



Standing Committee on Public Administration

Inquiry into the potential environmental contribution of recreational hunting systems

TOR: That the Council acknowledges the use in other States of regulated, licensed recreation hunting systems and the potential environmental contribution made in controlling pest animals on public lands, together with the possible economic, cultural and recreational benefits to the community.

Submission

Parks Forum, the peak body for park management organisations in Australia and New Zealand, endorses the implementation of the principles of management effectiveness¹ in all areas of park management. It is essential that any consideration of the environmental contribution of recreational hunting systems assesses the context, planning, inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes of the proposed recreational hunting.

There must also be defined measures to determine and benchmark success. Consideration of context requires judicious understanding of legislative and international frameworks under which the parks and reserves were created, the many and varied users which currently visit them, as well as their present and future contribution to the environmental, social and economic wellbeing of the state.

Parks and reserves are an integral part of Western Australia's conservation, recreation and tourism sectors. They feature in major international and national tourism campaigns, and are known to significantly contribute to regional economies². Tens of millions of people visit the State's national parks and reserves each year to participate in passive or active recreation, experience Indigenous culture and benefit from contact with nature.

Visitors want to enjoy themselves free from conflict with other users whether they are participating in family bushwalks, bird watching, canoeing or mountain biking. Determination on the introduction of recreational hunting systems will need to consider real and perceived visitor safety, review systems that are in place to manage possible conflict between different visitor segments and, calculate the human and financial resources required to implement it (e.g. education, licences, infringement notification etc). It is imperative that any new activity adds to the diverse suite of visitor experiences and does not detract from our national and international ecotourism reputation or discourage the community to be active in parks³.

¹Fiona Leverington, Katia Lemos Costa, Jose Courrau, Helena Pavese, Christoph Nolte, Melitta Marr, Lauren Coad, Neil Burgess, Bastian Bomhard, Marc Hockings (2010) Management effectiveness evaluation in protected areas – a global study. Second edition – 2010 The University of Queensland Brisbane AUSTRALIA

² Carlsen, J and Wood, D. (2004). Assessment of the economic value of recreation and tourism in Western Australia's national parks, marine parks and forests. Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, Southport, QLD.

³ News ABC <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-01-13/hunting-crackdown/5196542>

