

SHARK BAY — WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY STRATEGIC PLAN

Statement by Minister for the Environment

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for the Environment) [2.21 pm]: Members who have travelled extensively around our wonderful state will know that Shark Bay is one of the most spectacular areas in the state. The lands and waters of the region were the first parts of the state to gain World Heritage listing for their wonderful diversity; in fact, the Shark Bay World Heritage property is one of only 19 in the world that meet all four natural criteria for World Heritage listing.

I will advise the house of a number of initiatives to ensure that we preserve this pristine area for generations to come. Last week I released a World Heritage property strategic plan on behalf of the state and federal governments, as well as an excellent new website to showcase this magnificent area. I also had the pleasure of releasing a 10-year draft management plan for the Shark Bay terrestrial reserves and proposed new reserves. As part of the consultation process, the state government is asking people to submit names for the proposed conservation reserve covering the area known as South Peron and the unnamed islands that form part of the Shark Bay islands nature reserve. This magnificent part of Western Australia is valuable for a range of reasons, but it is also vulnerable, so we need to make sure we manage it properly so that it can be enjoyed and admired by generations to come. The draft management plan covers existing reserves in the region, including Francois Peron National Park, Shell Beach Conservation Park, Zuytdorp Nature Reserve, Bernier and Dorre Islands Nature Reserve and various Shark Bay islands' nature reserves. It also includes a large number of proposed reserve additions, including nature reserves to be created from parts of former pastoral leases Tamala, Murchison House and Nanga, as well as the proposed Dirk Hartog Island and Edel Land national parks and about 18 unnamed and unreserved islands, islets and rocks.

The draft plan outlines strategies to effectively manage Shark Bay's diverse range of land forms and the major environmental values, as well as many threatened species. The peninsulas and islands provide refuge for migratory and threatened fauna, including five threatened mammal species on Bernier and Dorre Islands Nature Reserve, and breeding sites for sea birds. The Shark Bay area also has considerable cultural heritage value. The draft plan proposes a number of strategies to ensure the protection of the distinctive values of Shark Bay while at the same time improving visitor experiences. The draft plan was prepared by the Department of Environment and Conservation on behalf of the Conservation Commission of Western Australia and in consultation with the local community. Advice was provided by the Shark Bay Community Advisory Committee, which comprised representatives from various existing committees, government agencies and local people from the towns of Denham and Carnarvon. The public comment period will be open for two months ending on Monday, 7 July 2008. Public workshops also will be held in Denham and Carnarvon during the submission period.