



Conservation Commission  
of Western Australia



# Annual Report 2010-2011



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of  
Western Australia**

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## **Cover Photo**

Kalbarri National Park

Photo provided by Patricia Barblett AM, Chair, Conservation Commission

**Conservation Commission  
of  
Western Australia**

***Annual Report 2010-2011***

**Transmittal to the Minister**

Minister for Environment

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit the Annual Report 2010-2011 of the Conservation Commission of Western Australia, covering its activities for the period ending 30 June 2011, as provided for under section 31 of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*.

Patricia Barblett AM  
Chair

## Overview of the Agency

### Chair's Report

This reporting period has seen the Conservation Commission as a key force in driving improvements in the area of management planning and performance assessments.

The Commission's strategic and integrated approach to management planning is already advancing the way for the preparation of more concise management plans based on a regional approach and meaningful objectives. The *Perup draft management plan 2011* and the *Yoorrooyang Dawang Proposed Conservation Parks Draft Management Plan 2011* are recent examples of the Commission's strategic direction.

During this reporting period, the Conservation Commission also had active representation in the stakeholder forum and site visit to the Fitzgerald River National Park as part of consultation undertaken by the Environmental Protection Authority in assessing proposed amendments to the management plan.

In relation to its policy functions, the Conservation Commission has devoted significant effort in the development of position statements to provide a better definition of the Commission's views on the areas of fire management, implementation of conservation reserve proposals and mining activities within vested lands. The Commission also updated its position statements on drainage and mosquito management.

The Conservation Commission is also committed to enhancing public education and awareness of the wealth in biodiversity and environmental values represented in the conservation estate. This ongoing effort is evidenced through major improvements to the Commission's website including new and user friendly features.

In addition, the Conservation Commission was pleased to see the conversion of Prince Regent Nature Reserve to a class A National Park during this reporting period. The Commission also welcomed the release of the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy* highlighting new terrestrial reserves for the Kimberley islands with the highest conservation significance and promoting better management of nature-based tourism in the area.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the significant contributions of the Commissioners and the Conservation Commission Service Unit for their efforts and work over the year and the support from key officers from the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Patricia Barblett AM  
Chair

## Operational Structure

The Conservation Commission of Western Australia was established in November 2000 by the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act), and works independent of, but closely with, the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). It is a statutory commission and body corporate and has vested in it terrestrial conservation reserves (including freshwater areas), State forest and timber reserves. It has associated management planning responsibilities and functions in respect of monitoring and auditing the performance of DEC and the Forest Products Commission (FPC) in respect of those management plans. It also has policy advisory functions in relation to vested lands and waters, and broader biodiversity conservation matters. Appendix 1 provides details of the Conservation Commission's functions as provided in section 19 of the CALM Act.

### *Members and Meetings*

The CALM Act provides that the Conservation Commission is to have nine members who, in the opinion of the Minister have knowledge of and experience in:

- the conservation or management of biodiversity, or;
- environmental management, including the management of the natural environment for use for recreational purposes, or;
- the sustainable use of natural resources, or;
- who have a particular function or vocational interest relevant to the functions of the Conservation Commission, and;
- who, in the opinion of the Minister, are able to make a contribution to the functions of the Conservation Commission.

One member is to be a person who, in the opinion of the Minister:

- has knowledge of and experience in Aboriginal cultural and Aboriginal heritage matters relevant to the functions of the Conservation Commission, and;
- is able to make a contribution to the functions of the Conservation Commission.

Commissioners are appointed by the Governor, on the nomination of the Minister. The members of the Conservation Commission and the date of their initial appointment and term of appointment (including any reappointments) at 30 June 2011 were:

Mrs Patricia Barblett AM, Chair	November 2000 – December 2011
Ms Regina Flugge, Deputy Chair	November 2003 – November 2010
Mr William Mitchell	December 2002 – December 2011
Ms Karen Jacobs	November 2007 – November 2010

Dr David Newsome	December 2006 - December 2011
Mr Vince Paparo	December 2006 – December 2011
Mr Graeme Rundle	November 2000 – December 2011
Ms Carolyn Turner	July 2006 – December 2011
Dr Tony Brandis	December 2009 – December 2011

The Conservation Commission holds meetings on the second Monday of every month, and during the reporting period the Conservation Commission held 11 meetings.

The Conservation Commission had two sub-committees operating in the reporting period:

- The Management Planning Review Committee (MPRC) which provides recommendations to the Conservation Commission on planning matters; and,
- The Communications and Promotions Sub-Committee whose focus is on recommendations relating to stakeholder interactions including website design and improvement.

### ***Executive Support***

In 2006 an operational relationship agreement was signed between the Conservation Commission and DEC which established the Conservation Commission Service Unit.

