

## MARINE PARK PLANNING

### *Motion*

Resumed from 23 November on the following motion moved by **Hon Sally Talbot** —

That this house condemns the government for taking an old-fashioned piecemeal and politically driven approach to marine park planning in Western Australia.

**The PRESIDENT:** I would remind members that there is 55 minutes remaining for the debate on this motion.

**HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [2.16 pm]: Thank you, Mr President. Given that I understand another member wishes to speak today, I do not anticipate taking all of that time, for a range of reasons.

Last week, when I started to make my comments, I was getting to the point where I was saying that one of the best decisions that former Premier Geoff Gallop made was his decision that Ningaloo be protected as a marine park. Although that was quite a contentious decision at the time, I think that decision is one that is greatly appreciated by the community.

I want to touch on an issue that I do not think has been canvassed in the earlier debate. I fortuitously picked up on an article in *The West Australian* of 21 November headed “Science supports marine parks”. I think that article will carry me through in my discussion of this matter today. This article is an opinion piece written by three people: Jessica Meeuwig, Shaun Collin and Malcolm McCulloch. As you would know, Mr President, Shaun Collin and Malcolm McCulloch are both UWA Winthrop professors. In fact, from memory you hosted both those individuals in your chamber earlier this year, and I think we had some photos taken in this place after that event. Their speciality is looking at shark populations around our coast, which is quite a niche area but a very important area of research given the vastness of our coastline, and perhaps a contentious issue at the moment given some tragic recent events.

In this opinion piece, they talk about the importance of the future of marine parks, and about how we need to take into consideration all the vested interests involved with the future development or the sustaining of current marine parks. Given Western Australia’s history and our resource sector, there is a fine balance between ensuring that we provide protection to marine parks, and also that we provide protection to the people who draw an income from those areas. The article talks about the fine balance between those who want to fish in those areas, those who want to seek out oil or gas in those areas, and those who want to sustain those areas from an environmental angle. I thought it was quite a useful article. They talk about how scientific research has consistently shown that the number, size and diversity of marine life increases greatly when those marine areas are protected as sanctuaries. They talk about how that is critical for Western Australia, especially when we are experiencing a resources boom—we all know that that is a phrase that the Premier does not like us to use, but it is used in this context because we know it is true—with associated increases in human population and wealth, and access to a changing marine environment. We need to achieve that balance so that all the various parties are appeased. They also talk about how sanctuary and fisheries management is necessary, that improving fisheries management is not the primary role of marine sanctuaries, and that the benefits of marine sanctuaries are very important to Western Australia.

They go on to talk about other aspects of the science, which leads me to where I wanted to go in this speech. When we talk about the piecemeal and ad hoc approach that this government has taken to marine sanctuaries, we are not talking about just the various areas of our state that have or do not have sanctuaries, and the fact that we have a number of ministers and government departments responsible for marine sanctuaries under various pieces of legislation. As I understand it, there has not been a holistic approach taken to date to the Western Australian coastline, and that is what we believe needs to happen. Even though money has been appropriated in the budget for the Kimberley science research project, it is only for one part of the state. Part of that is land-based and a lot of it is focused on research and development and engaging Indigenous communities, but it is in a fairly isolated area. Again, that is not the whole of the state.

When the government changes its approach, it needs to look at the issue of science. I have talked about this a number of times in this chamber. One of the things the government needs to invest in in the future is science and innovation. Mr President, I know that you would be a very keen supporter of that happening in light of your previous occupation. People of the ilk of Malcolm McCulloch, Shaun Collin and Jessica Meeuwig have come out and written with authority about their experiences, and about the real significance and importance of having marine sanctuaries and what can be achieved through them. I sat and thought, “Well, it’s great that we have these people now, but what do we do in the future?” This is where the government needs to invest money in the future of our young people, so that more people can develop this skill and knowledge and so that the government will have people on hand who can participate in this area of science.

