parks. Current contract from 1 May 2003 to 30 June 2008. Contract funding provided through the Natural Heritage Trust
Other significant management documents	Biosphere Reserves Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework; annual operational plan agreed between the Director and Austland Services

Financial	Operating* Revenue Capital*	\$0.58 million Not applicable \$0.01 million
Visitors	Not available	

■ INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)	Part of Calperum is included in Riverland Ramsar site
Bonn Convention	38 of the 160 listed Australian species
China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	10 of the 81 listed species
Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement	10 of the of the 110 listed species
Other international agreements	Major component of Bookmark Biosphere Reserve and listed by UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program as 1 of 440 biosphere reserves in the world

■ ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

Listed fauna	Species	1 endangered 5 vulnerable 41 migratory 34 marine (This unexpectedly high number arises from the way the marine species list was prepared)
	Recovery plans	1 being implemented; 1 in preparation
Listed flora	Species	1 vulnerable
	Recovery plans	None being prepared or implemented

■ REPORT ON PERFORMANCE BY KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREA: NATURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Land degradation
- Feral animal control
- Fauna management

* Funding provided by Director of National Parks only. Matching funding is provided by Austland Services.

Outputs

- Conduct wetlands restoration and revegetation activities
- Conduct fox and rabbit control programs
- Monitor native animal populations
- Implement recovery programs for threatened birds
- Reintroduce locally extinct mammals

Performance results 2002–03

- A major Natural Heritage Trust funded revegetation project covering 400 hectares was completed on the floodplain
- The closure of artificial watering points continued
- A report into management of Lake Mereti was finalised for publication
- The fox control program continued with monitoring suggesting fox density remains low
- Monitoring of threatened species continued and good progress was made with reintroduction of brush-tailed bettongs (*Bettongia penicillata*) and plains mice (*Pseudomys australis*)

KEY RESULT AREA: CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Aboriginal heritage

Outputs

- Protect known cultural sites

Performance results 2002–03

- No management action was required (there are very few known sites)

KEY RESULT AREA: VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND PARK USE

Major issues

- Management of tourism impacts

Outputs

- Manage day-to-day recreational use

Performance results 2002–03

- The schedule of fees and charges for accommodation and educational services is under review

KEY RESULT AREA: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Major issues

- Use of volunteers
- Governance arrangements

Outputs

- Promote, support and oversee extensive volunteer involvement
- Participate in the Bookmark Biosphere Community Committee

Performance results 2002–03

- Some 250 volunteers donated over 8000 hours of voluntary time during the year
- Management participated in three meetings via Canberra-based representatives of the Director of National Parks

KEY RESULT AREA: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Major issues

- Sustainable industry development

Outputs

- Undertake sustainable floriculture

Performance results 2002–03

- Progress of sustainable floriculture project continued to be affected by adverse weather and market conditions

■ FUTURE CHALLENGES

Identification and implementation of environmentally sustainable industries on Calperum Station remains an ongoing challenge. Access to sufficient water to re-establish natural flooding and drying regimes over the Calperum wetlands is also a challenge in the face of competing demands for water resources. Protection of old growth mallee on Taylorville Station from fire and other potentially threatening impacts is a major priority. The successful implementation of new governance arrangements for both properties will be important in ensuring effective involvement of the local community in the management of both properties. Preparation of the management plan will be a major priority for 2003–04.

>> CASE STUDY: Marine research and monitoring – a new approach

Implementation has commenced of an ecosystem approach to monitoring the Commonwealth marine protected areas.

The new program, introduced in 2002–03, uses a small set of common indicators to monitor all reserves of similar ecosystem types. First priority has been given to the six coral reef reserves. The common indicators measured are live coral cover, water temperature and the abundance of trochus, trepang and fish. This information is vital for determining the condition of the coral reef reserves in the face of global warming and natural events such as cyclones. It will help assess the effectiveness of the reserves in protecting species targeted globally in coral reef reserves.

It is now possible to compare the condition of these reserves with similar areas including sites at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and locations in Indonesia.

During the year monitoring was undertaken at the Ashmore, Cartier, Mermaid and Coringa–Herald reserves. Similar work is planned for the other two coral reef reserves at Lihou Reef and Elizabeth–Middleton during the coming year.

Initial results have indicated recent high-level coral bleaching in the Coringa–Herald reserve. Trochus and trepang were found to be in a depleted state at the Ashmore and Cartier reserves but with some encouraging isolated populations where management is most active. Management responses to these findings are being implemented. This highlights the importance of the recent declaration and closure of Cartier Island Marine Reserve and the need to provide an active on-site management presence.

Mermaid Reef, which is distant from the known areas of illegal fishing operations, was found to have very high levels of live coral and to support high numbers of the commercially important trepang species.

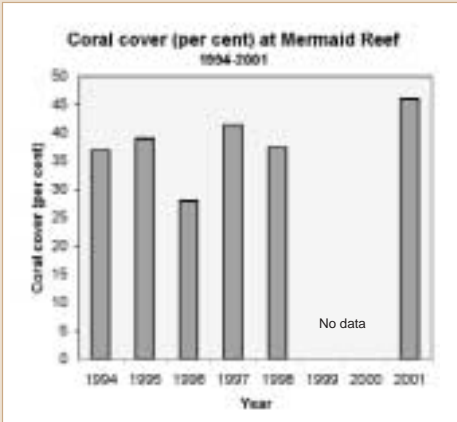
The results of the surveys are expected to be released soon.

This work has been made possible through cooperative arrangements with the Australian Institute of Marine Science and the CRC Reef Research Centre and with the assistance of the Australian Customs Service who provided the vessels and field support.

The trochus shell has been targeted across much of the world's coral reefs, particularly in Asia, for hundreds of years. The shells are highly prized and are used to make elaborate buttons, ornaments and jewelry. Trochus has become depleted across much of its range. An agreement is in place with the Australian Customs Service to patrol the Ashmore Reef and Cartier Island reserves in order to protect the biodiversity values of the area including the trochus populations.



Trochus at Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve. Photo: AIMS 2003



Live coral cover for Mermaid Reef National Nature Reserve

The Australian Institute of Marine Science has been monitoring live coral cover at Mermaid Reef since 1994, providing insight into the natural and human processes affecting the reef. A cyclone caused significant damage to Mermaid Reef in 1996. In this case the coral recovered to a greater extent than previously measured in just one year. The new monitoring program will measure live coral at all the coral reef reserves every two to three years.

PART E Management and accountability



Annual Report
2002-03

>> CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Director of National Parks is a corporation sole under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The corporation has a single (executive) director, the person appointed to the office of the Director of National Parks under the Act. Mr Peter Cochrane (BSc, M Public Policy) has held the office of Director since October 1999.

The functions of the Director prescribed by the Act are detailed in Part B. The Act makes the Director responsible for the management of Commonwealth reserves (which includes parks) established over Commonwealth-owned land, Commonwealth marine areas, and certain areas of Aboriginal land leased to the Director.

Ministerial directions

The Director is responsible to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, and the Act requires the Director to perform functions and exercise powers in accordance with any directions given by the Minister, unless the Act provides otherwise. During 2002–03, no directions were issued by the Minister nor were there any relevant directions continuing from previous years.

Funding

The Director is a Commonwealth authority and is subject to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*. There was no direct appropriation by Parliament for the purposes of the Director of National Parks in 2002–03. Under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* the Director receives, into the Australian National Parks Fund, such moneys appropriated by Parliament for the purposes of the Department of the Environment and Heritage as are allocated by the Secretary for the management of Commonwealth reserves or conservation zones. The Secretary allocated funds under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Director of National Parks. In addition, \$9.63 million of external revenue was paid into the Australian National Parks Fund.

Planning documents

The comprehensive planning and reporting framework is described in Part C.

Management

The Director and two senior executive branch heads provide leadership in Parks Australia. Weekly meetings of the Parks Australia Executive provide the primary management forum for developing parks policy, strategic and corporate goals.

Parks administration faces a number of specific challenges, recognised in the 2001–02 ANAO performance assessment, including widely distributed workplaces in remote areas, many in a cross-cultural environment. Coordination between area managers, Canberra-based managers, the Parks Business Management Section and the Parks Strategic Development Section is facilitated through a number of mechanisms including regular phone link-ups and the twice-yearly Parks Forum involving all senior managers.

Staff participation through consultative committees, both regional and Canberra-based, supports the internal management of Parks Australia.

Boards of management and advisory committees

Kakadu, Uluru–Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks are managed jointly by the Director and the traditional Aboriginal owners in accordance with the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. All three parks have a board of management established under the Act, with a majority of members being Aboriginals nominated by the traditional Aboriginal owners of land in the park. The boards' membership also includes the Director and members representing special interest groups or with particular skills relevant to managing the park.