The Conservation Commission Service Unit had the following staff at 30 June 2011:

Director: Gordon Graham  
 Executive Assistant: Kelly Watkins  
 Senior Environmental Auditor: Tom Hughson  
 Policy Advisor: Dr Juanita Renwick  
 Environmental Auditor: Geoff Cullen (Acting)  
 Policy Advisor: Wildaliz De Jesús (Acting)

Corporate Services support, including Human Resource Management, Financial Services and Information Technology, is provided to the service unit under the operational relationship agreement.

### ***Vested Lands***

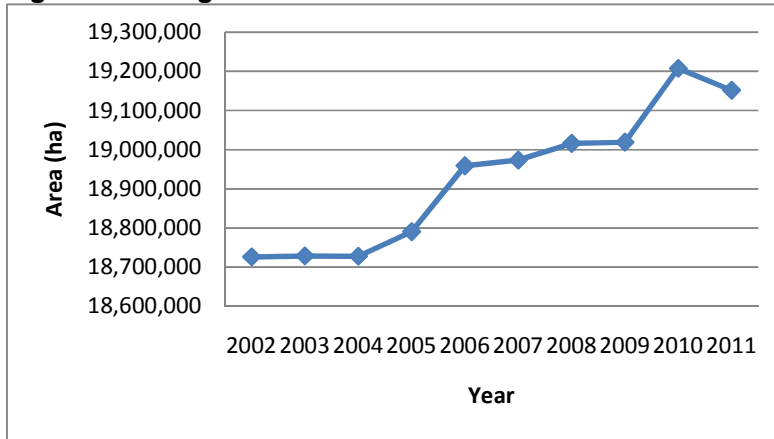
As at 30 June 2011 the total area of the lands vested in the Conservation Commission was 19,151,764 hectares, approximately 7.5% per cent of the land area of Western Australia. Table 1 provides a summary of the land categories and Figure 1 demonstrates the variation in lands vested over time.



**Table 1. Land vested in the Conservation Commission**

Land Classification	Area (ha) as of 30 June 2011	Area (ha) as of 30 June 2010
National Park	6,246,626	5,668,065
Conservation Park	847,312	847,312
Nature Reserves	10,240,607	10,875,720
State Forest	1,304,442	1,304,685
Timber Reserves	123,269	123,269
Section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) Reserves	389,508	388,440
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,151,764</b>	<b>19,207,491</b>

**Figure 1. Change in area of lands vested in the Conservation Commission**



The decrease of 635,113 hectares of nature reserves is a result of the conversion of Prince Regent Nature Reserve to Prince Regent National Park and a more accurate recalculation of the initial area.

The decrease of 243 hectares of State forest is mainly due to an excision of 165 ha of land within State forest No. 4 for the proposed Shotts Industrial Park in Collie and an excision of 37 ha of land within State forest No. 12 for the construction of the Bussell Highway Western Extension. The remainder relates to road purposes.

### **National Parks**

National parks are established for wildlife and landscape conservation, scientific study, preservation of features of archaeological, historic or scientific interest, and enjoyment by the public. They have national or international significance for scenic, biological or cultural values.

The area of the national parks vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2011 was 6,246,626 hectares representing an increase of 578,561 hectares in this reporting period.

### **Conservation Parks**

Conservation parks have the same purpose as national parks but do not have the same national or international significance. They have significant local or regional value for conservation and recreation.

The area of the conservation parks vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2011 was 847,312 hectares reflecting the same area as in the previous reporting period.

### **Nature Reserves**

Nature reserves are established for wildlife and landscape conservation, scientific study and preservation of features of archaeological, historic or scientific interest. Recreation that does not harm natural ecosystems is allowed.

The total area of the nature reserves vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2011 was 10,240,607 hectares. The decrease of 635,113 hectares of nature reserves is a result of the conversion of Prince Regent Nature Reserve to Prince Regent National Park and a more accurate recalculation of the initial area.

### **State Forest**

State forests are managed for multiple purposes, including water catchment protection, recreation, timber production on a sustained yield basis, and conservation. Provision is also made for public utilities and mineral production. Within State forests, designated areas are managed for specific purposes, such as conservation or the optimum yield of exotic plantings.

The total area of State forest vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2011 was 1,304,442 hectares, representing a decrease of 243 hectares in this reporting period. This decrease is mainly due to an excision of 165 ha of land within State forest No. 4 for the proposed Shotts Industrial Park in Collie and an excision of 37 ha of land within State forest No. 12 for the construction of the Bussell Highway Western Extension. The remainder relates to road purposes.

### **Timber Reserves**

Timber reserves declared under the CALM Act are managed on the same basis as State forests. The category is often transitional; as reserves are evaluated they may be changed to a more appropriate tenure, e.g. State forest or nature reserve.

