

## Indigenous Advisory Committee Bulletin No.10 Meeting 34

The Indigenous Advisory Committee held its 34th meeting on 22 and 23 February 2018 on Ngunnawal Country in Canberra.

### **Discussion with the Department's Executive and IAC key priorities**

The Committee met with members of the Department's Executive, Minister Frydenberg's Senior Adviser for Environment and Assistant Minister Price's Adviser to discuss key focus areas for the Committee in 2018, and alignment of those with the priorities of Ministers and the Department.

The Committee continues to work with the Department to improve its visibility of current and upcoming consultations, reviews, and program and policy development. The Committee spoke of the importance of consistency across all strategies, particularly in relation to messaging of Indigenous engagement.

The meeting agenda aligned broadly with the Committee's strategic plan themes and objectives allowing the Committee to track its progress across a range of policies and programs. Many issues cut across a number of themes.

### ***Theme one: Size and scale of the managed Indigenous estate in Australia.***

#### **Indigenous Protected Areas**

The Committee continued previous discussions on a range of options for the \$15 million funding for new Indigenous Protected Areas. Guidelines for the new Indigenous Protected Areas program are currently being developed. The Department of the Environment and Energy has been working with the Indigenous Advisory Committee and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to ensure the program delivers strong outcomes for the environment and Indigenous land managers.

#### **Closing the Gap**

The Committee discussed the Government's Closing the Gap Refresh and how it could capitalise on the critical role Indigenous peoples' connection to the environment plays in delivering economic, social, and cultural outcomes that all contribute to reduce Indigenous disadvantage.

### ***Theme two: Capacity of Indigenous land and sea management***

#### **Australia's Marine Parks**

The Committee discussed with the Department progress on Australia's marine parks. They discussed possible governance mechanisms for the management plans and asked the Department to consider Indigenous representation and/or interest in any governance structure across the marine park regions.

#### **Threatened Species Scientific Committee**

The Committee provided input to the Threatened Species Scientific Committee's conservation advice and recovery plan templates, and to consider to better cater to Indigenous engagement in species and ecological community conservation.

#### **Reef**

The Committee received a briefing on the work underway to provide increased support to better deliver on the traditional owner aspirations and commitments in the Reef 2050 Plan and agreed to engage with this work as it progresses. The commencement of this work was jointly announced by Ministers Frydenberg and Scullion via a media release on 25 January 2018.

## **Theme 3: Partnerships, advocacy and promotion**

### **Water, Commonwealth Environment Water Office**

The Committee met the newly appointed Commonwealth Environment Water Holder, Ms Jody Swirepik and discussed opportunities to consider Indigenous uses of water in relation to Commonwealth holdings.

### **National Environmental Science Program**

Prior to the meeting, the Committee joined a NESP workshop to explore options of what an Indigenous research collaboration might look like in the future.

### **Partnerships**

The Department of the Environment and Energy is committed to working more closely with private and non-government sectors to deliver environmental outcomes. The Committee discussed the Partnerships team's work in leading a project to co-design a partnerships signal, as a tool for government to open the conversation on cross-sector partnerships for environmental outcomes.

### **National Biodiversity Strategy**

The Department provided an update on the drafting of the updated National Biodiversity Strategy (Australia's Strategy for Nature 2018 – 2030). The Committee discussed the draft Strategy and suggested the Department note the need to include more detail around traditional knowledge given the remoteness of some areas in Australia, and to consider how traditional knowledge is referred to in the Strategy to ensure connection to country and its concept is captured.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/conservation/strategy/draft-revision>

### **Convention on Biological Diversity**

The Department, together with Ms Chrissy Grant, provided a briefing on the outcomes of the most recent Convention on Biological Diversity meeting, held in Montreal in December 2017. The Committee discussed the need for sufficient ongoing resourcing and support for succession planning for Indigenous interests and representation at key Convention meetings.

### **National Landcare Program update**

The Committee received an update on the roll-out of the next phase of the National Landcare Program, which commences in July 2018. The Committee will continue to advise on the best ways to ensure Indigenous priorities are incorporated in the program.

### **Threatened Species Commissioner**

The Committee met with recently appointed Threatened Species Commissioner, Dr Sally Box and discussed how to continue to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in helping to protect threatened species.

### **Carbon**

The Department and Committee discussed a draft guidance paper designed to explore the effect of native title on requirements for projects under the Emissions Reduction Fund.

**The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for the second half of 2018.**

## About the Committee

The Indigenous Advisory Committee is a statutory committee established in 2000 under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

All members of the Committee are Indigenous Australians and are ministerially appointed based on expertise in Indigenous land and sea management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and cultural heritage management. Members are not appointed to represent particular regions or organisations.

### Members:

- Mr Robert (Robbie) Dalton (Chair)
- Ms Teagan Goolmeer (Deputy Chair)
- Mr Ronald (Ricky) Archer
- Ms Cecilia (Cissy) Gore-Birch
- Dr Leah Talbot
- Mr Duane Fraser
- Ms Chrissy Grant
- Mr Wayne See Kee
- Dr Stephen van Leeuwen
- Ms Sandy Marty

Further information can be found at <http://www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/committees/iac.html>