The functions of a board of management for a Commonwealth reserve are to make decisions relating to the management of the reserve that are consistent with the management plan for the reserve and, in conjunction with the Director, to prepare management plans, monitor the management of the reserve and advise the Minister on future development of the reserve.

Norfolk Island, Christmas Island and Pulu Keeling National Parks have non-statutory advisory or consultative bodies comprising community representatives and representatives of the Director.

Other consultative mechanisms

Public participation in the management of Commonwealth reserves under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act is facilitated through consultative mechanisms to involve the community and user groups in the development of planning and management instruments.

The Act requires public consultation prior to the declaration of a Commonwealth reserve and in the preparation of management plans for reserves that have been established under the Act. Public comments must be invited by the Director of National Parks on a proposal to declare a reserve; a proposal to prepare a draft management plan for a reserve; and on a draft management plan for a reserve, with at least one month allowed on each occasion. Public comments are sought through notices in the Commonwealth Government Gazette and newspaper advertisements. When a management plan has been made it must be tabled in Parliament and is subject to disallowance by either House on a notice of motion brought within 15 sitting days of tabling.

For Commonwealth reserves on Aboriginal-owned land – Kakadu, Uluru–Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks – the Act provides for both consultation with and involvement of representatives of the Aboriginal landowners in relation to management of the reserve. The Director must consult and have regard to the views of the chairperson of the relevant land council in relation to the performance of the Director's functions and the exercise of the Director's powers in relation to the reserve. The chairperson must be specifically invited to comment on the preparation of management plans.

Additional consultation with traditional Aboriginal owners of Kakadu, Uluru–Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks takes place through cultural advisers, Aboriginal staff, community liaison officers, contact with Aboriginal organisations and through the establishment of special consultative committees. All traditional Aboriginal owners of Kakadu are being consulted individually during development of the new management plan.

>> CONTROL ARRANGEMENTS

Internal audit

The Director of National Parks Internal Audit Committee met on four occasions during the year and focused on corporate governance issues including risk management and financial management issues. As part of an overall strategy to build and enhance financial management practices within Parks Australia the committee considered a timetable of policies and procedures to be implemented. The committee endorsed, as part of this process, new Chief Executive Instructions and a new service level agreement with the Department of the Environment and Heritage.

The committee considered recommendations from a number of internal and external audits dealing with major financial systems, the ANAO interim letter on the 2002–03 financial statements and the ANAO performance audit report *The Management of Commonwealth National Parks and Reserves: Caring for Country*.

The committee endorsed a revised Internal Audit Committee charter, the process for preparation of the 2002–03 financial statements and a 2002–03 strategic audit plan.

Members of the committee during 2002–03 were:

- Mr Len Early, Len Early Pty Ltd, independent member and Chair
- Mr John Hicks, Assistant Secretary, Parks Australia South (from December 2002)
- Mr Peter Wellings, Assistant Secretary, Parks Australia North
- Dr David Kay, Assistant Secretary, Parks Australia South (until December 2002)
- Ms Glenys Roper, Roex Management, independent member (from February 2003).

The Director of National Parks and the Director, Parks Business Management Section, were also invited to attend meetings of the committee. Staff from the ANAO, the Department's Finance Branch and Walter Turnbull, the internal audit provider, also attended as observers.

Indemnities and insurance

In 2002–03 the Director held a professional indemnity and directors' and officers' insurance policy provided by Comcover. The policy covers the legal liability of the Director and officers for losses caused by the execution or breach of a duty arising from the Director's operations or business, and for a wrongful act by the Director or an officer.

>> EXTERNAL REVIEW

Judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals

Newcrest Mining (Western Australia) Limited and BHP Minerals Limited v Commonwealth of Australia and the Director of National Parks

In August 1997, the High Court of Australia found that the declarations of Stage 3 Kakadu National Park in 1987, 1989 and 1991 were technically invalid with respect to 23 small areas in the south-east of the park covered by existing mineral leases held by one of the Newcrest group of companies. The reason for

this decision was that the declaration over these areas had, with the absolute prohibition on mining activities in Kakadu National Park under the *National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975*, effected an acquisition of property without payment of just terms compensation, as required by the Australian Constitution.

The Minister has indicated that the lease areas should be incorporated within the park and that the Government will address the issue of appropriate compensation. The Government has entered a dialogue with mining company representatives about the matter. The process was still under way as at 30 June 2003.

Reports by the Auditor-General

The Auditor-General issued an unqualified audit report for the 2002–03 financial statements of the Director of National Parks. The report noted that the Director of National Parks successfully implemented many of the financial processes underpinning the statements in 2002–03.

>> MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Management of human resources and related corporate services were provided to the Director through a purchaser/provider arrangement with the Department of the Environment and Heritage. Detailed information on the management of human resources, employment conditions and remuneration is contained in the Department of the Environment and Heritage annual report for 2002–03.

Occupational health and safety

Section 74 of the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991* requires that measures taken during the year to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of employees, and statistics of any accidents or dangerous occurrences during the year, be reported. A review of the occupational health and safety framework for the Director commenced in March 2003 and the draft report was received in June. As part of the review, a comprehensive occupational health and safety audit was undertaken of the Australian National Botanic Gardens, and Booderee and Kakadu National Parks. A management response is being finalised and will result in additional resources being allocated to occupational health and safety.

The Director's Risk Management Policy, which applies to occupational health and safety as well as other types of risks, came into effect in November 2002. Under the policy, staff reviewed workplace risk watch lists quarterly.

Detailed information on occupational health and safety policies and initiatives implemented during the year is contained in the Department of the Environment and Heritage annual report.

During 2002–03, Parks Australia reported 24 accidents or incidents under section 68 of the Act. Comcare conducted two investigations into incidents, one in Kakadu National Park and the other at the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

In the Kakadu incident, a small amount of undiluted cleaning solvent splashed into an employee's eye. No permanent damage was sustained. Recommendations made by Comcare to prevent further accidents of this type have been implemented. At the Australian National Botanic Gardens, two visiting school students used an electric vehicle without permission and an accident occurred resulting in minor injuries

to one student and damage to the vehicle. As a result, steps were taken to improve security of all vehicles at the Gardens.

There were no matters to report under sections 45, 46 or 47 of the Act.

>> CONSULTANCY SERVICES

The total number of consultants engaged by the Director was 58. The total expenditure on consultancy services during the year was \$1 285 618.

The most common reasons to engage consultants were the need for specialised, technical and professional skills or knowledge and the need for work to be conducted independently. The design of facilities and infrastructure, feasibility studies, production of technical reports, data collection and analysis were among the categories for which consultants were engaged during the year.

Details of consultancies are available on the Department's internet site at www.deh.gov.au/about/annual-report.

>> ADVERTISING AND MARKET RESEARCH

A total of \$3635 was paid to Starcom Worldwide (Aust) Pty Ltd for media advertising.

>> PURCHASING AND ASSETS MANAGEMENT

The Director of National Parks purchasing policies are in line with the principles of the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines. These guidelines are included in the Director of National Parks Chief Executive Instructions and purchasing procedures. During the year an internal audit was conducted in relation to procurement practices. The audit made a number of recommendations in relation to processes, record keeping and policy enhancements.

Assets comprised the most significant part of the Director of National Parks balance sheet. Replacement and maintenance of these assets continued to prove challenging. A capital plan is used to prioritise and identify infrastructure, plant and equipment, and building maintenance and replacement needs as resources allow. An audit of assets management was conducted during the year. Recommendations were made in relation to strengthening policies, procedures and the implementation of a capital management plan.

>> ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

Section 516A of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act requires Commonwealth organisations to include in their annual reports details of the environmental performance of the organisation and the organisation's contribution to ecologically sustainable development.

Section 516A aims to promote the development of a framework within which Commonwealth organisations properly integrate environmental, economic and social considerations. The identification, monitoring and reporting of environmental issues within such a framework will help Commonwealth organisations improve their environmental and ecologically sustainable development performance.

Section 516A also aims to encourage Commonwealth agencies to adopt best practice in terms of the public reporting of information relevant to their environmental performance and promotion of ecologically sustainable development.

All of the activities of the Director have an impact on ecologically sustainable development.

Commonwealth protected areas are managed to conserve and enhance their natural and cultural values for current and future generations and only development activities that are consistent with the primary management objectives may be permitted. The provisions of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act ensure that management plans for Commonwealth reserves properly integrate environmental, economic and social considerations and that appropriate environmental monitoring and reporting regimes are in place.

The effects of park management activities on the environment are discussed throughout the report and in particular detail in Parts C and D. Section 516A reporting requirements are thus addressed by these representative examples of how the Director's activities and administration of legislation accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

>> COMMONWEALTH DISABILITY STRATEGY

The Department of the Environment and Heritage has developed a draft Disability Action Plan to meet the needs of people with disabilities in accordance with the roles identified by the Commonwealth Disability Strategy.