The total area of the timber reserves vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2011 was 123,269 hectares representing the same area as in the previous reporting period.

### **Section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) Reserves**

Under the CALM Act, lands categorised as sections 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) reserves are lands reserved under the *Land Act 1933* and the *Land Administration Act 1997* respectively, for which care, control and management is placed with the Conservation Commission. Unlike national parks, conservation parks and nature reserves, they are not automatically vested in the Conservation Commission.

The total area of sections 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) reserves vested in the Conservation Commission at 30 June 2011 was 389,508 ha, representing an increase of 1,068 hectares in this reporting period.

## Agency Performance

The decisions of the Conservation Commission, the Commissioners and the staff of the Conservation Commission are guided by the following principles as set out in its strategic plan:

- the need to comply with relevant State Government policies and national and international treaties, protocols and conventions relating to ecologically sustainable development and biological diversity conservation;
- the need for the application of the precautionary principle;
- the need for intergenerational equity;
- the need for community involvement and participation;
- the need for the involvement of Aboriginal people and consideration of their perspectives, cultural needs and rights;
- the need for community appreciation and enjoyment of the natural environment; and
- the need to maintain a diverse range of values, including cultural and heritage values.

The Conservation Commission's activities and achievements during the last twelve months are detailed below under the key outcome areas of policy, estate, management plans, forest management, and performance assessment.

### Policy

The Conservation Commission's main objective in relation to policy is to promote the conservation and appreciation of the natural environment of the State and fulfil its function in providing advice to the Minister for Environment.

During this reporting period, the Conservation Commission published the following position statements relating to activities within vested lands:

- *Position Statement No. 1: Fire Management,*
- *Position Statement No. 2: Implementation of Conservation Reserve Proposals, and*
- *Position Statement No. 3: Mining in Terrestrial Conservation Reserves*

The Conservation Commission also reviewed and updated the following position statements:

- *Position Statement No. 4: Mosquito Management, and*
- *Position Statement No. 5: Drainage*

As their title suggests, Position Statements set forth the Conservation Commission's views and considerations in relation to the management of vested lands and proposed activities that may have an impact on biodiversity values represented in the terrestrial conservation estate. All Position Statements are publicly available on the Conservation Commission's website.

## Estate

The Conservation Commission's main objectives in relation to vested lands and strategies for delivering these are identified in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. Objectives and strategies for vested lands**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
Identify what is required for a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system for Western Australia;	Promote the maintenance and extension of a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserves system through the strategic acquisition of key lands and innovative funding.
Consider proposed changes of purpose, or boundary of, land vested in the Conservation Commission; and	Provide advice upon request to the Minister for Environment on applications for changes in purpose or boundaries, including advice on any contentious issues or activities and proposed excision of areas that are not of value in maintaining biological diversity.
Evaluate potentially incompatible activities on vested lands with a view to maximising biological diversity.	Consult and provide advice on matters relating to leases, licences, permits, mining tenements and any other activities on land vested in the Conservation Commission.

Changes in purpose or boundaries, including advice on any contentious issue or activity and the proposed excision of areas that are not of value in maintaining biological diversity, are considered at the monthly meetings of the Conservation Commission. Advice on applications is subsequently provided to the Minister for Environment.

The policy for the delegation of decisions on minor changes to the conservation estate to a Commissioner or the Director continued to be implemented. Proposals involving large areas or that involve potentially contentious issues are still considered at the monthly meetings of the Conservation Commission.

Advice on matters relating to leases, licences, permits, mining tenements and other activities such as utility infrastructure proposed on land vested in the Conservation Commission was provided to DEC. Table 3 summarises the Conservation Commission's consideration of CALM Act leases, licences and permits.

**Table 3. CALM Act leases, licences and permits endorsed during 2010-2011**

<b>CALM Act leases, licences and permits</b>	<b>Conservation Commission endorsement</b>
Leases	19
Licences	30
Apiary permits	392

## Management Plans

In an ongoing effort to improve the development and delivery of management plans, the Conservation Commission has adopted three overall principles to guide the preparation of management plans. The planning framework is based on a strategic and integrated approach and is guided by the following principles:

- **A regional approach** – planning areas should relate to a suite of reserves within a geographical area rather than individual reserves;
- **More concise documents** – plans should focus on relevant site specific values, threats and management responses; and
- **Meaningful objectives** – plan objectives and strategies should be precise, specific, achievable, realistic, time-related and measurable whilst allowing for new opportunities as they arise. Plans should also relate to higher level commitments at the State, national and international levels.

The Conservation Commission ensures the implementation of this planning framework through the recommendations provided by its MPRC.

