



Australian Government  
Department of the Environment



Indigenous Advisory Committee

# Indigenous Advisory Committee Bulletin No.4

## Meeting 28 2-3 April 2014, Canberra, ACT

The Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC or Committee) held its 28th meeting in Canberra in April 2014. A range of issues relevant to the Committee were discussed with officers from the Department of the Environment. These included the Australian Government's Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan, National Parks and Commonwealth Marine Reserves, the Australian Government's deregulation agenda and the One Stop Shop for environmental approvals.

The IAC continues to provide advice to the Department on the development and delivery of the Australian Government's election commitments, including the Green Army programme, the National Landcare programme and the Reef 2050 Plan.

### Deregulation Agenda

The Department provided the IAC with an update on the Australian Government's deregulation agenda. Minister Hunt will be seeking the advice of the Committee to identify opportunities for regulatory reform that ensures the same or better environmental outcomes can be achieved.

The IAC expressed its strong support for maintaining and strengthening the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Heritage Protection (ATSIHP) Act 1984*, especially under the deregulation agenda. The IAC considers the ATSIHP Act to be the last resort for Indigenous people to protect their heritage, enabling the Minister for the Environment to consider a declaration to protect an area or object which is under threat.

### Heritage

The Department released the Australian Heritage Strategy for public consultation (<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/australian-heritage-strategy>). Consultation closes on 6 June 2014. The IAC will provide a formal submission as part of this process.

### National Parks

The Committee was given an update on the lease reviews currently being undertaken for Booderee, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks.

The IAC also discussed a proposal to hold a parallel event at the World Parks Congress from 12-19 November 2014 – bringing together Indigenous Traditional Owners, Indigenous Protected Area managers and senior government representatives. This forum would consider options and provide a forum to discuss securing greater conservation tenure for Indigenous landowners.

## **Commonwealth Marine Reserves**

The Commonwealth Marine Reserves Branch provided an update on the review of Commonwealth Marine Reserves, as part of this process five Bioregional Boards are being formed. The IAC agreed to provide advice on suitable Indigenous representatives on each Board for Ministerial consideration.

## **Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan**

The Committee was provided with an update on the implementation of the Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan, including a national recovery plan for marine turtles that will be seeking to create consistency with state and territory laws.

## **Reconciliation Action Plan**

The Committee noted that Department's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is currently being updated. The aim is to reinvigorate engagement and reconciliation across the Department, which is especially important since the movement of Indigenous environmental programmes to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Appropriate engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people needs to continue to occur effectively as part of the Department's policy development and design and implementation of its new and existing programmes.

## **Indigenous Water Advisory Committee**

The IAC noted the report on the final meeting of the Indigenous Water Advisory Committee (IWAC). The Chair of the IAC was an ex-officio member of the IWAC. The Committee noted the commitment from both the Hon. Greg Hunt MP, Minister for the Environment, and Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment, to continue to seek Indigenous specific advice on water matters from the IAC.

## **Dates for the next IAC meeting**

The date for the next IAC is yet to be confirmed, consultation is underway to hold the meeting to coincide with the World Parks Congress in Sydney from 12-19 November 2014.

## **Contact**

Should you require more information please contact the IAC secretariat on 02 6275 9099 or email [iac@environment.gov.au](mailto:iac@environment.gov.au)



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