

INTRODUCTION

Western Australia's unique environment needs to be celebrated and protected.

This Government is the first in the history of Western Australia to recognise the need to respect and conserve our environment for future generations.

Our environment is our lifeblood. It is the foundation of the lifestyle we all cherish and sustains our vibrant economy. Under the Carpenter Government our environment has become stronger and healthier, despite the many challenges posed by our drying climate and growing economy.

The Labor Government has already demonstrated its commitment to protecting the Western Australian environment. We put an end to logging in our precious old growth forests. We saved Ningaloo from inappropriate development and have supported its nomination for World Heritage Listing.

Western Australians have given a clear message to Government that they expect strong leadership on protecting and celebrating the environment.

Only a Carpenter Government has the track record, the belief and the leadership required to continue to make the environment a priority for all Western Australians.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- The Carpenter Government has added more than 2.7 million hectares to the conservation estate, taking it to over 20.1 million hectares, or eight per cent of the State's land area, including:
 - Converting former pastoral lands in the Gascoyne and Murchison into 11 new conservation parks and 14 new nature reserves.
 - Creating the 2000-hectare Gull Rock National Park at Albany, which contains several species of threatened native flora and has the most significant remaining stands of scarlet banksia (*Banksia coccinea*) in the region.

- Supported nomination of Ningaloo Marine Park and part of North-West Cape for World Heritage listing.
- Undertaken planning and consultation for the new Ngari Capes Marine Park, 123,300 hectares of unique coast from Geographe Bay near Busselton to Flinders Bay on the South Coast.
- Undertaken planning and consultation for the new Dampier Archipelago Marine Park and Regnard Marine Management Area, which covers 127,000 hectares of marine waters around the Dampier Archipelago.
- Created the Walpole-Nornalup Inlets Marine Park on the State's south coast and released management plans for the marine park and the adjoining Walpole Wilderness Area.
- Developed management plans for the Montebello Island-Barrow Island Marine Conservation Reserves, Rowley Shoals Marine Park and the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park.
- \$21 million to the Western Australian Marine Science Institution to research Ningaloo Marine Park.
- \$15 million to the Saving Our Species aimed at controlling dieback, weeds and pest animals, expanding the biological survey and implementing recovery plans for threatened species.
- \$18 million for new the biodiversity conservation science centre and herbarium.
- New laws to protect and give special status to the Swan and Canning Rivers.
- \$2.5 million eco-education centre for conservation at Canning River Regional Park.
- \$12 million to the fight against cane toads.

WHAT WE WILL DO

- 1. Save the Great Western Woodlands, one of the world's last wild places, by developing a new conservation model that conserves**

and protects the unique environment, supports active stewardship by Indigenous communities, and work in partnership with existing pastoral and mining users.

Taking up 16 million hectares of Western Australia east of the Wheatbelt, between Kalgoorlie and Esperance, the Great Western Woodlands is the largest and healthiest temperate woodland left on Earth, home to 3,500 types of plants and hundreds of native animal species.

It is a breathtaking environment of global significance, larger than the United Kingdom and nearly three times the size of Tasmania. It is also a massive carbon sink, which with better management will make a big impact on reducing Western Australia's overall carbon emissions.

The Great Western Woodlands is one of Western Australia's best and last opportunities to have and maintain a large, healthy ecosystem with abundant biodiversity. It deserves recognition and statutory protection.

The Carpenter Government will work in partnership with Traditional Owners, the conservation movement, pastoralists and mining companies to establish and manage the Great Western Woodlands for the future.

The first step will be the establishment of a Taskforce to identify transitional management arrangements and mechanisms to upgrade and recognise the status of the unique Great Western Woodlands bio-region.

We will also fund a comprehensive scientific study to identify areas of highest conservation values and mineral prospectivity, which will inform the development of a comprehensive management plan for the Great Western Woodlands, and give long term certainty to the environment, industry and Traditional Owners.

To be delivered by the end of 2010, this management plan will recognise the area's Traditional Owners, continue to allow for multiple uses including mining, pastoral and tourism, and upgrade all unallocated crown lands (UCL) to appropriate conservation tenures.

Given the national and international significance of the Great Western Woodlands, we will expect that the Commonwealth Government, industry, and national and international environmental stewardship

organisations will contribute to the long term funding of the woodland bio-region.

New funding of \$10 million will be allocated over four years to fund an immediate increase in science-based land management of unallocated crown land, lay the ground work for an Indigenous Rangers program, support the work of the Taskforce and undertake the scientific study. Longer term funding will be allocated pending the final model.

2. Plan for the long term sustainability and protection of the Kimberley's unique environment and culture.

The Kimberley is a stunning environment held in awe by Western Australians and the rest of the world. It contains many iconic places that are of global significance - like the Montgomery Islands and Reef, recognised for its world class coral reef structures, and Camden Sound, one of the world's major whale calving grounds.

It is critical that we balance the Kimberley's precious environmental and cultural values against increasing development pressures.

We are already working hard with local communities, industry and environmentalists to ensure that planned major oil and gas developments in the Kimberley proceed in a balanced and sustainable manner.

The Kimberley is also facing significant environmental threats from climate change, wildfires, weeds, feral animals and the looming arrival of cane toads. We will do more to manage the existing environment to reduce these threats and maintain the integrity of the Kimberley.

A Carpenter Government will:

- Continue to work through the Northern Development Taskforce to deliver responsible and sustainable development and the best possible outcomes for indigenous culture, heritage, environment and tourism.
- Commit to ongoing support for the Joint Strategic Assessment for the Browse Basin, with additional funding for natural and cultural surveys as necessary.