The MPRC facilitates liaison with DEC with the committee's major functions being to improve the delivery of the Conservation Commission's statutory responsibility for the preparation and submission to the Minister of proposed management plans, and for the review of expiring plans.

During the course of the reporting period the MPRC held five meetings and considered a range of matters in the preparation of management plans with special attention to their timeliness and adherence to the Commission's management planning principles.

Over the course of this reporting period, the MPRC advised the Conservation Commission on measures to improve the process of management plan preparation. In particular, the Conservation Commission endorsed MPRC recommendations aimed at improving timeliness in the preparation of management plans through monthly briefings for all management plans in preparation. The MPRC also contributed to final and draft plans under development.

On advice from the Conservation Commission, the Minister for Environment released the following draft management plans for a period of public comment during the year 2010-2011:

- *Yoorrooyang Dawang Proposed Conservation Parks Draft Management Plan 2011*
- *Perup draft management plan 2011*

The Minister for Environment released the following final management plans during the year 2010-2011:

- *Cape Range National Park Management Plan 2010*
- *Rockingham Lakes Regional Park: Proposed final management plan 2010*
- *Jandakot Regional Park Management Plan 2010*

### Summary of management plan progress

The following table provides an indication of progress of draft and final management plans at the end of the reporting period.

**Table 4: Summary of Management Plan Progress – Draft Management Plans**

Management plan area	Date plan commenced	Status
Leeuwin – Naturaliste Capes	April 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Period for public submissions closed on 18 February 2011.</li> <li>Analysis of public submissions and final plan in preparation by DEC.</li> </ul>
Ord River and Parry Lagoons Nature Reserves	March 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public submissions closed 17 November 2010.</li> <li>Analysis of public submissions and final plan in preparation by DEC.</li> </ul>
Northern Yilgarn	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>September 2010- the then Minister for Environment and Minister for Mines and Petroleum announced a new tenure proposal for the Northern Yilgarn area.</li> <li>October 2010- withdrawal of the draft plan by the Conservation Commission to allow for a review in light of the announcement.</li> </ul>
Yoorrooyang Dawang Conservation Parks	June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Yoorrooyang Dawang Proposed Conservation Parks Draft Management Plan 2011</i> released on 25 March 2011.</li> <li>Public comment submissions period closed on 27 May 2011.</li> <li>Analysis of public submissions and final plan in preparation by DEC.</li> </ul>
Albany Coastal	September 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 2009- Conservation Commission approved preparation of draft plan and plan area.</li> </ul>
Barrow Island	October 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 2010- Conservation Commission endorsed the draft plan for release.</li> </ul>
Blackwood Plateau	April 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2010- Conservation Commission approved preparation of draft plan and plan area.</li> </ul>
Esperance coastal reserves	March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2010- Conservation Commission approved preparation of draft plan and plan area.</li> </ul>
Kalbarri Shark Bay	1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 2010- Conservation Commission approved preparation of draft plan and plan area.</li> </ul>
Perup	July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Perup draft management plan 2011</i> released on 31 March 2011.</li> <li>Public comment submissions period closed on 3 June 2011.</li> <li>Analysis of public submissions and final plan in preparation by DEC.</li> </ul>
Purnululu	March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2010- Conservation Commission approved preparation of draft plan and plan area.</li> </ul>
Swan Coastal Plain South	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May 2011- Conservation Commission endorsed changes to the planning area.</li> </ul>
Yanchep	August 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May 2010- public submission period closed on draft</li> </ul>

Neerabup		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plan.</li> <li>Analysis of public submissions and final plan in preparation by DEC.</li> </ul>
Tuart Forest	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>February 2010- Conservation Commission endorsed plan to proceed as a concise, single park.</li> </ul>

**Table 4: Summary of Management Plan Progress – Final Management Plans**

Management plan area	Date plan commenced	Status
Cape Range National Park	May 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>August 2010- the then Minister for Environment released the <i>Cape Range National Park Management Plan 2010</i>.</li> </ul>
Dryandra Woodland	August 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2010- Conservation Commission endorsed minor changes to the management plan.</li> </ul>
Millstream-Chichester	January 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>February 2011- Conservation Commission endorsed minor changes to the management plan.</li> </ul>
Rockingham Lakes Regional Park	1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>November 2010- Minister for Environment released the <i>Rockingham Lakes Regional Park: Proposed final management plan 2010</i>.</li> </ul>
Shannon-D'Entrecasteaux National Park	January 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May 2009- final plan forwarded to Minister for consideration.</li> </ul>
Shark Bay Reserves	May 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2010- Conservation Commission endorsed minor changes to the management plan.</li> </ul>
Jandakot Regional Park	1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 2010- the then Minister for Environment released the <i>Jandakot Regional Park Management Plan 2010</i>.</li> </ul>
Lane Poole	January 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2010- Conservation Commission endorsed minor changes to the management plan.</li> </ul>

## Forest Management

The Conservation Commission's objective in relation to forest management is to have the State forest and timber reserves that are vested in the Conservation Commission managed on an ecologically sustainable basis and apply those principles in the management of forest produce throughout Western Australia.