The University of Western Australia has specialist departments—I am sure Curtin and Murdoch have them as well—looking at the marine environment and doing very particular research, just as Mr McCulloch is doing, and they are receiving some sort of assistance. But part of the problem with this sort of research is that we have to make sure that it is continuous and that more people are coming through. Although this idea is a bit out there, and perhaps not what was intended when this motion was drafted, I want to put it on the table. When we talk about these types of issues, we have to think a bit more broadly. It is important for the government to look at the people involved in the research and innovation aspect of marine sanctuaries. I think there would be real value in this government investing dollars in encouraging young people to go into specialising in this area of scientific research. We have some excellent research capacity here in Western Australia; it is unfortunately not promoted as well as it could be and it is certainly not funded as well as it could be. We know that there have been enormous cutbacks in state government funding for a range of research projects and that is a crying shame, because it again reflects the ad hoc and piecemeal approach of this government. It does not really understand that we need to have other types of industry and work happening to sustain us into the future.

Highly qualified people need to be trained and educated so that they can talk to us, help us plan for the future and give advice to the government on what is needed to be done, so that we can achieve a balance between providing appropriate levels of protection for marine sanctuaries and for those who need to draw income from the same marine areas. I know this idea is on a bit of a tangent, but it is a drum I like to bang on at the end of the year, because it has been a very frustrating year for people working and studying in this field at the universities as they constantly have to worry about projects being cut off because of a lack of funding.

My real concern about this government is that, although we have a Minister for Science and Innovation, very little happens in that area now. There has been a succession of three ministers over the last three years in that portfolio. Members in this chamber, including Hon Helen Morton, have shown a real interest in this area. Maybe over the next few weeks, when there will be a ministerial reshuffle, Hon Helen Morton or Hon Norman Moore might want to stick their hands up and say, “Yes, we’ll take science and innovation; we’ll give it a drive. We understand the importance and the relevance of it to our state.”

**Hon Helen Bullock:** Fat chance of that.

**Hon KATE DOUST:** Yes, but I am just trying to say that this is absolutely imperative. If the state is dinky-di about providing options for our young people into the future, science is the perfect vehicle for doing so. The funds need to be provided and the government needs to provide that base so that we can develop young people’s opportunities, and the ideas and guidance needed to be given back to government. It is an ever-continuing cycle. Instead, this government has used the science area as an ATM to extract cash from and siphon it off into other areas. We are really missing out on opportunities as a result.

When I saw this article written by these quite eminent scientists from our state I thought, “This is the perfect example of why we need to continue to appropriately fund this important area of work in our state”. They can articulate their concerns in plain English for our community, so that our community can pick up on the fact that this is not just an isolated green or niche issue; it is an issue for everyone in the community to be concerned about. I encourage members to read this article, because it is a very good one.

The article concludes by talking about how Western Australia’s marine environment is globally unique, and how our waters are home to more than one-third of the world’s cetacean species. The vast majority of our fish species are found only in Australia. Our marine environment remains largely unprotected and at risk from the impacts of overfishing, oil spills and subsea mining. If the science is ignored, the future remains very uncertain for our marine life. The article goes on to talk about how the commercial and recreational fishing lobbies choose sanctuaries in the areas they do not use, well offshore, with little or no protection for those areas that need it most. Governments need to bring some balance to ocean use on behalf of the Western Australia community by protecting examples of all key marine habitats, based on good science.

We can have good science only if we have good scientists, and we can have good scientists only if governments decide to actually tap the till and put money into those areas of research. To date, all we have seen is money being extracted. If this government is going to move forward and address the issues canvassed by Hon Sally Talbot with regard to taking a piecemeal and ad hoc approach, this is one of the areas it needs to canvass, because it is the way of the future. It is not about looking at just an isolated area of marine science or aquaculture; it is all the other relevant sciences that are associated with it. This is a matter that the National Party would be interested in, particularly for young people studying in rural and regional areas. The National Party would be very keen for them to have additional funding to encourage them into the areas of science and research to create great opportunities for those kids in the bush. I am sure that Hon Phil Gardiner will be banging on the Treasurer’s door, demanding education funding to encourage people into science as well.

I did not want to go on at length, but I wanted to canvass an extremely relevant issue that relates to this motion. We have talked about the gaps in protection that exist with marine sanctuaries, we have talked about the overlaps of departments and ministers and the problem with state and federal government interaction; we have talked about the various pieces of legislation and regulation that exist and the piecemeal approach; we have talked about the fact that vast tracts of our coastline are not afforded protection; and we have talked about finding that balance. But I think we also have to take into account the very important component of science, because the absence of specific, detailed, well-researched information providing good guidance to government exacerbates the problem of government not having holistic planning in place. It is a bit like the cart and the horse in that it cannot be achieved unless the government is prepared to support funding for study and research, and broadening the options. Our state is surrounded by water, and rather than tightening the capacity of our state to conduct research, we should be encouraging more research in these areas. We should be becoming the beacon, if members like, for other places, and people should be able to specialise in this very highly valuable and very interesting work.

