



## Camden Sound Marine Park: News update for charter fishers and commercial tour operators – Issue 2

### A collaborative approach to marine park management



Photo: Shannon Conway

In marine parks, there is a broad division of roles and responsibilities between the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). The Department of Fisheries is responsible for fishing and aquaculture; DEC is responsible for general protection of biodiversity and the licensing of commercial tourism. Both agencies are committed to protecting the State's resources and recognise that the responsibilities often overlap.

Marine park staff from both agencies have been working together to develop an operational plan. The plan details the shared and overlapping arrangements for activities specified in the management plan and for key operations including education, patrolling and enforcement, research and monitoring. Hopefully, this will lead to more effective management of the State's marine reserves through greater cooperation between agencies and more cost-effective outcomes for the people of Western Australia.

### Status of Kimberley marine parks

Camden Sound is the first of five marine parks to be created under the \$63 million Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy, with other marine parks to be created over the coming years. This marine park (and others such as Horizontal Falls) will be jointly managed by DEC and the Dambimangari Traditional Owners while the Department of Fisheries will manage and enforce the relevant fisheries legislation.

Marine park	Current status
<b>Eighty Mile Beach</b>	Sub-tidal area has been formally reserved under the CALM Act. The inter-tidal reservation is being discussed as part of Indigenous Land Use Agreement discussions.
<b>Roebuck Bay</b>	Draft management plan is being prepared for both the sub-tidal and intertidal areas.
<b>Horizontal Falls</b>	Planning has started. DEC is meeting with Traditional Owners and other groups that may be affected to gain an understanding of the commercial and recreational fishing now occurring in the area of the proposed marine park.
<b>North Kimberley</b>	Planning has started. DEC is meeting with Traditional Owners and other groups that may be affected to gain an understanding of the commercial and recreational fishing now occurring in the area of the proposed marine park.

## What to expect when Fisheries and Marine Officers board your vessel

Fisheries and Marine Officers (FMOs) from the Department of Fisheries enforce commercial and recreational fishing rules, including size and bag limits. It is also their responsibility to make sure you have the required licences and certificates. In addition, they play an educational role. As we mentioned in the last newsletter, we now have a permanent team whose primary role is to patrol Camden Sound Marine Park.

It is the Master's responsibility to ensure that all required documents are on board and are produced when requested by an FMO. We suggest you keep items, such as your Fishing Tour Operators Licence and survey certificates, in a file in the wheelhouse ready to be produced when required.

While we understand that you run to tight schedules, FMOs try to cause minimal interruption to your activities. You are required to allow FMOs on board and your help will go a long way to ensuring the checks are done quickly and accurately.

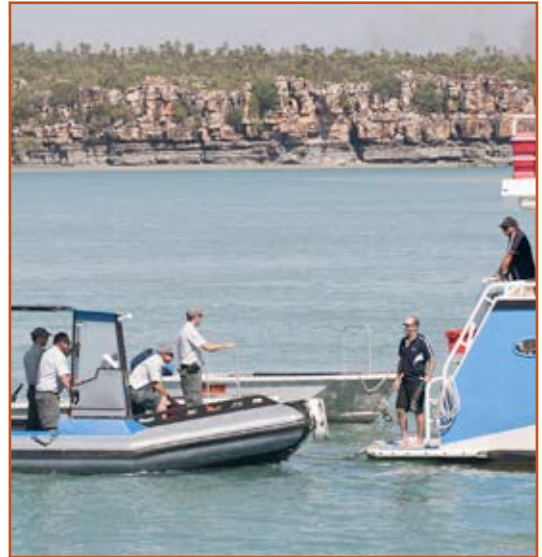


Photo: Shannon Conway

## Catching and consuming fish at sea

In February 2013 the Department of Fisheries introduced simpler rules for better fishing – Statewide bag and size limits. The new rules have received a positive response from the general public, particularly here in the north.

According to the new rules, all fish with a minimum size limit must have a fillet size of not less than 30cm, and fish with a maximum size limit (i.e. barramundi and cod) must be carried **whole at sea** and landed whole. Effectively, this prohibits a person from consuming fish at sea.

We acknowledge that a big part of the charter industry's appeal is giving guests the chance to enjoy the iconic Kimberley fishing experience with the added satisfaction of the chef preparing their catch for dinner. It was never intended to prohibit this. As a result, we are drafting an amendment to the regulations to provide a defence to being in possession of a fillet if it is being "**prepared for immediate consumption**".

Immediate consumption means that the fish needs to remain whole until it is going to be consumed. If it is found filleted, and stored in an esky, fridge or freezer, you may be in breach of the regulation.



Montgomery Reef

## Aboriginal cultural connection

Three Aboriginal groups, Dambimangari, Wunambal Gaambera (Uunguu) and Mayala, have traditional country across the extent of the marine park. Traditional Owners have determined native title rights and interests based on strong and ongoing cultural connections to the broader Camden Sound area.

Customary activities, including use of marine resources, have occurred in the area for thousands of years. In the past, Aboriginal people living in the area travelled by mangrove raft and dug-out canoe to the offshore islands to collect food from man-made fish traps and natural reefs. Saltwater fish, turtle, dugong, crocodile, crabs and oysters are all important food sources for many Aboriginal people.