- Reiterate its commitment for a single hub site for potential liquefied natural gas (LNG) processing, jointly determined through industry and community consultation and analytical processes.
- Commit to undertake a comprehensive science-based regional assessment and planning process, through the Northern Development Taskforce, to identify and plan to protect the West Kimberley's unique marine and terrestrial environment, in conjunction with Indigenous people. This Plan will provide a framework for how the State will:
 - Protect and manage the indigenous, environmental and tourism values of the West Kimberley.
 - Give priority to Indigenous joint management, effective biodiversity protection and nature-based tourism.
 - Identify appropriate land tenures and management arrangements reflecting the social, economic, cultural and environmental values of the region, especially those that empower local Indigenous communities.
 - Identify areas of high conservation value for protection, including marine ecosystems and rivers.
 - Enhance sustainable tourism in the Kimberley and manage cultural and environmental impacts.
- Continue to apply the international principles of free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous people to the Northern Development Taskforce process.
- Support the Commonwealth's assessment of the Kimberley for National Heritage Listing (and possible World Heritage Listing) and ensure that the process balances the needs of the environment, local communities and industry.
- While we are committed to the Northern Development Taskforce process, there is an immediate need to inject additional resources into managing the diverse environmental threats faced throughout the Kimberley. Therefore, complementary to the work of the Taskforce, we will move immediately to:
 - Prepare comprehensive management plans for the existing conservation estate underpinned by biological surveys and extensive stakeholder engagement.

- Consult with local indigenous groups to progress joint management arrangements.
- Employ 25 Indigenous Rangers to help protect, manage and promote the Kimberley environment.
- Upgrade management of the Kimberley, in particular inappropriate fire regimes and invasive species, including the cane toad.

3. Protect the future of our iconic marine environment by implementing a new coast-wide model of marine planning for Western Australian state waters.

It is clear that our marine environment, along the entire coast of Western Australia, is under extreme pressure. Climate change is impacting on our marine ecosystems and fishing stocks. The fishing catch has been in long term decline, and the large demersal fish (dhufish, pink snapper, baldchin groper, breaksea cod and red snapper species) are on the verge of collapse. Our beaches and coastline are changing, affected by climate change, changing water conditions, and development pressures.

Without action to respond to these pressures, industry will lose security, domestic fishers will have few fish to catch, and all Western Australians will face the demise of our treasured part of our unique coastal lifestyle.

It is time to act now for the future and implement a new system of marine planning to deliver the Western Australian coast better environmental outcomes and long term certainty for marine users.

The Carpenter Government has listened to what community, industry and scientists have told us about the best way of planning for the future of our iconic marine environment. It is clear that all users – industry, recreational, environmental – recognise that it is time to change our approach. If we don't act now, we will all lose.

Therefore, the Carpenter Government will implement an innovative new approach to planning the entire coast, based on Regional Marine Planning. It will be applied to all state waters within six years, with the majority of bioregions completed in the next term of government.

Regional marine planning will be a world class, scientifically and internationally recognised approach to marine planning that will:

- Take an independent, ecosystem-based approach to marine planning, based on the zoning of all Western Australian marine waters on a region by region, scientifically-determined basis.
- Formally and proactively involve community, industry and recreational stakeholders in designating areas of use including recreational and commercial fishing, oil and gas, along with protection of areas of high natural integrity for scientific and conservation purposes and growth of fish stocks.
- Improve certainty and security for marine-based industries.
- Improve certainty and sustainability for recreational fishing.
- Underpin economic development opportunities for regional communities on the coast, through new tourism opportunities and sustainable industries.
- Establish a comprehensive adequate and representative (CAR) system of no-take marine protected areas within each bio-region in Western Australia, thus maintaining the ecological values of our unique marine environment.
- Maximise total ocean management by complementing and supporting the parallel process of regional marine planning and CAR reserve declaration including important ecological features in adjacent Commonwealth waters.

This policy will replace the out-dated *New Horizons* approach to planning, introduced by the Court Government, which does not reflect the scale of the environmental challenges faced by the marine environment, or our increased scientific understanding of them.

The Minister for the Environment will continue to be responsible for delivering new marine parks, and regulations will be changed to charge the Minister with demonstrating consultation with the Minister for Fisheries and Minister for Resources, rather than seeking their concurrence.

The existing State Marine Policy Stakeholder Group will continue to play an integral role in representing all key stakeholders in the regional marine planning process.

An independent panel of marine scientists will also be formed to advise Government and to guide stakeholders on the scientific parameters of regional marine planning, including those of conservation and ecologically sustainable use.

A Regional Marine Planning Framework outlining a clear plan for delivering regional marine planning, in an integrated whole of government approach, will be released as a priority within six months of a Labor's re-election.

WHAT IT WILL COST (Impact on forward estimates)

Initiative	Funding	2008-09 \$'000	2009-10 \$'000	2010-11 \$'000	2011-12 \$'000	Total \$'000
Recurrent						
1. Great Western Woodlands.	Additional	500	2,000	4,000	3,500	10,000
2. Kimberley Heritage & Science.	Additional	0	3,000	6,000	6,000	15,000
3. Regional Marine Planning.	Additional	1,000	1,000	3,000	3,000	8,000
Total additional recurrent expenditure		1,500	6,000	13,000	12,500	33,000
Capital						
Total additional capital expenditure						

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