With those few words, I most certainly support Hon Sally Talbot's motion. I think she has given members the opportunity to canvass a range of issues, and I know that Hon Lynn MacLaren wants to add a few words. It is really up to this government to get with the program, if members like, and actually work out a plan in total that will incorporate the various facets to make it work better. The government needs to provide appropriate funding for science and innovation to ensure that these talented and skilled people can do that research and provide good, solid advice to government; I think that is a very important component. I think that although some research is happening now, it is not enough, and it is up to the government to broaden that. If it does, that might help fill some of the gaps that Hon Sally Talbot has tried to highlight.

**HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan)** [2.32 pm]: I rise to support the motion. As the house had already heard from Hon Giz Watson, the view of the Greens (WA), as it has been of other speakers in this debate, is that the house should condemn the government for taking an old-fashioned, piecemeal and politically driven approach to marine park planning in Western Australia.

I begin my remarks by hooking into what Hon Kate Doust has just focused on, which is science and whether our marine park planning and management is based on science, and to what degree the state government uses that science to adequately conserve and protect the environment and the uses we make of marine parks. In responding to this motion, I want to look at the South Metropolitan Region and the interest my electors might have in marine park planning, and there is no more obvious issue than the proposed inland canals marina at Point Peron. I want to look carefully at whether marine park planning has been adequately prioritised by the government in its decision to construct a marina at Point Peron.

The proposed development at Point Peron abuts the seagrass beds of Shoalwater Islands Marine Park. Members would know that, yesterday, Cockburn Sound Management Council tabled its annual report in this house, and I look forward to seeing whether we have managed to protect and preserve some of the seagrass that has been under threat because of the deteriorating health of Cockburn Sound. But according to the "Shoalwater Islands Marine Park Management Plan 2007–2017", which was approved in 2007, Shoalwater Islands Marine Park is an A-class reserve and so it is covered by some of those marine park protections we have been talking about. It was gazetted on 25 May 1990, and covers 6 658 hectares. That amazing environment has a diverse range of habitats, and I will quote from the management plan —

... including seagrass meadows, subtidal and intertidal macroalgal limestone reefs and the silty basin of Warnbro Sound ... These habitats are home to a diverse range of finfish and invertebrates and a variety of wildlife including little penguins —

Many of us have been there and seen the penguins. The management plan continues —

other sea and shore birds and marine mammals such as bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) and Australian sea lions ...

Members can see that the values that the marine park has managed to protect include a diverse range of animals. As to the ideas about marine parks and why we use them, they are not only a habitat for animals, but also there is a thriving tourism industry in this marine park that caters for local and regional communities; it is also an area that is popular for commercial and recreational fishing. There are many reasons to preserve marine parks. Shoalwater Islands Marine Park has high scientific research and educational value, and it has been well utilised by many visiting schoolchildren over the years. It is a pleasant place to live and visit, and it is a highly valued coastal resource. It is fair to say that the values that we want to protect and preserve in Shoalwater Islands Marine Park affect a wide number of people. They affect jobs, and they affect not only the ecosystem that we seek to protect, but also our lifestyle and our social enjoyment of the Western Australian environment. I quote again from the management plan —

Much of the marine biodiversity of the State is poorly described, particularly along the south-west and south coasts where many endemic species are likely to occur.

I digress to note that the Save our Marine Life campaign, which has been running for several years in an attempt to get commonwealth protection of our biodiversity, has pointed out that there is much that we have not yet identified that is valuable in and around our coast. I return to the quote —

The conservation of Western Australia’s marine biodiversity is not only important from an intrinsic point of view but also as the fundamental basis of major recreation, nature-based tourism, fishing and potentially, pharmaceutical industries.

The proper protection and management of marine parks has flow-on effects throughout the economy.

I want to talk about the threatened impacts of the Point Peron—also known as Mangles Bay—tourism marina. In 1983, the Department of Conservation and Environment published “Conservation Reserves for Western Australia: The Darling System – System 6”, which identified the waters between Cape Peron and Port Kennedy as being of regional significance for conservation, recreation and education, and it recommended that the area become a marine reserve. If members want to see what can happen after the introduction of a marina to an area already identified as an important regional area, members need look no further than the seagrass beds. The management plan states that —

The area has a high diversity of seagrass, with 10 species recorded in Perth’s southern metropolitan waters ... Most of the seagrass meadows in the marine park consist of ... (i.e. long-lived) genera ...