Provision of access to Commonwealth reserves for tourism and recreation is a significant part of the responsibility of the Director of National Parks. As managers of reserves, Parks Australia and the Marine and Water Division of the Department (until 30 June 2003) come under the 'provider' role of the Commonwealth Disability Strategy.

Information about reserves is available on the Department's web site at www.deh.gov.au/parks and in hard copy. Given the locations and nature of the terrain, access for people with a disability to the reserves varies. Some marine reserves are very remote and without facilities, whereas a number of the major tourist destinations in the three mainland parks – Kakadu, Uluru–Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks – are wheelchair accessible. Management plans developed through a consultative process address current and proposed levels of accessibility.

>> FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

No applications were received relating to the Director's statutory functions under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. The Director's statement under section 8 of the Act is at Appendix 1.

PART F Financial statements



Annual Report
2002-03

>> DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

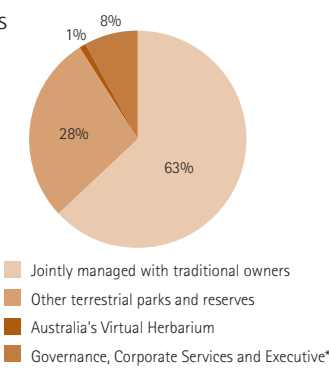
The following should be read in conjunction with the summary on the following page.

The Director of National Parks' deficit for the year was \$3.219 million (8.6% unfavourable to budget) reducing the net asset position to \$103.430 million.

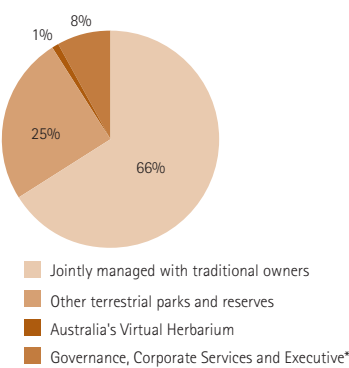
The variance to budget was primarily due to the non-controllable increases in Comcover insurance \$273,000. Unfavourable employee expenses were offset with savings in depreciation through delaying some major infrastructure works and the revaluation of useful lives of the asset base.

BUSINESS AREA	REVENUES	EXPENSES
Jointly managed parks with traditional owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Down \$0.240m primarily due to lesser than expected park use fees and offset by houses received free of charge in Kakadu National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none">\$1.624m unfavourable primarily due to increases in employee costs of \$0.630m, operating costs of \$0.800m and lesser than expected depreciation and sales of infrastructure sales \$0.211m
Other terrestrial parks and reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Up \$0.397m primarily due to houses received free of charge on Pulu-Keeling National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Costs are favourable by \$1.325m primarily due to the revaluation of the Christmas Island Blowhole infrastructure and road useful life
Australia's Virtual Herbarium (AVH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Transfer of Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) funding to the Director of National Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Transfer of NHT funding to AVH
Governance, Corporate Services and Executive*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Revenues are down \$0.164m due to less than expected corporate services resources received free of charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Higher than expected labour costs due to the certified agreement increase of 3.5% off set by savings in operating expenses

Revenues



Costs



>> OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL RESULTS

		2003 Actuals \$000's	2003 Budget \$000's	2003 Variance \$000's
Jointly Managed Parks with Traditional Owners				
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park	Gross Revenues	12,172	12,676	(504)
	Costs	(13,665)	(13,142)	(523)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,493)	(466)	(1,027)
Kakadu National Park	Gross Revenues	18,991	18,670	321
	Costs	(20,890)	(19,704)	(1,186)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,899)	(1,034)	(865)
Booderee National Park	Gross Revenues	7,165	7,222	(57)
	Costs	(7,511)	(7,596)	85
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(346)	(374)	28
Total Jointly Managed Parks	Gross Revenues	38,328	38,568	(240)
	Costs	(42,066)	(40,442)	(1,624)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(3,738)	(1,874)	(1,864)
Other Terrestrial Parks and Reserves				
Christmas Island National Park	Gross Revenues	3,825	3,805	20
	Costs	(2,605)	(4,006)	1,401
	Surplus/(Deficit)	1,220	(201)	1,421
Norfolk Island National Park and Botanic Garden	Gross Revenues	1,129	1,117	12
	Costs	(1,262)	(1,190)	(72)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(133)	(73)	(60)
Australian National Botanic Gardens	Gross Revenues	9,366	9,288	78
	Costs	(9,822)	(9,823)	1
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(456)	(535)	79
Pulu Keeling National Park	Gross Revenues	1,153	817	336
	Costs	(899)	(830)	(69)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	254	(13)	267
Beecroft and Calperum	Gross Revenues	1,242	1,291	(49)
	Costs	(1,222)	(1,286)	64
	Surplus/(Deficit)	20	5	15
Total Other Terrestrial Parks and Reserves	Gross Revenues	16,715	16,318	397
	Costs	(15,810)	(17,135)	1,325
	Surplus/(Deficit)	905	(817)	1,722
Australia's Virtual Herbarium	Gross Revenues	800	0	800
	Costs	(800)	0	(800)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	0	0	0
Governance, Corporate Services and Executive*	Gross Revenues	6,882	7,046	(164)
	Capital Use Charge	(1,950)	(1,950)	0
	Other Costs	(5,318)	(5,370)	52
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(386)	(274)	(112)
Total Director of National Parks	Gross Revenues	62,725	61,932	793
	Costs	(65,944)	(64,897)	(1,047)
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(3,219)	(2,965)	(254)

* Governance, Corporate Services and Executive includes Administration for Parks Australia North and Parks Australia South, Finance, Legal, Insurance, Planning, Interest Income and Bank Charges and an Unallocated Capital Use Charge of \$1.950 million.

** The 2002-03 Additional Estimates Budgeted deficit of \$2.965 million includes the capital use charge of \$11.516 million.

*** The operating surplus from ordinary activities does not include the capital use charge of \$11.516m in the financial statements, for comparative purposes this amount is included.



INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

To the Minister for the Environment and Heritage

Scope

I have audited the financial statements of the Director National Parks for the year ended 30 June 2003. The financial statements comprise:

- Statement by Director;
- Statements of Financial Performance, Financial Position and Cash Flows;
- Schedules of Commitments and Contingencies; and
- Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements.

The Director of National Parks is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and the information they contain. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to you.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards, to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. Audit procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia and statutory requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Director of National Park's financial position, its financial performance and its cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

GPO Box 707 CANBERRA ACT 2601
Centenary House 19 National Circuit
BARTON ACT
Phone (02) 6203 7300 Fax (02) 6203 7777

Audit Opinion

In my opinion the financial statements:

- (i) have been prepared in accordance with Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*; and
- (ii) give a true and fair view, in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia and the Finance Minister's Orders, of the financial position of the Director of National Parks as at 30 June 2003, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

Australian National Audit Office

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Mashelle Parrett'.

Mashelle Parrett
Executive Director

Canberra
17 September 2003

**Director of National Parks
Statement by the Director**

In my opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2003 give a true and fair view of the matters required by the Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*.

In my opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Director of National Parks will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Cochrane', with a stylized, cursive script.

Peter Cochrane
Director

15th September 2003

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
For the year ended 30 June 2003

	Notes	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
REVENUE			
Revenues from ordinary activities			
Revenue from Government Agencies	4A	49,627	45,551
Goods and Services	4B	9,451	10,185
Interest	4C	974	1,042
Revenue from sale of assets	4D	273	766
Assets Recognised for First Time	4E	0	5,223
Other	4F	2,622	1,616
Revenues from ordinary activities		62,947	64,383
EXPENSE			
Expenses from ordinary activities (excluding borrowing costs expense)			
Employees	5A	20,582	18,594
Suppliers	5B	24,465	25,700
Depreciation and amortisation	5C	8,933	7,906
Write-down of assets	5D	455	172
Value of assets sold	4D	192	356
Expenses from ordinary activities (excluding borrowing costs expense)		54,627	52,728
Borrowing costs expense	6	23	46
Operating surplus from ordinary activities		8,297	11,609
Net surplus		8,297	11,609
Net credit to asset revaluation reserve	12A	1,961	10,355
Total revenues, expenses and valuation adjustments recognised directly in equity		1,961	10,355
Total changes in equity other than those resulting from transactions with owners as owners		10,258	21,964

