

Progress Report CF 2011-118

North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program strategic plan

Marine Science

Project Core Team

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Update requested

Document endorsements and approvals as of June 20, 2017, 3:35 p.m.

Project Team

required

Program Leader

required

Directorate

required

North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program strategic plan

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Context

The North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program (NWSFTCP) is one of four environmental additional undertakings for the Gorgon Gas project at Barrow Island. The purpose of the offset is to increase the conservation and protection of the Northwest Shelf flatback turtle population through: surveying, monitoring and research; reducing interference to key breeding and feeding locations; and establishing information and education programs. The Marine Science Program coordinates the planning and implementation of works required for the NWSFTCP in addition to coordinating general research and monitoring of marine turtles in Western Australia. The NWSFTCP has a range of governance arrangements that include an Advisory Committee and a Panel of Experts.

Aims

- Develop a conservation plan for marine turtles in Western Australian as an overarching document to guide marine turtle conservation activities and to provide context for the NWSFTCP.
- Develop a Strategic Plan for the NWSFTCP to outline the scientific, management and communication activities over the next five years in the context of long-term goals.
- Establish the governance arrangements for the NWSFTCP.

Progress

In the past year a range of projects outlined in the draft Strategic Conservation Plan progressed or were initiated and included:

- thermal studies on embryonic development;
- preliminary data collected on fox impact on clutches of eggs at Mundabullangana Station;
- nesting sites were mapped across the Kimberley as part of the WAMSI Turtle project turtle;
- neonate flatback turtles were tracked using solar powered GPS transmitters;
- hosted the 2nd Australian and 2nd Western Australia Symposia;
- the NWSFTCP Advisory Committee met twice and reviewed budgets and reports.

Management implications

At this early stage of the NWSFTCP, the delivery of a comprehensive plan is setting the foundations of the program that establish a robust program of works within a strategic long-term framework. This offset fund provides an opportunity to fill key gaps in knowledge, establish a long-term robust monitoring program, and deliver management outcomes for flatback turtles whilst more generally providing the framework for conservation and management of all marine turtles in Western Australia.

Future directions

- *Strategic Conservation Plan for Marine Turtles in Western Australia* finalised and published.
- *Strategic Plan for the NWSFTCP* finalised and published.
- Submissions to Marine Park Coordinators describing the status of marine turtles and the pressures that impact them, as part of Western Australian Marine Monitoring Program reporting.