There are also short-lived species. The seagrass meadows are important habitat and nursery areas. I know from my time in the South Metropolitan Region that quite a big whitebait nursery sits off Port Kennedy. That whitebait is a key food source for the penguins that we visit at Penguin Island, which is not far from the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park. There is a high diversity of marine species, including important commercial and recreational species. Seagrasses are an important food source for some species and might help maintain water clarity and light penetration to the seabed.

The marine management plan identifies the risks to the seabed and to the seagrasses that grow there. There can be physical disturbance from vessel activity, such as anchoring, the installation of moorings and propeller scour, and from coastal developments such as marinas. There can be discharges of toxicants from urban stormwater runoff, treated waste water and sewage, and shipping-related waste and spillages, such as the accidental spillage of fuel and chemicals associated with the boating industry. Therefore, already in 2007, when we established the “Shoalwater Islands Marine Park Management Plan” we identified potential risks to that very important area. However, we failed to adequately take those risks into consideration when this state government thought it would be a great idea to construct the Mangles Bay marina. It is completely incompatible with the objectives of no loss of seagrass and no loss of perennial seagrass biomass as a result of human activities. The “Mangles Bay Marina Based Tourist Precinct Scoping Document” identifies these risks. It states —

As the proposed marina will have lesser water quality than in Mangles Bay, outflow of marina water has the potential to affect water quality in Mangles Bay and adjacent waters in Cockburn Sound and the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park.

Why would we locate a canal estate, a marina-based boating home, adjacent to, in this case, a marine park of such high values as Shoalwater Islands Marine Park?

**Hon Simon O’Brien** interjected.

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** Hon Simon O’Brien would never do it. Even Strategen Environmental Consultants, which prepared this environmental scoping report, which we considered way back in February—it has been sitting around since February—identified that —

The following aspects of the Proposal may affect marine water quality values:

- **dredging of the seabed** to allow for the construction of the access channel ...
- **seepage of return water from bunded areas** ...
- **placement of limestone for the marina breakwaters and leaching of fines from the limestone** ...
- **creation of land-based marina** which may potentially affect the water quality within Mangles Bay ... on an ongoing basis, due to outflow of lesser water quality from the marina.
- **increased boat numbers** increasing the potential for pollution.

**Hon Phil Edman** interjected.

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**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** Therefore, I say and I continually ask Hon Phil Edman who seeks to interrupt me —

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** Hon Phil Edman seeks to interject. I welcome Hon Phil Edman's contribution to this debate.

**Hon Phil Edman** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** As someone who has an interest in marine industries, the member should make a very good contribution to this debate, rather than interject on mine.

The Point Peron area is of enormous value and has been recognised as such for many decades. It has been used for not only recreational and commercial fishing but also the tourism industry. It even, as we would say, has intrinsic value as a habitat for animals. The proposed development also takes land from Rockingham Lakes Regional Park. We are now talking about terrestrial parks, which is very important to take into account as well.

**Hon Phil Edman** interjected.

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** That includes a Bush Forever site that is also a class A reserve. The land was handed over for the benefit of all Western Australians, not the select few who can afford to live in a luxury canal estate. It is appalling that the state government has already committed \$3.7 million of taxpayers' funds to subsidise what is little more than a land grab for private developers but even more than that is just on the edge of this highly valued marine park. The conservation of our marine habitats, going back to what Hon Kate Doust —

**Hon Phil Edman** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Hon Phil Edman, you cannot make a speech from your chair by interjection. Opportunities arise for members to make speeches at various times and that is when you need to take advantage of the call.

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** Thank you, Mr President; it was growing increasingly difficult to hear myself, so I appreciate that.

I just want to conclude and bring it back to the beginning when Hon Kate Doust was talking about the importance of science. The conservation of our marine habitats should be science-based to ensure that these valuable resources are preserved for the enjoyment of future generations. I made the point that our planning systems need to honour the values that we have already identified in these marine parks and not threaten them with developments that may undermine those environmental values. Our resources should not be undermined because of pressure from developers who are out to make a quick buck from our environment. Therefore, we remain entirely opposed to proposals such as the Point Peron or Mangles Bay tourism precinct located right on the edge of the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park and we support the motion. That is why we support this motion that condemns the government for its piecemeal and old-fashioned approach, which seems to place under threat these resources that we would hold dear for all generations to come and which should not be put under threat by this generation and the need for some quick profit.

