

CAMDEN SOUND MARINE PARK — ESTABLISHMENT

Statement by Minister for Environment

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan — Minister for Environment) [3.40 pm]: I am pleased to inform the house that the government will establish a marine park at Camden Sound in the Kimberley to protect and manage a key nursery of the world's largest humpback whale population. More than 1 000 humpback whales can be found in the Camden Sound maternity ward during the calving season. They are part of the biggest population of humpback whales in the world—numbering about 22 000—that migrate from Antarctica every year to give birth in the waters off the north of our state.

The government recognises the Kimberley as one of Australia's special places. This is why we are protecting Camden Sound, and developing our Kimberley science and conservation strategy. Even before the process of developing the Kimberley strategy began, the need to protect and manage Camden Sound was brought to the government's attention, and it was emphasised again during the public consultation phase of the Kimberley strategy. These consultations gathered feedback from stakeholders across Western Australia via a series of workshops, forums and meetings in Wyndham, Kununurra, Halls Creek, Perth, Broome, Derby and Fitzroy Crossing, as well as from written submissions. Hon Chris Ellison facilitated the public consultation process, which attracted about 200 participants in public forums, more than 100 verbal and written submissions received and 40 stakeholder meetings held. A report entitled "Foundations for a Kimberley Strategy" has been released on the Department of Environment and Conservation's website. This report highlights the key issues raised by stakeholders through the consultation, and provides an excellent basis for the further development of the \$9 million Kimberley science and conservation strategy.

Camden Sound is an area rich in marine life. The proposed marine park will be created in consultation with the local Indigenous community, meeting the requirements of native title, and with all stakeholders having an interest in the area. This consultation will be conducted on behalf of the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority under the statutory planning process for new marine parks. Allowing for consultation, including a statutory public comment period of three months, our aim is that the marine park will be established by around mid-2010.

Consideration of the statement made an order of the day for the next sitting, on motion by **Hon Ed Dermer**.