In order to achieve that objective, the Conservation Commission has the following strategies in place:

### Strategies

- prepare, through the agency of DEC acting jointly with the FPC and any relevant water utility, and with appropriate research and consultation, a ten-year Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the period 2004 – 2013;
- monitor, assess and audit existing and new FMP's;
- provide advice on principles of ecologically sustainable forest management with respect to the State forest and timber reserves and forest produce and forest products throughout the State; and

- provide advice to the Minister for Environment on the production and harvesting of forest products and forest produce to maintain a sustained yield, including areas not covered by the FMP's.

### **Old-Growth Forests**

Through the FMP approximately 331,370 hectares of old-growth forest has been set aside from timber harvesting in formal and informal reserves.

The FMP also identifies an additional portion of forest for the Conservation Commission to assess. This portion of the FMP area consists of 9,387 ha of State forest which was reclassified from old-growth forest to non old-growth forest by DEC (ex CALM) between 1997 and 2001. A further 2,650 hectares of other crown land which is not vested in the Conservation Commission was also reclassified in DEC's corporate database during the same period and is also subject to this assessment.

The methodology applied for these assessments is outlined in the document *Assessment Criteria and Process for the Conservation Commission Review of Old-Growth Amendments* which was released in December 2005. This document describes the process for the assessment of reclassifications of old-growth forest together with a process to allow the public to nominate areas of forest they consider to be old growth for assessment by the Conservation Commission. There was considerable stakeholder consultation through its development, including the provision of field demonstrations for interested stakeholders. The assessment process is ongoing and involves remote and field assessment techniques.

To facilitate greater public access to these reports an on-line publishing system has been developed for the Conservation Commission website. Detailed results including aerial maps of all old-growth assessments can be easily accessed via the Conservation Commission's website at <http://www.conservation.wa.gov.au>. During the reporting period the Conservation Commission undertook and published the following assessments of old-growth forest:

#### **Reclassified old-growth forest review areas**

##### **Collins**

Both field assessment and remote analysis were undertaken for three areas within Collins forest block totalling approximately 18 hectares. Field surveys revealed stumps present throughout the areas assessed. The recommendation made by the Conservation Commission was that the 18 hectares within the Collins forest block did not meet the criteria of old-growth forest.

##### **Iffley**

Both field assessment and remote analysis were undertaken for areas within Iffley forest block totalling approximately six hectares. Field surveys revealed evidence of intensive harvesting with greater than 10 stumps per hectare and some areas of non-forest. The recommendation made by the Conservation Commission was that the six hectares within the Iffley forest block did not meet the criteria of old-growth forest.



## Yornup

Both field assessment and remote analysis were undertaken for three areas within Yornup forest block totalling approximately 44 hectares. Field surveys revealed evidence of intensive logging from previous lease activity and confirmed infestations of dieback. The recommendation made by the Conservation Commission was that the 44 hectares within Yornup forest block did not meet the criteria of old-growth forest.

### *Summary of assessment of reclassified old-growth forest review areas*

During the reporting period, approximately 68 hectares, in three forest blocks, were subject to reclassification work that was completed and endorsed by the Conservation Commission. Of the 68 hectares, the reclassification to non old-growth was confirmed for all 68 hectares. Please see Table 5 for a breakdown of the assessments.

**Table 5: Summary of old-growth assessment carried out during the reporting period**

Block Name	Area classified as old-growth (ha)	Area classified as non old-growth (ha)	Total area under review (ha)
Collins	Nil	18	18
Iffley	Nil	6	6
Yornup	Nil	44	44
Total area	Nil	68	68

### *Public nomination of old-growth*

As required in the FMP, and further detailed in the Conservation Commission's paper *Assessment criteria and process for the Conservation Commission review of old-growth amendments*, there is a public nomination process for persons to request the Conservation Commission to assess whether areas should be classified as old-growth forest in DEC's corporate database.

During the reporting period the Conservation Commission received two such requests, for Warrup and Clarke forest blocks. Reports have been published for the Warrup community nomination. A full assessment and report was not undertaken for the Clarke community nomination.

## Warrup

Warrup forest block contains predominantly jarrah forest. Both remote and field assessments were conducted in an area of approximately 573 hectares. Canopy sampling was undertaken at seven different locations and stump data was collected for more than half of the nominated area. A total of 259 hectares (minus future mapping from DEC on diverse ecotype zone informal reserves) was determined to meet the criteria for minimally disturbed old-growth forest.