**HON MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM (Agricultural)** [2.46 pm]: I will not take up too much time, but I certainly want to put on record just a few observations that I have about this motion on notice for a couple of reasons. One, fairly obviously, is that at the northern and southern end of my electorate, be it in the area around Geraldton and Kalbarri or south in Jurien Bay and all the way through to Bremer Bay, marine parks and reserves are certainly very much a significant issue. I have to say on a personal note so is the fact that my extended family still lives in the Walpole–Nornalup area bordering the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets National Park. That part of the world had an enormous impact on me in my formative years and I want to see some sort of meaningful management continue to be associated with it. I put on record my total agreement with the remarks of the opposition thus far because the need for meaningful planning for marine parks and reserves is beyond question. Yes, I honestly have a concern for—I will mention this in a while—the multiple usage of these areas. Significant numbers of my extended family are commercial fishermen and I genuinely have issues associated with how we utilise our marine parks and our marine environment—full stop. I know from speaking with fishermen in the Geraldton–Mid West area that there are issues about federal legislation that seem to preclude commercial fishers from earning what might be a reasonable living style. Therefore, those issues very much are important to me.

I will make just a few observations in the time remaining. Why the need for these marine parks and reserves? As all the speakers thus far have said, the marine environment is obviously something that is unique. With some 13 500 kilometres of coastline, Western Australia is in a very special situation with the sort of environments that we have—we are talking about some of the world's most pristine and beautiful environments. There is enormous diversity in these areas. If we start in the Kimberley region and head down the west coast all the way through to

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the capes region and then across to Eucla, the environmental diversity from those warm tropical northern parts to the cool temperate waters of the south west and south coast represent areas of some uniqueness. The various ecosystems in those areas require special management.

Where I am coming from is the need to look at how to manage those types of environments, given the fairly significant degree of functional complexity in terms of the usage that occurs, including people seeking to earn an income from the environment.

I also mention in particular the fact that Western Australia has only one marine nature reserve—I might be wrong—which is Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve. That is one of only two places in the world with living marine stromatolites, which are living fossils. A key goal to managing those and all the areas that successive governments over the years have put aside must surely be the total sustainability of these marine environments. By putting on the public record the number of marine parks and reserves that we have now, Hon Sally Talbot has given us a good overview of what Labor did when it was in government. She also made the point that since 2008 precious little has been done in declaring additional marine parks. That issue is documented very well in *Hansard*.

I go back to the issue of the multiple-use of the marine environment that I have already referred to. This is very much a problem area. It is the state's responsibility to manage up to the three-nautical mile mark. Australia's marine boundary extends to about 200 nautical miles, but I stand to be corrected if I am mistaken. Obviously, we are talking about the state's responsibility. Western Australia and Australia can enjoy an enormous range of benefits by appropriately managing these marine areas. The cultural, commercial, recreational and ecological values afforded by our coastal environments, in as much as they help generate employment, income and recreational pleasure, is something that I would suggest to members defies any real description. But—this is a big “but”—marine recreation, tourism and development along the coastline where man interacts with the environment needs to remain healthy, otherwise there will be no benefits to fishers, to give just one example, and other economic pursuits will likewise be in jeopardy. The reason for the existence of a marine reserve would disappear and the implications could be quite devastating, in every sense of the word, if that were not to happen. The question then is: what are we going to do? To my way of thinking, it is all to do with our strategic approach to developing, planning and managing our existing and proposed marine parks and reserves. We must understand what makes our marine environments tick. That is an issue that I do not think a lot of people comprehend. I say that of people at even the highest levels. I will give members an example of that. Hon Jon Ford referred to some of those when he talked about Wilson Inlet. He said that he had to deal with the potato growers who were arcing up because their paddocks were being flooded and who believed that the only way to solve that problem was to go to the mouth of Wilson Inlet with a front-end loader or bulldozer and open the inlet. What an ecological disaster that would be. We have local governments that promote that type of thing to appease the landowners. The property should never have been offered for sale on the shore of Wilson Inlet in those localities where the high-water mark may have encroached on someone's backyard.

