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Fraser Island (K'gari) World Heritage Scientific Advisory Committee Communiqué March 2017



The Fraser Island (K'gari) World Heritage Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) met in Brisbane on Wednesday 7th March 2018. The SAC comprises an independent chair and nine members and provides advice to the Queensland and Federal Government on matters relating to the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage of the Fraser Island (K'gari) World Heritage area from a technical and scientific perspective.

The Committee members are enthusiastic for the upcoming events to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the World Heritage inscription. In particular, the event on the 18th April at which time we will have the chance to meet you and the Assistant Federal Environmental Minister, the Hon. Melissa Price MP, on K'gari.

The committee strongly supports the 25th Anniversary celebrations that extend beyond this pinnacle event, with the SAC Chair and a number of SAC members excited to participate in ancillary events. The committee views this as an opportunity to promote the Outstanding Universal Value of Fraser Island (K'gari) to a wide reaching audience.

During the meeting, the Committee continued to discuss the draft Great Sandy Area Management Plan and draft Visitor Strategy for K'gari. The Committee also met with senior members of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) planning group to further discuss the value Based Management Framework.

The Committee would like to acknowledge the value of this meeting and looks forward to ongoing interactions with the Minister and senior officials in QPWS. Please find attached the SAC's overall feedback on the draft Great Sandy Area Management Plan and draft Visitor Strategy for K'gari.



Separate attachment.

The overall values-based management framework is to be applauded. As the theoretical basis for a management plan, this approach is sound and provides the opportunity for best management practice in planning. A significant benefit is that such a framework allows outstanding universal value (OUV) to be incorporated directly and transparently into the planning process. Hence this approach enables Australia and the state to meet World Heritage obligations and aspirations.

Unfortunately, our advice is that the draft plan, in its current form, does not deliver the requirements of the values-based adaptive management planning framework. In many aspects the draft plan, both structurally and in terms of content, is seriously flawed.

We agree that incorporation of Butchulla and Kabi Kabi input is essential before a revised draft plan is prepared. We have identified a number of inconsistencies, errors and omissions that need to be addressed.

Four key areas of concern are:

1. The absence of an overview statement
2. The absence of adaptive management strategies
3. The need for clear Key Performance Indicators for on-ground management
4. Poor integration of strategies across the planning layers.

The Scientific Advisory Committee has met with senior member of QPWS and provided initial detailed feedback. The committee was encouraged by these discussions and we welcome the opportunity to provide further advice on a revised draft.