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
as at 30 June 2003

	Notes	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
ASSETS			
Financial assets			
Cash	13B	10,345	5,086
Receivables	7A	1,300	915
Other Investments	7B	13,848	11,700
Total financial assets		25,493	17,701
Non-financial assets			
Land and buildings	8A, D	54,542	52,362
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	8B, D	47,582	45,972
Intangibles	8C	10	4
Other	8E	303	301
Total non-financial assets		102,437	98,639
Total assets		127,930	116,340
LIABILITIES			
Interest bearing liabilities			
Leases	9A	203	333
Total interest bearing liabilities		203	333
Provisions			
Employees	10A	5,130	4,909
Capital use charge	10B	12,545	1,029
Other	10C	600	954
Total Provisions		18,275	6,892
Payables			
Suppliers	11A	5,699	4,167
Other	11B	323	260
Total Payables		6,022	4,427
Total liabilities		24,500	11,652
NET ASSETS		103,430	104,688
EQUITY			
Parent entity interest			
Contributed equity	12A	9,755	9,755
Reserves	12A	26,698	24,736
Accumulated surpluses (deficits)	12A	66,977	70,196
Total parent entity interest		103,430	104,688
Total Equity		103,430	104,688
Current assets		25,503	18,007
Non-current assets		102,427	98,334
Current Liabilities		22,209	8,612
Non-current Liabilities		2,291	2,086

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
for the year ended 30 June 2003

	Notes	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Goods and Services		11,909	9,872
Revenues from Government Agencies		45,916	42,973
GST received from ATO		1,372	975
Interest		877	1,042
Other		222	1,616
Total cash received		60,296	56,478
Cash used			
Employees		20,311	18,946
Suppliers		22,354	20,690
Borrowing Costs		23	-
Total cash used		42,688	39,636
Net cash from operating activities	13A	17,608	16,842
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment		346	766
Total cash received		346	766
Cash used			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		10,415	9,192
Total cash used		10,415	9,192
Net cash from / (used by) investing activities		(10,069)	(8,426)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash used			
Repayment of lease liabilities		131	175
Capital use charge paid		-	14,411
Total cash used		131	14,586
Net cash from financing activities		(131)	(14,586)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held		7,407	(6,170)
Cash at beginning of the reporting period		16,786	22,956
Cash at end of the reporting period	13B	24,193	16,786

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
SCHEDULE OF COMMITMENTS
as at 30 June 2003

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
BY TYPE		
CAPITAL COMMITMENTS		
Buildings & Works ¹	2,936	3,397
Total capital commitments	2,936	3,397
OTHER COMMITMENTS		
Operating leases ²	59,709	65,380
Other commitments ³	3,205	-
Total other commitments	62,914	65,380
Commitments receivable	(5,986)	(6,110)
Net Commitments	59,864	62,667
BY MATURITY		
All net commitments		
One year or less	4,299	4,114
From one to five years	3,382	3,191
Over five years	52,183	55,362
Operating lease		
One year or less	680	997
From one to five years	2,722	3,082
Over five years	50,879	55,362

NB: Commitments are GST inclusive where relevant

¹ Outstanding contractual payments for buildings and infrastructure under construction

² Operating leases included are effectively non-cancellable

³ Other commitments comprise general consultancy services and utilities

Nature of Leases	General description of leasing arrangements
Leases for Office accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the initial periods of office accommodation leases are still current there are no options to renew leases are increased with CPI
Agreements for the provision of motor vehicles - senior executive officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no contingent rentals exist there are no renewal or purchase options available to the Office
Leases for office equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no contingent rentals exist there is an option to renew for 90 days
Leases for rent of National Parks from Traditional Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepayment of annual rent terms of leases vary up to a maximum of 99 years

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
SCHEDULE OF CONTINGENCIES
as at 30 June 2003

	NOTES	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Contingent liabilities			
Claims for damages/costs ¹	14	11,010	11,010
Contingent Assets			
Claims for damages/costs	14	-	-
Net contingent liabilities		<u>11,010</u>	<u>11,010</u>

¹ The amount represents an estimate of the Director of National Parks liability claim for compensation of loss.

The DNP is seeking advice on exposure to a possible Fringe Benefit Tax liability relating to housing utilities from a number of sources including the Australian Taxation Office. It is not possible to reliably estimate the amount of any possible liability at this point in time.

Details of each class of contingent liabilities and assets, including those not disclosed above because they cannot be quantified or are considered remote, are shown in Note: 14 Contingent Liabilities and Assets.

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2002

Note	Description
1	Summary of Significant Accounting Policies
2	Economic Dependency
3	Events Occuring After Reporting Date
4	Operating Revenues
5	Operating Expenses
6	Borrowing Cost Expense
7	Financial Assets
8	Non-Financial Assets
9	Interest Bearing Liabilities
10	Provisions
11	Payables
12	Equity
13	Cash Flow Reconciliation
14	Contingent Liabilities and Assets
15	Directors Remuneration
16	Related Party Disclosures
17	Remuneration of Officers
18	Remuneration of Auditors
19	Average Staffing Levels
20	Financial Instruments
21	Reporting Of Outcomes

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are required by clause 1(b) of Schedule 1 to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* and are a general purpose financial report.

The statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- Finance Minister's Orders (being the Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Financial Statements for reporting periods ending on or after 30 June 2003) Orders);
- Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board; and
- Consensus Views of the Urgent Issues Group.

The Director of National Parks Statements of Financial Performance and Financial Position have been prepared on an accrual basis and are in accordance with historical cost convention, except for certain assets, which, as noted, are at valuation. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

Assets and liabilities are recognised in Director of National Parks Statements of Financial Position when and only when it is probable that future economic benefits will flow and the amounts of the assets or liabilities can be reliably measured. Assets and liabilities arising under agreements equally proportionately unperformed are however not recognised unless required by an accounting standard. Liabilities and assets that are unrecognised are reported in the Schedule of Commitments and the Schedule of Contingencies.

Revenues and expenses are recognised in the Director of National Parks Statements of Financial Performance when and only when the flow or consumption or loss of economic benefits has occurred and can be reliably measured.

1.2 Changes in Accounting Policy

The accounting policies used in the preparation of these financial statements are consistent with those used in 2001-02, except in respect of.

- * measurement of certain employee benefits at nominal amounts (refer to Note 1.5);
- * the initial revaluation of property plant and equipment on a fair value basis (refer Note 1.11); and
- * the imposition of an impairment test for non-current assets carried at cost (refer Note 1.11 and 1.13).

1.3 Revenue

The revenues described in this Note are revenues relating to the core operating activities of the Director of National Parks.

Revenue from the sale of tickets, permits and goods are recognised upon the delivery of goods to the customers.

Refunds for ticket sales are accounted for when they occur. An estimate for these refunds is not provided for.

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Revenue from disposal of non-current assets is recognised when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

Revenues from Government - Output Appropriations

The full amount of the appropriation for departmental outputs for the year is recognised as revenue.

Resources Received Free of Charge

Services received free of charge are recognised as revenue when and only when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense.

Contributions of assets at no cost of acquisition or for nominal consideration are recognised at their fair value when the asset qualifies for recognition.

The Department of the Environment and Heritage provides Corporate services under a Service Level Agreement to the Director of National Parks.

1.4 Transactions by the Government as Owner

Capital Use Charge

A Capital Use Charge is imposed by the Government on the net assets of the Director of National Parks. The Charge is accounted for as a dividend to Government.

In accordance with the recommendations of a review of Budget Estimates and Framework, the Government has decided that the Charge will not operate after 30 June 2003. Therefore, the amount of the charge payable in respect of 2003 is the amount appropriated (2002: 11% of adjusted net assets).

1.5 Employee Benefits

(a) Benefits

Liabilities for services rendered by employees are recognised at the reporting date to the extent that they have not been settled.

Liabilities for wages and salaries (including non-monetary benefits), annual leave, sick leave are measured at their nominal amounts. Other employee benefits expected to be settled within 12 months of their reporting date are also to be measured at their nominal amounts.

The nominal amount is calculated with regard to the rates expected to be paid on settlement of the liability. This is a change in accounting policy from last year required by initial application of a new Accounting Standard AASB 1028 from 1 July 2002. The Director of National Parks certified agreement raised pay rates on 1 August 2003, the financial effect of this change is not material.

All other employee benefit liabilities are measured as the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

(b) Leave

The liability for employee entitlements includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and the average sick leave taken in future years by employees of the Director of National Parks is estimated to be less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration, including the Director of National Parks employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

Employer Productivity Superannuation Contributions total was \$310,637.86 (302,625 in 2001-02).

The liability for long service leave has been determined as per AASB 1028(5.2).

(c) Separation and Redundancy

Provision is made for separation and redundancy benefit payments. The Director of National Parks has developed a detailed formal plan for the terminations and has informed those employees affected that it will carry out the terminations.

(d) Superannuation

Employees of the Director of National Parks are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme and the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme. The liability for their superannuation benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Commonwealth and is settled by the Commonwealth in due course.

Director of National Parks makes employer contributions to the Commonwealth at rates determined by the actuary to be sufficient to meet the cost to the Commonwealth of the Superannuation entitlements of the Director National Parks employees.

The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June 2003 represents outstanding contributions for the final fortnight of the year.

1.6 Leases

A distinction is made between finance leases, which effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to ownership of leased non-current assets, and operating leases, under which the lessor effectively retains substantially all such risks and benefits.

