

## **Kakadu National Park Management Plan 2007-2014**

### **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

Section 366 (3) of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) requires a Board for a Commonwealth reserve to prepare management plans for the reserve in conjunction with the Director of National Parks (the Director).

The purpose of the Kakadu National Park Management Plan 2007-2014 is to describe the philosophy and direction of management for the Park for the next seven years in accordance with the EPBC Act. The Plan enables management to proceed in an orderly way; it helps reconcile competing interests and identifies priorities for the allocation of available resources.

#### **Background**

The Kakadu National Park (the Park) is approximately 150 km South East of Darwin. It was declared in three stages between 1979 and 1991 under the *National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975*. Stage One was declared on the 5 April 1979, Stage Two was declared on 28 February 1984, and Stage Three was declared progressively on 12 June 1987, 22 November 1989 and 24 June 1991. It is now protected and managed under the EPBC Act.

The Park is ecologically and biologically diverse. Major landforms and habitats within the Park include the sandstone plateau and escarpment, extensive areas of savanna woodlands and open forest, rivers, billabongs, floodplains, mangroves, mudflats, coastal areas and monsoon forests.

The value of the natural and cultural heritage of the Park to the world has been recognised by its inscription on the World Heritage List under the World Heritage Convention. The Park includes a large area that is listed as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, and many species that occur in the Park are protected under international agreements such as the Bonn Convention for conserving migratory species and Australia's migratory bird protection agreements with China (CAMBA) and Japan (JAMBA).

Under the EPBC Act the entire Park has been assigned the international World Conservation Union (IUCN) protected area category II - national park.

#### **Structure and content of the management plan**

The Management Plan consists of two parts. Part 1 explains the context for managing the Park, including the legal context. Part 2 sets out how the Park will be managed. It has been structured according to the Parks Australia Planning and Performance Assessment Framework. The purpose of the Framework is to achieve consistency and comprehensiveness in the management and conservation within and between reserves. Copies of the Framework are available from the Department of the Environment and Heritage on request.

The Kakadu National Park Management Plan includes six of the Framework's seven Key Result Areas:

- Key Result Area 1 (**KRA1**): Natural Heritage Management
- Key Result Area 2 (**KRA2**): Cultural Heritage Management

- Key Result Area 3 (**KRA3**): Joint Management
  - Key Result Area 4 (**KRA4**): Visitor Management and Park Use
  - Key Result Area 5 (**KRA5**): Stakeholders and Partnerships
  - Key Result Area 6 (**KRA6**): Business Management
- NOTE: Key Result Area 7 (Biodiversity Knowledge Management) is not relevant to this Management Plan as it applies explicitly to other responsibilities of the Director.*

Within the Management Plan, each chapter covers the protection and management of the various aspects of the Park's values and uses:

- Background
- Introductory provisions
- IUCN category
- Joint management
- Looking after country and culture
- Visitor management and Park use
- Stakeholders and partnerships
- Business management

Most sections within the Management Plan's chapters are structured in the following way:

- Our Aim (describes the desired result of Park management activity)
- Measuring how well we are meeting our aim
- Background (explains why the section is needed)
- Issues (indicating the key factors to consider)
- What we are going to do
  - Policies
  - Actions

### **Consultation**

On 15 August 2002, consistent with the EPBC Act, notices were published in the *Government Gazette*, the Australian newspaper, the Northern Territory News and placed on the Department of the Environment and Heritage's website, inviting comments until 31 October 2002 related to the preparation of the draft fifth management plan for the Park. Thirty two public submissions were received.

Paragraphs 368(3)(c)(ii) and (iii) of the EPBC Act require the Director and the Board (established under section 377 of the EPBC Act) to take account of the interests of the traditional owners of any indigenous people's land in the reserve and the interests of any other indigenous persons interested in the reserve. To facilitate this, 33 participatory planning meetings were held involving over 100 people. The Northern Land Council (NLC) also attended most of these meetings. In addition, various stakeholders were consulted during the plan's preparation.

In accordance with paragraph 368(1)(b) of the EPBC Act the Director and Board prepared a draft plan which was released for public comment on 15 February 2006. Invitations to comment were published

in the Government *Gazette*, the Australian newspaper, Northern Territory News, Jabiru Rag, and on the Department of the Environment and Heritage's website. Draft Plans were sent to various stakeholders with an invitation to comment (including those providing comments for the preparation of the draft Plan). Draft plans were also provided to local public libraries and the Department of the Environment and Heritage's Community Information Unit.

Thirty seven submissions were received and in accordance with paragraph 368(1)(e) of the EPBC Act, the Director and Board considered the submissions and subsequently amended some aspects of the Plan. On 6 September 2006, consistent with requirements under subsection 370(1) of the EPBC Act, the Board agreed for the Director to give the Minister the Plan for approval. The Plan was approved on 7 December 2006.

This instrument is a legislative instrument for the purposes of the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003*.

The Plan will commence on 1 January 2007.