The Dambimangari people say:

*“We believe all the land, sea, heaven and all living things in our country were put there by Wanjina (creation ancestors) and Wunggurr (the creator snake). They made the law and rules by which we live. They set out the way we must look after Dambimangari culture, plants, animals, people and country to keep them healthy.”*

Cultural protocols mean that the Traditional Owners bear a responsibility for their sites of significance. The Dambimangari Healthy Country Plan 2012 – 2022 indicates that there are many important cultural sites within and adjoining the marine park. Some of these are:

<i>Yowjab</i>	Montgomery Reef
<i>Ngalaan-ngurru</i>	High-cliffy island
<i>Wurrulgu</i>	Augustus Island
<i>Wijingarri Bard Bard</i>	Freshwater Cove
<i>Langawurru</i>	Area around and adjoining Hall Point
<i>Ngumbriii</i>	Raft Point
<i>Gumalamala</i>	St. George Basin

**dambimangari**  
Aboriginal Corporation



### Commonwealth marine reserves

The management plans for both the South West and North West networks were approved and tabled in Parliament on 12 March 2013. The plans are now under transitional arrangements and there are no changes on the water for users of Commonwealth marine reserves until July 2014.

New and renamed reserves most likely to affect Kimberley commercial tourism operators include:

- Eighty Mile Beach Commonwealth Marine Reserve
- Argo-Rowley Terrace Commonwealth Marine Reserve
- Roebuck Commonwealth Marine Reserve
- Kimberley Commonwealth Marine Reserve
- Mermaid Reef Commonwealth Marine Reserve (renamed)
- Ashmore Reef Commonwealth Marine Reserve (renamed)
- Cartier Island Commonwealth Marine Reserve (renamed)

If you hold an approval to undertake activities within the renamed Commonwealth marine reserves (**Ashmore Reef, Cartier Island** and **Mermaid Reef** Commonwealth marine reserves), you may continue to operate under the terms of your existing approval until July 2014.

The new areas proclaimed in the Commonwealth marine reserves network include different management zones within which different types of activities are or will be permitted. You can download the plans from the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC) website at <http://www.environment.gov.au/marinereserves/consultation/index.html>

For more information on Commonwealth marine reserves, please contact SEWPaC on 1800 069 352.

### Cruise management strategy

TRC Tourism is leading a project to develop a Kimberley Coast Cruise Management Strategy. The aim is to make sure marine activity is effectively managed while visitors are offered a high-quality experience, including opportunities to meet Traditional Owners. This project was nominated for funding by the Kimberley National Landscapes Steering Committee.

Traditional Owners, the cruise industry, Government agencies and other stakeholders are being consulted in order to:

1. Identify tourism-related infrastructure needs along the corridor, particularly around key places of interest, with the focus on improving interpretation, protecting sensitive areas and helping manage visitors. This will take into account Healthy Country plans to incorporate information about sites already assessed as being at risk by Traditional Owner groups.
2. Improve the visitor experience through incorporating more opportunities for immersion in culture on country by working with Traditional Owners.
3. Develop a ship (and/or passenger) management system to improve passenger experiences, site impact management and access. It will also assess existing regulations designed to minimise impacts from vessels, such as scheduling. The outcomes will be communicated to both private and commercial vessels.

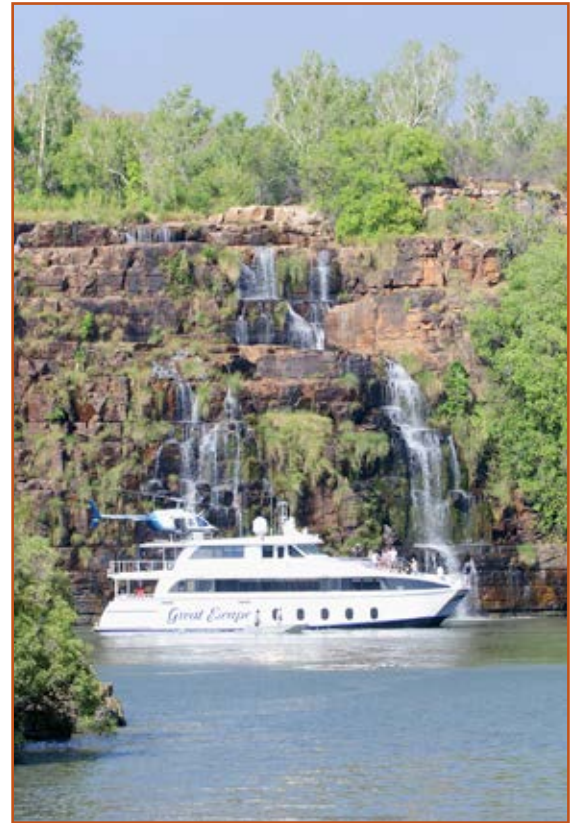


Photo: Shannon Conway

The project is underway and expected to be finalised in late September 2013.

If you have any questions regarding the project, please email the project leader Janet Mackay of TRC Tourism at [Janet@trctourism.com](mailto:Janet@trctourism.com).

### Contact us

This newsletter outlines some of the changes that will be happening in Camden Sound Marine Park and other related information. If you have questions about fishing in Camden Sound Marine Park, please do not hesitate to contact me, Kara Dew, your local Department of Fisheries Community Education Officer.

E: [Kara.Dew@fish.wa.gov.au](mailto:Kara.Dew@fish.wa.gov.au)

Any of our staff at the Broome office will also be happy to assist.

T: (08) 9193 8600.

For more information about other uses of the marine park, please contact the Department of Environment and Conservation.

W: [www.dec.wa.gov.au](http://www.dec.wa.gov.au) T: (08) 9195 5500.