Where a non-current asset is acquired by means of a finance lease, the asset is capitalised at the present value of minimum lease payments at the inception of the lease and a liability recognised for the same amount. Leased assets are amortised over the period of the lease. Lease payments are allocated between the principal component and the interest expense.

Operating lease payments are expensed on a basis which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets. The net present value of future net outlays in respect of surplus space under non-cancellable lease agreements is expensed in the period in which the space becomes surplus. The majority of operating lease payments relate to arrangements with traditional owners over Kakadu, Uluru Kata-Tjuta and Booderee National Parks.

1.7 Borrowing Costs

All borrowing costs are expensed as incurred except to the extent that they are directly attributable to qualifying assets, in which case they are capitalised. The amount capitalised in a reporting period does not exceed the amounts of costs incurred in that period.

1.8 Cash

Cash means notes and coins held and any deposits held at call with a bank or financial institution.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1.9 Financial Instruments

Accounting policies for financial instruments are stated at Note 20.

1.10 Acquisition of Assets

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and revenues at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor entity's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

1.11 Property (Land, Buildings and Infrastructure), Plant and Equipment

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of property, plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the Statement of Financial Position, except for purchases costing less than \$2,000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

Revaluations

Land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment are carried at valuation. Revaluations undertaken up to 30 June 2002 were done on a deprival basis. The Mount Pitt Road (at Norfolk Island) revaluation of 2001-02 was corrected in 2002-03; there have been no revaluations since that date. A full revaluation will take place in 2005 in line with the 3 year revaluation policy. This change in accounting policy is required by Australian Accounting Standards AASB 1041 *Revaluation of Non-Current Assets*.

Fair and deprival values for each class of assets are determined as shown below:

Assets Class	Fair Value Measured at:	Deprival Value Measure at:
Land	Market selling price	Market selling price
Building	Market selling price	Depreciated replacement cost
Leasehold Improvements	Depreciated replacement cost	Depreciated replacement cost
Plant & Equipment	Market selling price	Depreciated replacement cost

Under both deprival and fair value, assets which are surplus to requirement are measured at their net realisable value. At 30 June 2003, Director of National Parks held no surplus assets (30 June 2002 = \$0).

The financial effect for 2002-03 of this change in policy relates to those assets to be recognised at their fair value at 30 June 2003. The financial effect of the change is given by the difference between the carrying amount at 30 June 2003 of these assets and their fair values as at 1 July 2002. There is no financial effect relating to the change to fair value in 2003.

Frequency

All classes of assets are revalued together on a 3 year cycle. The last revaluation was conducted in 2002. The next revaluation is scheduled for 2005.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Conduct

All valuations are conducted by an independent qualified valuer.

Recoverable Amount Test

From 1 July 2002, Schedule 1 no longer requires the application of the recoverable amount test in AAS 10 *Recoverable Amount of Non-Current Assets* to the assets of authorities when the primary purpose of the asset is not the generation of net cash inflows.

No property, plant & equipment assets have been written to recoverable amount as per AAS10. Accordingly the change in policy has had no financial effect.

Depreciation and Amortisation

Depreciable property plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the Director of National Parks using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation. Leasehold improvements are amortised on a straight-line basis over the lesser of the estimated useful life of the improvements or the unexpired period of the lease.

Depreciation/amortisation rates (useful lives) and methods are reviewed at each balance date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate. Residual values are re-estimated for a change in prices only when assets are revalued.

Depreciation and amortisation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the following useful lives:

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
Buildings on freehold land	25 years	25 years
Leasehold Improvements	10-25 years	10-25 years
Plant and equipment	3 to 10 years	3 to 10 years

The aggregate amount of depreciation allocated for each class of asset during the reporting period is disclosed in Note 5C.

1.12 Intangibles

The Director National Parks intangibles comprise internally-developed software for internal use. The asset is carried at cost.

From 1 July 2002, Schedule 1 no longer requires the application of the recoverable amount test in Australian Standard AAS 10 *Recoverable Amount of Non-Current Assets* to the assets of authorities when the primary purpose of the asset is not the generation of the net cash inflows.

However Schedule 1 now requires such assets, if carried on the cost basis, to be assessed for indications of impairment. The carrying amount of impaired assets must be written down to the higher of its net market selling price or depreciated replacement cost.

All software assets were assessed for impairment as at 1 July 2002. None were found to be impaired.

Software is amortised on a straight-line basis over their anticipated useful lives.

Useful lives are:

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

* Internally developed software	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
	5 years	N/a

1.13 Taxation

The Director of National Parks is exempt from all forms of taxation except fringe benefits tax and the goods and services tax (GST).

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of GST:

- * except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian taxation Office; and
- * except for receivables and payables.

1.14 Foreign Currency

Transactions denominated in a foreign currency are converted at the exchange rate at the date of the transaction. Foreign currency receivables and payables are translated at the exchange rates current as at balance date. Associated currency gains or losses are not material.

1.15 Insurance

The Director of National Parks has insured for risks through the Government's insurable risk managed fund, called 'Comcover'. Workers compensation is insured through Comcare Australia.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 2 Economic Dependency

The Director of National Parks was established by the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and is controlled by the Director of National Parks.

The Director of National Parks is dependent on appropriations from the Parliament of the Commonwealth received via the Department of the Environment and Heritage for its continued existence and ability to carry out its normal activities.

NOTE 3 Events Occuring After Reporting Date

There were no subsequent events occurring after reporting date

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 4	Operating Revenues	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<u>Note 4A - Revenues from Government Agencies</u>			
	Revenues from Government Agencies	45,916	42,973
	Resources received free of charge	3,711	2,578
	Total revenues from government	49,627	45,551
<u>Note 4B - Sales of Goods and Services</u>			
	Goods	65	50
	Services	9,386	10,135
	Total sales of goods and services	9,451	10,185
	Provision of goods to:		
	External entities	65	50
	Total sales of goods	65	50
	Rendering of services to:		
	Related entities	2,458	618
	External entities	6,928	9,567
	Total rendering of services	9,386	10,185
	Costs of sales of Goods	65	50
<u>Note 4C - Interest Revenue</u>			
	Total interest revenue	974	1,042
<u>Note 4D - Net Gain from Sales of Assets</u>			
	Land & Buildings		
	Write-offs	(148)	-
	Net gain / (loss) from disposal of land & buildings	(148)	-
	Infrastructure, plant & equipment		
	Proceeds from disposal	346	766
	Other Adjustments	(73)	-
	Net book value of assets disposed	(192)	(356)
	Write-offs	(315)	(55)
	Net gain / (loss) from disposal of infrastructure, plant & equipment	(234)	355
	Total proceeds from disposals	273	766
	Total value of assets disposed	(192)	(356)
	Write-offs	(463)	(55)
	Total net gain / (loss) from disposal of assets	(382)	355
<u>Note 4E - Assets Recognised for First Time</u>			
	Total assets recognised for First Time	-	5,223
<u>Note 4F - Other Revenue</u>			
	Total other revenue	2,622	1,616

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 5	Operating Expenses	2003	2002
		\$'000	\$'000
Note 5A - Employee Expenses			
	Wages & Salaries	12,482	11,452
	Superannuation	2,110	2,312
	Leave & other entitlements	2,018	1,285
	Separation and redundancy	322	689
	Other employee benefits	3,650	2,858
	Total employee benefits expenses	20,582	18,595
	Total employee expenses	20,582	18,595
Note 5B - Suppliers Expenses			
	Goods from external entities	16,399	16,733
	Services from related entities	2,714	2,578
	Services from external entities	1,502	2,445
	Operating lease rentals #	3,850	3,944
	Total supplier expenses	24,465	25,700
# These comprise minimum lease payments only.			
Note 5C - Depreciation and Amortisation			
	Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	8,765	7,549
	Amortisation of leased assets	168	357
	Total depreciation and amortisation	8,933	7,906
The aggregate amounts of depreciation or amortisation expensed during the reporting year for each class of depreciable asset are as follows:			
	Buildings on freehold land	1,894	2,136
	Intangibles	3	1
	Plant and Equipment	7,036	5,769
	Total depreciation and amortisation	8,933	7,906
Note 5D - Write down of Assets			
	Receivables	(8)	1
	Inventories	-	116
	Infrastructure, plant and equipment - write-off on disposal	463	55
	Total write-down of assets	455	172
NOTE 6	Borrowing Costs Expense		
	Total borrowing costs expense	23	46