**Hon Giz Watson:** They are very old allocations of land.

**Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM:** Maybe they are. Certainly, that is a significant issue. If members want to see the impact that has had, I suggest they go to the mouth of Nornalup Inlet, where the mouth of the inlet is always open. I have been going there for the past 50 years or so—since I was a kid—and I have never seen the mouth of Nornalup Inlet closed. At the mouth of Wilson Inlet, where there is a managed ecosystem, the people do not know what they are doing and every 12 to 18 months or thereabouts it turns into a disaster zone. These are the sorts of things that Hon Jon Ford mentioned. I wanted to put that into context and to quote Hon Jon Ford, who said —

The failure in the current regime with regard to marine parks is that the Department of Environment and Conservation ignores those values—the interactions between those species, from benthic to demersal to pelagic—and just concentrates on mammals, because that is what the act limits it to.

There is a legislative imperative to do something about it. He also said —

In fact, even if a marine park is declared, only the Minister for Fisheries can write the regulations to enforce the restrictions.

The next comment he made brings that all together. He states —

But on top of that, there is no interlink to inland rivers.

He goes on to say —

It seems to me that contemporary marine park planning has to include planning around rivers, the settlements of rivers, and the agricultural land and feeding areas into those rivers. It seems that when we look at projects such as the North West Shelf, we have to cast our minds further and think about the

impact on the marine environment. If we start thinking like that, there is a case to say that perhaps we need a pattern of marine parks that have specific values to ensure the survival of a whole range of different species, but that has to start right up in the catchments. We talk about fertilisers and what should and should not be put in the Swan River, and the people of Western Australia live with that all the time.

More importantly, he goes on to say —

We have to have an integrated approach.

That is my bone of contention. If the Minister for Fisheries has the sole responsibility to enforce the restrictions through the regulations and there cannot be a better integrated approach to the management of our marine parks and reserves, no matter how that might be achieved, as far as I am concerned, the legislation and the marine parks will not be the success that they might otherwise be.

**HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [2.57 pm]: I will keep my comments very brief. I rise to speak against this motion. I listened with interest to the various contributions made by members on both sides of the house. I found it interesting that there appeared to be different arguments from members opposite. Hon Jon Ford at times appeared to take a different tack from Hon Sally Talbot. Heaven forbid if ever Hon Sally Talbot becomes the Minister for Environment and Hon Jon Ford becomes the Minister for Fisheries. I am sure that would be an interesting set of circumstances when dealing with these issues because it appears that they took a different view on how these matters should be dealt with.

Having said that, as the former Minister for Environment, I believe this government has a very strong commitment to the establishment of marine parks in Western Australia, which is in stark contrast to the previous Labor government. The opposition talked very much about the importance of the marine environment and what it will do in government, but the fact is that the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park was the first marine park to be created since 2004. I recognise that the previous government and its ministers had been working to establish that park and that it was created under this government. However, the fact remains that that was the first marine park to be created since 2004. The previous government was in power from 2001 to 2008. It had four years, between 2004 and 2008, to establish marine parks, and it did not. I know the former government established a stakeholder working group which included a broad range of people but it did not include the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority, which I found amazing. We also know that the former Labor government talked a lot about marine parks but in fact did very little. This government, under Premier Colin Barnett, is doing something. For example, the Kimberley wilderness parks that we announced last year will almost treble the area of marine parks and reserves in Western Australia from 1.5 million hectares to 4.1 million hectares. I will repeat that because that is very significant. It will increase in size from 1.5 million hectares to 4.1 million hectares. The Kimberley wilderness parks, when completed, will cover an area—I am quoting from a statement that was released last year—of land and sea that is more than half the size of the state of Tasmania. If the opposition suggests that we as a government do not take marine parks and the establishment of them seriously, I ask it to look at those facts because they are the facts. The fact is we will have a marine park at Camden Sound. Added to that will be a further three marine parks. The Minister for Environment is working very closely with the Minister for Fisheries to see that we get a very successful outcome.

In the short time available—because I know Hon Phil Edman would like to say something before the debate comes to an end—I reiterate that this government is prepared to put on the table that it wants these marine parks established. They will be established. Unlike the previous government's four years and no action, this government will have a record of establishing a number of marine parks along the length and breadth of this great state. That is something we should all be very proud of.

