

# Indigenous Advisory Committee Bulletin

## No.8 Meeting 32

**29 - 30 March 2017, Canberra, ACT**

The Indigenous Advisory Committee (the Committee) held its 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting on 29-30 March 2017 in Canberra. The meeting, chaired by Mr Robbie Dalton, focused on providing updates and progress on a number of new and continuing issues. These included the implementation of the Reef 2050 plan; the Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan; Indigenous heritage; the National Environmental Science Programme; the work of the Threatened Species Commissioner, the Emissions Reduction Fund and climate change policy and the review of the National Landcare Program.

The Department welcomed new committee members and formally acknowledged the intersessional work undertaken by committee members during the past year.

### **Meeting with Minister Frydenberg**

The Committee met with Minister Frydenberg and discussed the importance of Indigenous land management, particularly in regional and remote Australia. The Minister thanked the Committee for their time and noted the comprehensiveness of their agenda. The Minister welcomed input on how the Government could improve its programs and policies to benefit Indigenous Australians.

### **Heritage**

The Committee met with the Australian Heritage Council to discuss Indigenous heritage issues and the ongoing collaborative relationship between the two bodies. Discussion focused on the monitoring and preservation of important Indigenous heritage sites and issues around 'intangible' heritage.

The Department also provided an update on the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* reform process.

### **National Environmental Science Programme**

The Department provided an update on the National Environmental Science Programme (NESP), in particular Indigenous participation and engagement activities in the NESP. The Committee welcomed the incorporation of indigenous engagement as a foundation principle of the program, and offered its ongoing support for this effort. The Committee noted that it will be important to ensure that research outputs lead to improved capacity for Indigenous people and is fed back into the regions and communities.

### **Emissions Reduction Fund**

The Committee was presented with an update on the 2017 climate change review which includes consideration of the Emissions Reduction Fund. The Committee discussed how Indigenous Australians could participate in future policy design and continue to benefit from the scheme.

## **Threatened Species Commissioner**

The Threatened Species Commissioner, Mr Gregory Andrews, presented to the Committee on his role. The Committee are looking forward to greater engagement in this space and encouraged capacity building and early engagement with Indigenous Australians in threatened species policy and program design.

## **National Landcare Program update**

The Committee received an update on the National Landcare Program review, and discussed ways in which Indigenous participation could be maximised across the broad suite of Landcare programs. The Committee's input will be critical to the long term funding strategy under the program.

## **Indigenous Protected Areas and Indigenous Rangers**

The Committee met with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to discuss Indigenous Rangers and Indigenous Protected Areas, with a focus on future funding security and capacity building initiatives for these important programs. Indigenous management has a significant role in managing conservation values, protecting species, addressing threats from pests and weeds and in biosecurity and is therefore vital for the overall health and productivity of Australia.

## **Reef 2050 Plan**

The Committee noted the good work on the Reef 2050 Plan and strong Indigenous outcomes in that plan. An approach to coordinating the strategy to deliver Traditional Owners actions set out in the Reef 2050 Plan was discussed.

## **Dugong and Turtle Protection Plan**

The Committee was presented with the findings of an investigation into the alleged poaching of turtle and dugong and illegal trade in associated meat products around the Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait. The Committee is committed to working with the Department on key messages and case studies on sustainable use of dugong and turtle.

## **The Committee's forward work plan**

With a number of new members, the Committee is taking the opportunity to assess how they work with the Department and ways they can track how advice has been addressed. The Committee will develop a strategic work plan and set of priorities, with a focus on actions rather than updates.

## About the Committee

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

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 Richard (Ricky) Archer
- Ms Cecilia (Cissy) Gore-Birch
- Mr Duane Fraser
- Ms Chrissy Grant
- Mr Wayne See Kee
- Ms Leah Talbot
- Dr Stephen van Leeuwen
- Dr Josie Douglas

Further information can be found at

<http://www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/committees/iac.html>