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
NOTE 7 Financial Assets		
<u>Note 7A - Receivables</u>		
Goods and services	581	477
Less: provision for doubtful debts	(14)	(22)
	<u>567</u>	<u>455</u>
GST receivable	636	399
Other receivables	97	61
Total receivables (net)	<u><u>1,300</u></u>	<u><u>915</u></u>
All receivable are current assets		
Receivables(Gross) are aged as follows:		
Not overdue	<u>1,236</u>	<u>720</u>
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	49	202
30 to 60 days	2	4
60 to 90 days	1	-
More than 90 days	<u>26</u>	<u>11</u>
	<u>78</u>	<u>217</u>
Total receivables (gross)	<u><u>1,314</u></u>	<u><u>937</u></u>
The provision for doubtful debts is aged as follows:		
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	-	7
30 to 60 days	-	4
60 to 90 days	-	-
More than 90 days	<u>14</u>	<u>11</u>
Total provision for doubtful debts	<u><u>14</u></u>	<u><u>22</u></u>
 <u>NOTE 7B - Investments</u>		
Cash deposit account	<u>13,848</u>	<u>11,700</u>
Total Investments	<u><u>13,848</u></u>	<u><u>11,700</u></u>
Investments are categorised as follows:		
Current	<u>13,848</u>	<u>11,700</u>
Total Investments	<u><u>13,848</u></u>	<u><u>11,700</u></u>

NOTE 8 Non-Financial Assets

	2003	2002
<u>NOTE 8A - Land and Buildings</u>	<u>\$'000</u>	<u>\$'000</u>
Land		
Land - at 30 June 2002 valuation	8,197	8,345
Total land	<u>8,197</u>	<u>8,345</u>
Buildings - at cost	3,213	672
Accumulated depreciation	(187)	(102)
	<u>3,026</u>	<u>570</u>
Add: work in progress at cost	2,907	785
Buildings - at 30 June 2002 valuation (deprival)	42,221	42,662
Accumulated depreciation	(1,809)	
	<u>40,412</u>	<u>42,662</u>
Total buildings	<u>46,345</u>	<u>44,017</u>
Total Land and Buildings (non-current)	<u>54,542</u>	<u>52,362</u>

NOTE 8B - Infrastructure, Plant & Equipment

Infrastructure, plant and equipment - at cost	10,006	3,713
Accumulated depreciation	(1,634)	(603)
	<u>8,372</u>	<u>3,110</u>

Infrastructure, plant & equipment - at 30 June 2002 valuation (deprival)	37,393	39,946
Accumulated depreciation	(5,544)	
	<u>31,849</u>	<u>39,946</u>
Plant and equipment - WIP	6,043	1,437
Equipment under finance lease (deprival)	1,486	1,479
Less: accumulated amortisation	(168)	0
	<u>1,318</u>	<u>1,479</u>
Total Infrastructure, plant and equipment (non-current)	<u>47,582</u>	<u>45,972</u>

The revaluations were in accordance with the revaluation policy stated at Note 1 and were completed by an independent valuer, the Australian Valuation Office (AVO).

NOTE 8C - Intangibles

Computer software internally developed - in progress (non-current)	13	5
Accumulated amortisation	(3)	(1)
Total intangibles	<u>10</u>	<u>4</u>

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 8D - Analysis of Property, Plant, Equipment and Intangibles

Table A - Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment and intangibles

	Land	Buildings	Infrast. Plant and Equipment	Intangibles	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Gross book value as at 1 July 2002	8,345	44,119	46,575	5	99,044
Accumulated depreciation / amortisation	-	(102)	(603)	(1)	(706)
Net Book Value	8,345	44,017	45,972	4	98,338
Additions					
by purchase	-	3,254	7,212	7	10,473
Net revaluation increment / decrement	-	-	1,961	-	1,961
Depreciation / amortisation expense	-	(1,895)	(7,037)	(1)	(8,933)
Write-downs	(148)	(28)	(343)	-	(519)
Disposals					
Other disposals			(182)		(182)
Assets transferred in/(out) - Jabiru & Cocos Island houses	-	997	-	-	997
As at 30 June 2003					
Gross Book Value	8,197	48,342	55,223	12	111,774
Accumulated depreciation / amortisation	-	(1,997)	(7,640)	(2)	(9,639)
Net book value	8,197	46,345	47,583	10	102,135

Table B - Assets at valuation as at 30 June 2003

	Land	Buildings	Infrast. Plant and Equipment	Intangibles	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 30 June 2003					
Gross value	8,197	42,221	38,878	-	89,296
Accumulated depreciation/ amortisation	-	(1,809)	(5,711)	-	(7,520)
Net book value	8,197	40,412	33,167	-	81,776
As at 30 June 2002					
Gross value	8,345	42,662	39,946	-	90,953
Accumulated depreciation/ amortisation	-	-	-	-	-
Net book value	8,345	42,662	39,946	-	90,953

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Table C- Assets held under finance lease as at 30 June 2003

	Land	Buildings	Infrast. Plant and Equipment	Intangibles	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 30 June 2003					
Gross value	-	-	1,486	-	1,486
Accumulated depreciation/ amortisation	-	-	(168)	-	(168)
Net book value	-	-	1,318	-	1,318
As at 30 June 2002					
Gross value	-	-	1,479	-	1,479
Accumulated depreciation/ amortisation	n/a	-	-	-	-
Net book value	-	-	1,479	-	1,479

Table D - Assets under construction as at 30 June 2003

	Land	Buildings	Infrast. Plant and Equipment	Intangibles	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 30 June 2003					
Gross value	-	2,907	6,043	-	8,950
As at 30 June 2002					
Net book value	-	785	1,437	-	2,222

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
NOTE 8E - Other Non-Financial Assets		
Prepayments	303	301
Total other non-financial assets	303	301

NOTE 9 Interest Bearing Liabilities

NOTE 9A - Interest Bearing Liabilities

Finance lease commitments		
Payable:		
Within one year	203	197
In one to five years	-	163
Minimum lease payments	203	360
Deduct: future finance charges		(27)
Total lease liability	203	333

Lease liability is categorised as follows:

Current	203	176
Non-current	-	157
Total lease liability	203	333

NOTE 10 Provisions

Note 10A - Employee Provisions

Salaries and wages	435	378
Leave	4,178	3,908
Superannuation	475	493
Separation & redundancies	42	130
Aggregate employee entitlement liability	5,130	4,909

Employee provisions are categorised as follows:

Current	2,839	2,986
Non-current	2,291	1,923
Aggregate employee entitlement liability	5,130	4,909

NOTE 10B - Capital Use Charge Provision

Capital Use Charge	12,545	1,029
Balance owing 1 July 2002	1,029	1,029
Capital Use Charge provided for during the period	11,516	-
Capital Use Charge paid	-	-
Balance Owing 30 June 2003	12,545	1,029

The capital use charge provision is a current liability.

NOTE 10C - Other

Christmas Island make good	600	954
Other Provision is a non-current liability.		

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2003	2002
	\$'000	\$'000
NOTE 11 Payables		
<u>Note 11A - Supplier Payables</u>		
Trade creditors	4,933	3,615
Operating lease rentals	<u>766</u>	<u>552</u>
Total supplier payables	<u>5,699</u>	<u>4,167</u>

All suppliers payable are current

<u>Note 11B - Other Payables</u>		
Unearned Revenue	<u>323</u>	<u>260</u>
Total other payables	<u>323</u>	<u>260</u>

All other payables are current

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 12 Equity

NOTE 12A - Analysis of Equity

Item	Accumulated results		Asset revaluation reserve		Contributed Equity		TOTAL EQUITY	
	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Opening Balance 1 July	70,196	68,777	24,737	14,381	9,755	9,755	104,688	92,913
Net Surplus	8,297	11,609	-	-	-	-	8,297	11,609
Net revaluation increments	-	-	1,961	10,355	-	-	1,961	10,355
Transactions with owner:								
Capital Use Charge (CUC)	(11,516)	(10,190)	-	-	-	-	(11,516)	(10,190)
Closing balance as at 30 June	66,977	70,196	26,698	24,736	9,755	9,755	103,430	104,687
Total equity attributable to the Commonwealth	66,977	70,196	26,698	24,736	9,755	9,755	103,430	104,687

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
NOTE 13 Cash Flow Reconciliation		
<u>NOTE 13A - Reconciliation of Operating Surplus to Net Cash from Operating Activities:</u>		
Reconciliation of operating surplus to net cash from operating activities		
Operating Surplus before extraordinary items	8,297	11,609
Non-cash items		
Depreciation and amortisation	8,933	7,906
Take up of Assets for first time	-	(5,223)
Assets received free of charge	(997)	-
Write down of assets	463	172
(Gain) or Loss on disposal of non-current assets	(81)	(410)
Changes in Assets and Liabilities		
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	-	233
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	(337)	(358)
(Increase)/decrease in other financial assets	(2)	2
Increase/(decrease) in unearned revenue	63	-
Increase/(decrease) in employee liabilities	221	146
Increase/(decrease) in Christmas Island Provision	(355)	-
Increase/(decrease) in supplier liabilities	1,533	2,966
Increase/(decrease) in other liabilities	(130)	(201)
Net cash from / (used by) operating activities	17,608	16,842

NOTE 13B - Reconciliation of Cash

Cash Balance Comprises:		
Cash at bank	10,308	5,043
Cash on hand	37	43
Total cash	10,345	5,086
Investment in cash deposit account	13,848	11,700
Balance of cash as at 30 June 2003 shown in the Statement of Cash Flows	24,193	16,786

NOTE 14 Contingent Liabilities and Assets

Quantifiable Contingencies		
Contingent Liabilities		
Claims for damages/costs	11,010	11,010
Total contingent liabilities		
Contingent assets		
Legal claims	-	-
Net contingent liabilities	11,010	11,010

The amount represents an estimate of the Director of National Parks liability claim for compensation of loss.