## Clarke

Clarke forest block contains predominantly jarrah forest with varying predominance of marri and blackbutt. Remote assessment and initial inspections by the Conservation

Commission and dieback interpreters, strongly indicates that the area is unlikely to meet the criteria for old-growth forest because of past logging and the presence of dieback. The Conservation Commission determined the area in Clarke did not warrant a full assessment as the area is not proposed for logging (falls within a Fauna Habitat Zone) and is unlikely to meet the criteria for old-growth forest.

**Table 6: Summary of public nominations carried out during the reporting period**

Block Name	Area found to be old-growth (ha)	Area found to be non old-growth (ha)	Total area assessed under nomination (ha)
Warrup	259	314	573
Clarke	Nil	37	37
Total area	259	351	610

## Performance Assessment

The following Performance Assessments were published in the reporting period 2010-2011:

- *Albany Parks Performance Assessment* - the Albany coast and hinterland contains iconic landscapes with diverse values. The report detailed the internationally and nationally significant biodiversity, social and landscape values of the conservation reserves in the area, the threats to these values and an evaluation of the management response.
- *Wungong Catchment Trial (Part A)* – this Forest Management Plan Performance Assessment (FMPPA) reviewed the context and planning of the Water Corporation’s ‘Wungong Catchment Environment and Water Management Project’ (Wungong Project).
- *Wungong Catchment Trial (Part B)* - this FMPPA reviewed the operational activities undertaken as part of the Wungong Project.
- *Dieback performance assessment*- in this assessment report the Conservation Commission has examined documentation relating to policy, protocols, guidelines and local area dieback management planning.

During this reporting period, the Conservation Commission also undertook a 12 month review for the following previous performance assessments:

- *Purnululu National Park Performance Assessment*, and
- *Yalgorup National Park Performance Assessment*.

## Interaction with Other Agencies

In order to ensure it effectively conducts its responsibilities the Conservation Commission works closely with a range of other agencies on a variety of issues. The Conservation Commission works closely with DEC on a day to day basis.

The Conservation Commission works collaboratively with other environmental bodies including the Environmental Protection Authority and the Marine Parks and Reserves

Authority. It also has association with the FPC, Department of Mines and Petroleum, Tourism WA, Western Australian Museum, local government authorities, Department of Indigenous Affairs, Rottnest Island Authority, Main Roads, Water Corporation, Department of Water, Office of Native Title, Swan River Trust, and Office of the Auditor General for Western Australia.

One of the Conservation Commission's key functions is to promote and facilitate community involvement in the conservation of Western Australia's environment. Outside the public sector, the Conservation Commission works with a range of community, conservation and industry stakeholders, as well as Aboriginal representatives to ensure that policies and plans meet the balanced needs of the wider community. This includes regular interactions with the Conservation Council of Western Australia and the Australian Wildlife Conservancy.

## Participation on External Committees

The following members of the Conservation Commission also participated in the following external committees:

Mrs Patricia Barblett AM	<p>Founder and immediate past President, now an Executive Board Member of Forum Advocating Cultural and Ecotourism.</p> <p>Capes Parks Community Advisory Committee</p> <p>Member Maritime Museum Advisory Committee</p> <p>Deputy Chair, Project Reference Committee for Southern Darling Region Recreation Strategy for Inland Water Bodies and Catchments</p> <p>Deputy Chair Rottnest Conservation Foundation</p> <p>Member of the Kaitajin Mia Mia Aboriginal Foundation (Bush University)</p> <p>Member Southern Darling Range Recreational Study</p>
Ms Regina Flugge	<p>Millstream Chichester Park Council</p> <p>Member Coastal Planning and Coordination Council</p> <p>Non-Executive Director Rangelands NRM WA</p>
Karen Jacobs	<p>Director Noongar Property Holdings</p> <p>Chair of Kaitajin Mia Mia Aboriginal Foundation</p> <p>Independent Director of the Ngarluma Tharndu Karrungu Maya Ltd (Ngarluma Trust)</p> <p>Director of Indigenous Economic Solutions</p>
Dr David Newsome	<p>Shark Bay Advisory Committee</p> <p>Coral Coast Advisory Committee</p> <p>Member Editorial Board <i>Tourism in Marine Environments</i></p> <p>Member Editorial Board <i>Journal of Ecotourism</i></p> <p>Member of the Queensland Horse Trails Scientific Advisory Committee</p> <p>Member IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas</p> <p>Honorary Advisory Committee member Hong Kong Geopark Guide System</p> <p>Advisor Geoheritage Institute of Iran</p>

Mr Graeme Rundle                      Kalbarri National Park Community Advisory Committee  
Yanchep and Neerabup National Parks Community  
Advisory Committee  
Tuart Forest Community Advisory Committee

Mr Bill Mitchell                      Chair Rangelands NRM WA

## **Significant Issues Impacting the Agency**

### ***Joint Management***

The joint management of Western Australia's natural areas is an ongoing priority of the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission will continue to seek opportunities to become more closely involved in joint management initiatives. The Conservation Commission's role in joint management includes statutory management planning and performance assessment.