**HON PHIL EDMAN (South Metropolitan)** [3.01 pm]: I apologise for my interjections before but I could not help myself when I heard some of the baloney from the other side.

Opposition members interjected.

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** We will get to the ALP in a minute! In relation to the Shoalwater Bay Marine Park —

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! I have to make the point that members should not interject, but it becomes a bit hard when they are invited by a member. I ask the member to concentrate on the motion before the house.

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** Thanks, Mr President. Once again, I just cannot help myself sometimes when I prepare for the opposite side!

In relation to what Hon Lynn MacLaren said in this debate about the Shoalwater Bay Marine Park and Point Peron, the proposed marina is actually in Mangles Bay. It is not in Point Peron, it is not in the Shoalwater Bay Marine Park —

**Hon Kate Doust:** It cuts into Point Peron; be honest about that.

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** The other side should be very careful interjecting. I remember when the ALP, through Hon Mark McGowan, came down south with a \$250 000 cheque in 2004 to get this project started. We thank the ALP for that. Putting that money into this project was fantastic. Hon Kim Beazley was also very supportive. I am sure the opposition will be thrilled to see the project up and running once it gets environmental approval. That is just it—this project needs environmental approval. That is one thing that members from the other side would agree: any project needs to have environmental approval. Hon Lynn MacLaren made a claim that we have wasted \$3.7 million of taxpayers' money. Once again, that is wrong.

**Hon Nigel Hallett:** Another misinformed comment.

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** That is right; it is misinformed.

The \$3.7 million actually came from Cedar Woods. This project is basically being run with LandCorp and Cedar Woods, but Cedar Woods has put that money up-front. I will say again: the former Labor state government put \$250 000 of taxpayers' money into this project, and so did the Howard federal government back around the same time, in 2004. I think it put \$280 000 into this project from regional partnerships. The local council also put in about \$150 000. Everybody has been pouring money into it. The \$3.7 million that is going through the environmental assessment now is not coming out of the taxpayers' purse; it was provided by Cedar Woods.

Let us talk a bit about Mangles Bay, which is where the project will be. Let us also talk about some of the environmental disasters occurring at the moment. There are moorings that have been there since the good old days. They are not all environmental moorings. As Hon Simon O'Brien, who has been to the site with me, would know—in fact I first met him as a member of the Liberal Party back in 2003—damage from moorings has resulted in the loss of about two hectares of seagrass. By changing those moorings to either an environmentally friendly mooring or putting them into a pen, we will regain the two hectares of seagrass lost.

The other thing that is very damaging to hear is about when boats need to refuel. It is a real problem for the area that there are no refuelling jetties anywhere. Boats either have to be driven all the way to Fremantle or taken to Mandurah. Boat owners do not do that. They put their jerry cans into their dinghies, row it over and attempt to do it in a Neanderthal way to put it in their boat. The result is diesel spillage. That is bad for the environment. Having a refuelling jetty there would stop that. We need to look at the regional benefits of this facility. I do not believe this will be a marina for the rich, as was claimed—a three-storey Tuscan house with a Bertram boat out the front. This is something that has been designed on public land. It will have a marine science centre for excellence. There will be universities down there as well as the local high school. Rockingham Senior High School is one of the leading high schools for maritime studies, as well as industry. CSIRO would also be based there because it has shared some interest. It is not just about a marina and rich guys with boats. They are looking at short-stay accommodation at affordable prices and a place where people can have a few drinks and eat. It will provide around 800 jobs. It will pour more money into the area. It will provide economic sustainability in a region that really needs it. It is obvious that it is now time to have a marina in that area. The area is called an aquatic playground but it does not have a marina. It has guys rocking up with jerry cans to fill up their boats. It is just a joke.

I believe the environmental assessment is just about finished. That will go out for public environmental review. That should not be too much longer. The general public, as well as other political parties, can comment on that. Once that process is done, I guess the Department of Environment and Conservation or the Environmental Protection Authority will make a determination on that, which will be given to the Minister for Environment. There is a process it has to go through. To think we are going to fast track it and bulldoze down an area is just ridiculous. I will leave my remarks there. The Barnett government has a lot of respect for the environment. I thank our former environment minister, Hon Donna Faragher, and our current minister and cabinet for doing a wonderful job in not only helping out in Rockingham but also making sure the state is run properly and is maximising its economic potential to make this state a better place for everybody.

Question put and negatived.