



## Biological Diversity Advisory Committee

MEETING 12 COMMUNIQUE

held at

Department of the Environment and Heritage

John Gorton Building, Canberra

18–19 May 2004

The Biological Diversity Advisory Committee (BDAC) held its twelfth meeting in Canberra on 18 and 19 May 2004 and was joined by the Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) on the 19 May for a joint one-day meeting.

The Committee finalised discussion of a number of outstanding issues on the work schedule including: the implication of climate change for biodiversity, incentives for nature conservation on private land, the role of local government in biodiversity and vegetation management and protection.

The Chair has proposed that the Committee focus future work on a number of few key issues. Three key issues of particular note were the:

- Proposed review of the effectiveness of the NHT II Regional Delivery Model in meeting national biodiversity objectives;
- The role of role of sustainable use policies and strategies that focus on prevention rather than repair in Northern Australia; and
- The importance of investment in Australia's taxonomic capacity to better guide environmental decision making and strengthen bioprospecting and related commercial industry opportunities.

At the joint meeting on 19 May, the BDAC and IAC agreed that indigenous engagement was a critical component of natural resources management in Australia. In particular, the Committees recommended a national approach be taken to increasing indigenous engagement in the Regional Delivery Model under the under the Natural Heritage Trust.

The Committees noted the critical role that Natural Heritage Trust guidelines had played in increasing indigenous engagement and recommended the following publication be distributed to regional bodies and government agencies:

- *Guidelines for Indigenous Participation in NRM Planning* and
- the *Working with Indigenous Knowledge in Natural Resource Management* series
  - Ways to improve community engagement
  - Recommendations for Commonwealth Agencies;
  - Guidelines for Regional Bodies

The Committees strongly supported the Natural Heritage Trust Dugong and Marine Turtle Project, as a model for a partnership approach to species management that demonstrated Australian government, States/Territories and northern Australian indigenous communities cooperation. An independent peer review of the National Recreational and Indigenous Fisheries Survey was recommended.

BDAC and IAC confirmed their commitment to work cooperatively on joint issues.