

Committee Secretary
Senate Environment, etc
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
Canberra

Submission re Inquiry into Australia's National Parks, Conservation Reserves etc.

These comments will concentrate on funding and recourses as related to Commonwealth National Parks and reserves mainly in relation to the Norfolk Island situation.

- (a) (a) As you are aware Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS) was formed in 1974. We must not lose sight of the original aims and objectives.
- that the Australian Government aims to ensure that adequate samples of Australia's unique Flora and Fauna are preserved in a system of National Parks and equivalent reserves.
 - the National Park concept involves recognition that certain areas are of important to the nation and that their protection and management is of national responsibility.
 - the ANPWS will be responsible for control and management of NP and nature reserves of National Significant in the NT ACT and other Islands and Territories under Australian Government control.

The ICUN definition "preserving in perpetuity for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, areas that contain such distinctive quality of natural features so beautiful or unique that their preservation is in the National interest".

- (b) (b) Norfolk Island National Park was declared under the ANPWS Act in 1986 requiring recovery programs for endangered species and rehabilitation of weed infected areas as well as normal operational requirements .

In 1996 Phillip Island was added requiring substantial extra funding requirements. Since then no extra funds have been added for that. In 1999 the Park manager advised that the majority of the remaining annual budget is expended on operational obligations particularly asset maintenance.

Of all the Commonwealth Parks Norfolk Island has a large proportion of endangered species and this extends equally to Vegetation Communities .The addition of Phillip Island without funding has seriously compromised the ability to meet the obligations of the POM and present and future needs under the multi species recovery program.

The current Park Manager has endeavoured to seek NHT funds to meet needs.

In my opinion Parks Australia should not be competing for other sources of funding. Instead adequate annual funding provides continuity of programs and consistent management in accordance with POM and follow up.

It should be said Parks Australia has professionally managed the NP within the confines of the recourses available.

(c) One obvious threat that comes to mind to the objectives and management of our NP s (Commonwealth level) was when Senator Hill, if I am correct, tried to take “authority” out of ANPWS even attempting to eliminate position of the Director. At that time the NINP became vulnerable to local take over and ANPWS potential to becoming a “lame duck” Fortunately we still have a director.

(d)&(e) Funding for possible extensions to the NP was considered recently. The people in charge of the Commonwealth Reserves fund said it would not apply to Norfolk Island .That needs to be investigated .

Finally the Commonwealth Reserves of Norfolk Island although POM have been completed some years ago have no funding or any consistent management . These areas of NES significance need ongoing management and not the possibility of ad hoc funding such as NHT.

Yours sincerely
John G Andersom OAM