### ***Improving the Management Planning Process***

The implementation of changes to the way in which management plans are prepared remains a major task for the Conservation Commission and its staff. The Conservation Commission is currently working with Parks and Visitor Services (DEC) to establish the most effective way of implementing the Conservation Commission's principles for management planning and improving the delivery and presentation of management plans. DEC's support has been pivotal in the implementation of recent Conservation Commission resolutions to improve the preparation of management plans, particularly through ongoing liaison with the MPRC.

### ***Performance Assessment***

As part of its ongoing responsibility for audit, the Conservation Commission will continue to implement its performance assessment program, including fire related assessments, assessments under the FMP and assessments of management plan implementation in reserves in other parts of the State.

### ***Greater Community Engagement***

The need for greater community engagement and participation in the activities of the Conservation Commission continues to be a major consideration. The Conservation Commission also acknowledges that there is still a degree of confusion as to the roles and responsibilities of the Conservation Commission amongst the general public.

During this reporting period, the Conservation Commission undertook major modifications to its website to improve public access to relevant information and promote a better understanding of its role and functions under the CALM Act.

### ***Proposed Reserves***

A number of proposed reserves are awaiting tenure changes so they can be added to the conservation estate. This includes a large number of pastoral leases in the Rangelands purchased by DEC for the purpose of conservation, along with long standing reservation proposals. The Conservation Commission considers that a whole of Government approach is required in order to meet appropriate comprehensive, adequate and representative outcomes.

In addressing the need for further guidance, the Conservation Commission has also developed a position statement on the implementation of conservation reserve proposals and the need to ensure that land acquisitions result in final reservation under an appropriate CALM Act tenure (see *Position Statement No. 2: Implementation of Conservation Reserve Proposals*).

## Disclosures and Legal Compliance

### Financial Statements

Funding for the activities of the Conservation Commission is provided for by DEC with administrative arrangements being handled by that agency. The reporting and audit of expenditure is undertaken by DEC and, as required, is incorporated into DEC's annual report.

The total expenditure by the Conservation Commission, and the associated support unit, was \$840,000 as identified in DEC's 2010-2011 annual report.

### Detailed Key Performance Indicators Information

The Conservation Commission's performance is reported at *Performance of statutory functions by the Conservation Commission of WA – Service 3* in DEC's annual report. The performance indicator reported is the average cost per management plan and significant policy submitted for the Conservation Commission's consideration.

### Other legal requirements

#### **Advertising**

(*Electoral Act 1907*, section 175ZE)

In accordance with the reporting requirements of section 175ZE of the *Electoral Act 1907*, the Conservation Commission of Western Australia incurred an expenditure of \$376.31 in advertising, market research, polling, direct mail and media advertising during this reporting period.

#### **Disability access and inclusion plan outcomes**

(*Disability Services Act 1993*, amended 2004, section 29)

Under its operational relationship agreement with DEC that agency's policy relating to disability access and inclusion is adopted.

#### **Compliance with public sector standards and ethical codes**

(*Public Sector Management Act 1994*, section 31(1))

DEC undertakes human resource management for the Conservation Commission under an operational relationship agreement.

In the administration of the Conservation Commission, the Director has complied with the Public Sector Standards in Human Resource Management, the Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics and the Conservation Commission's Code of Conduct.

Information on both the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct is provided to employees on commencement with the Conservation Commission.

No complaints have been lodged under the Code of Ethics during the reporting period and there have been no instances of misconduct.

### ***Recordkeeping plans***

A Record Keeping Plan Review Report was submitted to the State Records Office in 2008 in compliance with the *State Records Act 2003* and was then reviewed with the updated document submitted to the State Records Office. A review of management of vital records was undertaken in 2009 and recommendations for improvements to security, storage and retrieval processes have been implemented.

As part of the Conservation Commission's employee induction program, all staff receive basic training in record keeping. This is conducted using DEC's online Record Keeping Awareness program. This addresses employee roles and responsibilities in regard to their compliance with the recordkeeping plan. In meeting job requirements, the Executive Assistant also received ongoing detailed training, through DEC, in the use of Objective, the records management program used by the Conservation Commission.