Unquantifiable Contingencies

At 30 June 2003, the Director of National Parks has a number of outstanding legal claims for which it has denied liability and is defending the claims. It is not possible to estimate the amounts of any eventual payments which may be required in relation to these claims.

The DNP is seeking advice on exposure to a possible Fringe Benefit Tax liability relating to housing utilities from a number of sources including the Australian Taxation Office. It is not possible to reliably estimate the amount of any possible liability at this point in time.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 15 Director Remuneration

The number of directors of the Director of National Parks included in these figures are shown below in the relevant remuneration bands:

	2003	2002
\$200,000 to \$209,999	1	1
Total number of directors of Director of National Parks	1	1
	\$	\$
Aggregate amount of superannuation payments in connection with retirement of directors	-	-
Other remuneration received or due and receivable by directors of the authority	208,098	200,613
Total remuneration received or due and receivable by the Director of National Parks:	208,098	200,613

NOTE 16 Related Party Disclosures

Director of National Parks

The Director of the National Parks during the year was Mr P Cochrane.

The aggregate remuneration of the Director is disclosed in Note 15.

Loans to Director and Director related entities

There were no loans made to either the Director or entities related to the Director during 2002-03.

Other Transactions with Director or Director related entities

There were no other transactions with either the Director or entities related to the Director during 2002-03.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 17 Remuneration of Officers

The number of officers who received or were due to receive total remuneration of \$100,000 or more:

	2003	2002
\$130,000 - \$139,999	1	-
\$140,000 - \$149,999	-	1
\$170,000 - \$179,999	1	-
	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>

	2003	2002
	\$	\$
The aggregate amount of total remuneration of officers shown above	<u>311,049</u>	<u>141,978</u>

There was no separation or redundancy / termination benefit payments during the year to officers shown above.

The officer remuneration includes all officers concerned with or taking part in the management of the National Parks during 2002-03 except the Director of National Parks. Details in relation to the Director of National Parks have been incorporated into Note 15:-- *Director Remuneration*.

NOTE 18 Remuneration of Auditors

	2003	2002
	\$	\$
Remuneration to the Auditor-General for auditing the financial statements for the reporting period.	<u>55,000</u>	<u>52,000</u>

No other services were provided by the Auditor-General during the reporting period.

NOTE 19 Average Staffing Levels

	2003	2002
	Number	Number
The average staffing levels for the Director of National Parks during the year were:	<u>292</u>	<u>283</u>

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 20 Financial Instruments

Note 20A - Terms, conditions and accounting policies

FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT	Notes	Accounting Policies and Methods (including recognition criteria and measurement basis)	Nature of underlying instrument (including significant terms & conditions affecting the amount, timing and certainty of cash flows)
<i>Financial Assets</i>		Financial assets are recognised when control over future economic benefits is established and the amount of the benefit can be reliably measured.	
Cash	13A	Deposits are recognised at their nominal amounts. Interest is credited to revenue as it accrues.	Temporarily surplus funds, mainly from monthly drawdowns of appropriation, are placed on deposit at call with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. Interest is earned on a daily balance at the prevailing daily rate for money on call and is paid at month end.
Receivables for goods and services	7A	Receivables are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any provision for bad and doubtful debts. Provisions are made when collection of the debt is judged to be less rather than more likely.	Credit terms are net 30 days (2002 - 30 days).
Accrued Interest	7A	Interest is accrued as it is earned.	The interest rates range from 4.4% to 4.72% And the frequency of payments range from monthly to quarterly.
Accrued Revenue	7A	Receivables are recognised at their nominal amounts due less any provision for bad and doubtful debts. Collectability of debts is reviewed at balance date. Provision is made when collection of the debt is judged to be less rather than more likely.	Accrued revenue for goods and services as for receivables. Accrued revenue for interest as for cash.
<i>Financial Liabilities</i>		Financial liabilities are recognised when a present obligation to another party is entered into and the amount of the liability can be reliably measured.	
Finance Leases Liabilities	9A	Liabilities are recognised at the present value of the minimum lease payments at the beginning of the lease. The discount rates used are estimates of the interest rates implicit in the leases.	At reporting date the Director of National parks had one finance lease with a maximum term of 5 years. The interest rate implicit in the lease is 18% (2001-02: 18%).
Capital Use Charge payable	10B	The amount payable as at 30 June 2003 is \$12.545m. It is expected that this liability will be paid within 30 days of the beginning of the next financial year.	The charge is a return on capital required under the Budget Framework in place since 1 July 1999. In prior years, the Charge has been calculated as a percentage of adjusted net assets. (2002: 11%) The charge is being discontinued after 30 June 2003.
Trade creditors	11A	Creditors and accruals are recognised at their nominal amount, being the amounts at which the liabilities will be settled. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods and services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).	Settlement is net 30 days or less.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 20B - Interest Rate Risk

Financial Instrument	Notes	Floating Interest Rate		Fixed Interest Rate Maturing in						Non-Interest Bearing		Total		Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate	
				1 year or less		1 to 5 years		> 5 years							
		2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Financial Assets															
Cash at Bank	13B	10,308	5,043	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,308	5,043	3.6	4.6
Cash on Hand	13B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	43	37	43	n/a	n/a
Cash deposit account	13B	13,848	-	-	11,700	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,848	11,700	4.6	4.4
Receivables for goods & services	7A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	567	455	567	455	n/a	n/a
GST receivable	7A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	636	399	636	399	n/a	n/a
Other receivables	7A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	97	61	97	61	n/a	n/a
Total		24,156	5,043	-	11,700	-	-	-	-	1,337	958	25,493	17,701		
Total Assets												127,930	116,340		

Financial Instrument	Notes	Floating Interest Rate		Fixed Interest Rate Maturing in						Non-Interest Bearing		Total		Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate	
				1 year or less		1 to 2 years		2 to > 5 years							
		2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Financial Liabilities															
Finance Leases	9A	-	-	203	178	-	157	-	-	-	-	203	333	18%	18%
Capital Use Charge	10B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12,545	1,029	12,545	1,029	n/a	n/a
Trade Creditors and accruals	11A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,699	5,121	5,699	5,121	n/a	n/a
Other payables	11B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	323	260	323	260	n/a	n/a
Total		-	-	203	178	-	157	-	-	18,567	6,410	18,770	6,743		
Total Liabilities												24,500	11,652		

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 20C - Net Fair Values of Financial Assets and Liabilities

		<u>2003</u>		<u>2002</u>	
		Total Carrying Amount	Aggregate Net Fair Value	Total Carrying Amount	Aggregate Net Fair Value
	Note	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Financial Assets					
Cash at Bank and on hand	13B	10,345	10,345	5,086	5,086
Cash deposit account	13B	13,848	13,848	11,700	11,700
Receivables for services	7A	1,300	1,300	915	915
Total financial assets		25,493	25,493	17,701	17,701
Financial Liabilities					
Trade Creditors and accruals	11A	5,699	5,699	5,121	5,121
Payables - Other	11B	323	323	260	260
Capital use charge	10B	12,545	12,545	1,029	1,029
Finance Leases	9A	203	203	333	333
Total Financial Liabilities		18,770	18,770	6,743	6,743

Financial Assets

The net fair values of the cash and non-interest-bearing monetary financial assets approximate their carrying amounts.

Financial Liabilities

The net fair value of the finance lease is based on the discounted cash flows using an implicit interest rate of 8.3%.

The net fair values for trade creditors are approximated by their carrying amounts.

Note 20D - Credit Risk Exposure

The Director of National Park's maximum exposures to credit risk at reporting date in relation to each class of recognised financial assets is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the Statement of Financial Position.

The Director of National Park's has no significant exposures to any concentrations of credit risk.

All figures for credit risk referred to do not take into account the value of any collateral or other security.

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PARKS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 21 Reporting of Outcomes

Note 21A - Outcomes of the Director of National Parks

The Director of National Parks is structured to meet one outcome.

The Director of National Parks contributes to the following objective of the Department of the Environment and Heritage:

Advise on and implement policies and programs for the protection and conservation of the environment while ensuring its use is ecologically sustainable.

The Director of National Parks is structured to contribute to the following outputs:

Outcome 1

The environment, especially those aspects that are matters of national environmental significance, is protected and conserved.

Output

The Director of National Parks only has one output.