As the recordkeeping training program is provided by DEC, the review of its efficiency and effectiveness is conducted by DEC.

### ***Ministerial directives***

In the reporting period there have been no instances under the CALM Act section 24 where the Minister has given the Conservation Commission directions in writing with respect to the exercise or performance of its functions.

In accordance with the CALM Act section 17(4), there have also been no instances where advice has been provided to the Minister under section 19(10) and the Minister has decided to act otherwise than in accordance with the recommendation.

## **Government policy requirements**

### ***Corruption prevention***

(Premier's Circular 2005/02: Corruption Prevention)

The Conservation Commission operates under an Operational Relationship Agreement with DEC which includes adoption of DEC's Code of Conduct.

All new staff are inducted according to DEC's induction program, which includes ensuring they are informed about information and asset security as well as guidelines for private use of vehicles, if applicable. The Conservation Commission complies with DEC's administrative policies and procedures as they relate to corruption prevention issues such as the use of credit cards.

### ***Substantive equality***

(Premier's Circular 2009/23: Implementation of the Policy Framework for Substantive Equality)

The Conservation Commission operates under an Operational Relationship Agreement with DEC which includes departmental representation on the Strategic Management Council. Information on DEC progress achieved in implementing the Policy Framework for Substantive Equality can be found in the Annual Report of DEC.

***Occupational Safety and Health management***

(Premier's Circular 2007/12: Code of Practice: Occupational Safety and Health in the Western Australian Public Sector)

The Conservation Commission operates under an Operational Relationship Agreement with DEC which includes provision of occupational safety and health management and the adoption of Occupational Health and Safety policy and guidelines set forth by DEC.

**Table 7. Summary of Occupational Safety and Health incidences**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target 2010/2011</b>
Number of fatalities	Zero (0)
Lost time injury/diseases (LTI/D) incidence rate	Zero (0)
<b>Lost time injury severity rate</b>	<b>Zero (0)</b>

Information provided by DEC Risk Management Section.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Functions of the Conservation Commission**

#### **Policy**

- To develop policies -
  - for the preservation of the natural environment of the State and the provision of facilities, and;
  - for the enjoyment of that environment by the community, and;
  - for promoting the appreciation of flora and fauna and the natural environment, and;
  - to achieve or promote the objectives for management plans, taking into account specific requirements referred to in the CALM Act pertaining to State forests, timber reserves, national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves and other vested land, and;
  - to advise the Minister on the development of policies for the conservation and management of biodiversity and biodiversity components throughout the State, and;
  - with the approval of the Minister, to cause study or research to be undertaken for the purposes of the development of policies.

#### **Estate**

- To have vested in it State forest, timber reserves, national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves, relevant land referred to in section 5(1)(g) of the CALM Act and to have the joint management function with other bodies as provided for in the CALM Act.
- To have the care, control and management of relevant land referred to in section 5(1)(h) of the CALM Act placed with it.
- To consider any cancellation, change of purpose or boundary alteration in respect of land vested, whether solely or jointly with an associated body, in the Conservation Commission.
- To be consulted on matters relating to the granting of licences, leases, permits and mining tenement applications on land vested in the Conservation Commission.

#### **Management Plans**

- To be responsible for the preparation of proposed management plans, and the review of existing management plans for all lands vested in the Conservation Commission.
- To prepare, as the controlling body, proposed management plans for land vested in the Conservation Commission -
  - through the agency of DEC;
  - if the vested land is State forest or a timber reserve, the Conservation Commission through the agency of DEC in consultation with the FPC;
  - or
  - if the vested land is or includes a public water catchment area, the Conservation Commission through the agency of the DEC in



consultation with the Minister (Water Resources) and the Department of Water.

- To submit proposed management plans to the Minister for approval.
- In relation to management plans for land vested, whether solely or jointly with an associated body, in the Conservation Commission -
  - to develop guidelines for monitoring and assessing the implementation of the management plans by DEC;
  - to set performance criteria for assessing and auditing the performance of DEC and the FPC in carrying out and complying with the management plans; and
  - to assess and audit the performance of DEC and the FPC in carrying out and complying with the management plans.

### **Forest Management**

- To advise the Minister on the application of the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management in the management of -
  - State forest and timber reserves; and
  - forest produce throughout the State.
- To advise the Minister on the production and harvesting, on a sustained yield basis, of forest produce throughout the State.

### **Advice and Promotion**

- To inquire into and after relevant consultation, to advise the Minister on any matter on which the Minister requests advice.
- To provide advice, upon request, on matters relating to land and waters vested in the Conservation Commission, whether solely or jointly with an associated body, to any body or person, if the provision of the advice is in the public interest and it is practicable for the Conservation Commission to provide it.