Conservation and appreciation of Commonwealth reserves.

Note 21B - Net Cost of Outcome Delivery

	Outcome 1		Total	
	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Administered Expenses	-	-	-	-
Departmental Expenses	41,330	44,600	41,330	44,600
Total expenses	41,330	44,600	41,330	44,600
<i>Costs recovered from provision of goods and services to the non-government sector</i>				
Administered	-	-	-	-
Departmental	6,993	9,617	6,993	9,617
Total costs recovered	6,993	9,617	6,993	9,617
<i>Other external revenues</i>				
Departmental				
- Sales of goods and services - to related entities	2,458	618	2,458	618
- Interest	974	1,042	974	1,042
- Revenue from Government agencies	45,916	42,973	45,916	42,973
- Revenue from sale of assets	273	766	273	766
- Assets recognised for the first time	-	5,223	-	5,223
- Other	2,622	1,616	2,622	1,616
Total Departmental	52,242	52,238	52,242	52,238
Total Other external revenues	52,242	52,238	52,242	52,238
Net cost / (contribution) of outcome	(17,905)	(17,255)	(17,905)	(17,255)

The net costs shown include intra-government costs that would be eliminated in calculating the actual Budget outcome.

The Capital Use Charge is not included in any of the Net cost / (contribution) of outcomes as it is not an operating expense.

Note 21C - Major Departmental Revenue and Expenses by Output Groups and Outputs

Major Departmental Revenue & Expenses by Outcome	Outcome 1		Total	
	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Operating Expenses				
Employees	20,582	18,594	20,582	18,594
Suppliers	24,465	25,700	24,465	25,700
Depreciation	8,933	7,906	8,933	7,906
Borrowing cost expense	23	46	23	46
Write-down of assets	455	172	455	172
Value of assets sold	192	356	192	356
Total Operating Expenses	54,650	52,774	54,650	52,774
Funded by:				
Operating Revenues				
Revenues from Government agencies	49,627	45,551	49,627	45,551
Sale of goods and services	9,451	10,185	9,451	10,185
Interest	974	1,042	974	1,042
Revenue from sale of assets	273	766	273	766
Assets recognised for the first time	-	5,223	-	5,223
Other non-taxation revenues	2,622	1,616	2,622	1,616
Total Operating Revenues	62,947	64,383	62,947	64,383

The Director National parks outcomes and outputs are described at Note 21A.

The net costs shown include intra-government costs that would be eliminated in calculating the actual Budget outcome.

The Capital Use Charge is not included in any of the Net cost / (contribution) of outcomes as it is not an operating expense.

>> APPENDIX 1: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION STATEMENT

This statement is correct to 30 June 2003 and replaces the statement under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* published in the 2001–02 Annual Report of the Director of National Parks.

Organisation, functions and powers

The Director of National Parks and Wildlife was established as a corporation by the *National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975*, which was replaced on 16 July 2000 by the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The new Act continues the corporation in existence, as the Director of National Parks.

The functions of the Director prescribed by the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act are detailed below. The Director is responsible to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, and the Act requires the Director to perform functions and exercise powers in accordance with any directions given by the Minister, unless the Act provides otherwise.

The Director is assisted in the performance of the Director's functions by staff of the Parks Division of the Department of the Environment and Heritage (Parks Australia), being employees of the Department assigned to duties assisting the Director; and, up until 30 June 2003, by staff of the Marine and Water Division of the Department, to whom the Director delegated functions and powers under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act to manage Commonwealth reserves in offshore areas.

Functions of the Director prescribed by the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act

Functions are:

- to administer, manage and control Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones;
- to protect, conserve and manage biodiversity and heritage in Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones;
- to cooperate with any country in matters relating to the establishment and management of national parks and nature reserves in that country;
- to provide, and assist in the provision of, training in the knowledge and skills relevant to the establishment and management of national parks and nature reserves;
- to carry out alone or in cooperation with other institutions and persons, and to arrange for any other institution or person to carry out, research and investigations relevant to the establishment and management of Commonwealth reserves;
- to make recommendations to the Minister in relation to the establishment and management of Commonwealth reserves;
- to administer the Australian National Parks Fund;
- any other functions conferred on the Director under any other Act; and
- to do anything incidental or conducive to the performance of any of the functions mentioned above.

Arrangements for outside participation in decisions, policy and administration

Public participation in the management of Commonwealth reserves under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act is facilitated through consultative mechanisms to involve the community and user groups in the development of policy, planning and management.

The Act requires public consultation prior to the declaration of a Commonwealth reserve and in the preparation of management plans for reserves that have been established under the Act. Public comments must be invited by the Director of National Parks on: a proposal to declare a Commonwealth reserve; a proposal to prepare a draft of a management plan for a Commonwealth reserve; and, on a draft management plan for a reserve, both before a plan is prepared and after its preparation, with at least one month allowed on each occasion.

Public comments are sought through notices in the Commonwealth Government Gazette and newspaper advertisements. When a management plan has been made it must be tabled in Parliament and is subject to disallowance by either House on a notice of motion brought within 15 sitting days of tabling.

For Commonwealth reserves on Aboriginal-owned land – Kakadu, Uluru–Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks – the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act provides for both consultation with and involvement of representatives of the Aboriginal landowners in relation to management of the reserve.

The Director of National Parks must consult and have regard to the views of the chairperson of the relevant land council in relation to the performance of the Director's functions and the exercise of the Director's powers in relation to the reserve. The chairperson must be specifically invited to comment on the preparation of management plans.

Kakadu, Uluru–Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks are managed jointly by the Director and the traditional Aboriginal owners in accordance with the Act. All three parks have a board of management established under the Act, with a majority of members being Aboriginals nominated by the traditional Aboriginal owners of land in the park. The boards' membership also includes the Director and members representing special interest groups or with particular skills relevant to managing the park. The functions of a board of management for a Commonwealth reserve are: to make decisions relating to the management of the reserve that are consistent with the management plan for the reserve; and, in conjunction with the Director, to prepare management plans, monitor the management of the reserve and advise the Minister on future development of the reserve.

Additional consultation with traditional Aboriginal owners of Kakadu, Uluru–Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks takes place through cultural advisers, Aboriginal staff, community liaison officers, contact with Aboriginal organisations or through the establishment of special consultative committees.

Norfolk Island, Christmas Island and Pulu Keeling National Parks have non-statutory advisory or consultative bodies comprising community representatives and representatives of the Director.

Categories of documents

Categories of documents are: files relating to all aspects of the activities and functions of the Director; studies, reports and surveys; agenda papers and minutes of meetings; and procedures manuals.

Lists of available publications may be obtained by contacting the Community Information Unit on 1800 803 772.

Facilities for access

The access points at which members of the public may make enquiries on freedom of information, request freedom of information forms, submit formal freedom of information requests or inspect documents to which access has been granted are listed below. The access points are open during business hours and staff are available to assist with enquiries and inspection of documents. Areas are set aside to enable members of the public to inspect documents. Information about facilities for access by people with disabilities can be obtained from the Freedom of Information Officer.

Freedom of information procedures and initial contact points

Enquiries may be made in writing, by telephone or in person at the official access points. Formal freedom of information requests should be addressed to:

Freedom of Information Coordinator
Legal Section
Department of the Environment and Heritage
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601

Telephone (02) 6274 1578
Fax (02) 6274 1587
Email FOI_Contact_Officer@ea.gov.au

Special arrangements can be made in other states with the nearest regional office of the Australian Archives (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Townsville, Perth, Adelaide or Hobart).

If difficulty arises in identifying the document or in providing access in the manner requested, an officer will contact the applicant with a view to resolving the difficulty. In consultation with applicants, documents will be made available by mail to the address specified by the applicant, at the official access point or at the information access office located within the regional office of the Australian Archives nearest to the applicant's normal place of residence.

The authorised decision-maker under the Act who may refuse, defer or grant access is the relevant Assistant Secretary.

>> GLOSSARY

AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANBG	Australian National Botanic Gardens
ANARE	Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions
Bonn Convention	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CALM	Department of Conservation and Land Management (WA)
CPBR	Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
HIMI	Heard Island and McDonald Islands
IBRA	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
IMCRA	Interim Marine and Coastal Regionalisation for Australia
IUCN	World Conservation Union
MOU Box area	An area within Australian waters covered by a memorandum of understanding with Indonesia, that includes Ashmore Reef and Cartier Island and is open to traditional Indonesian fishers
PIRSA	Department of Primary Industries and Resources (SA)
Ramsar Convention	Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WBEL	Wreck Bay Enterprises Ltd
World Heritage Convention	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

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This annual report has been prepared in accordance with the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2002*.

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Our mission

To assist the Minister and the Department of the Environment and Heritage in the conservation and appreciation of Australia's biological diversity and associated cultural heritage, through leadership and cooperation in the management of the Commonwealth's protected areas.

