

CABINET MINUTE

DECISION NO.

BRISBANE, 24/2/1992

01938

SUBJECT: *Proposed Listing of Parts of Moreton Bay and Bowling Green Bay National Park under the RAMSAR Convention.*

(Submission No. *01846*)

55 Copies Received at *10:00* ^{a.m.}/_{p.m.} *18/2/1992* *COMBEN*

Copies Made

CIRCULATION DETAILS

1	MR GOSS		21	Premier's <i>52B</i>	Copy of relevant Submission attached
2	MR BURNS	<i>47B</i> <i>Re: DONS SN 11-3-92</i>	22	Housing & <i>53B</i>	Copy of relevant Submission attached
3	MR DE LACY	Submission attached	23	Treasury <i>54B</i>	Copy of relevant Submission attached
4	MR WARBURTON		24	Police & Emergency Services	
5	MR GIBBS		25	Tourism, Sport and Racing	Copy of relevant Submission attached
6	MR HAMILL	<i>48B</i> Copy of relevant Submission attached	26	Transport <i>12B</i>	
7	MR VAUGHAN		27	DEVETIR	
8	MR CASEY	<i>50B</i> Copy of relevant Submission attached	28	Primary Industries <i>9B</i>	Copy of relevant Submission attached
9	MR BRADDY		29	Education	
10	MR COMBEN	<i>51G</i> Copy of relevant Submission attached	30	Env & Heritage <i>215</i>	Copy of relevant Submission attached
11	MR WELLS		31	Attorney-General <i>5B</i>	Submission attached
12	MS WARNER		32	Family Services & Abor & Is Affairs <i>155B</i>	Copy of relevant Submission attached
13	MR MILLINER		33	Justice & Corrective Services <i>1</i>	
14	MR McLEAN		34	Admin Services	
15	MR SMITH		35	B.I.R.D.	Copy of relevant Submission attached
16	MR EATON		36	Land Management <i>17B</i>	
17	MR HAYWARD		37	Health	
18	MR McGRADY		38	Resource Industries <i>13B</i>	Copy of relevant Submission attached
19	GOVERNOR		39	PSMC <i>16B</i>	Copy of relevant Submission attached
20	Master File		40		



Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage

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Enquiries to G. Inglis

Telephone 22 78849

Your reference

Our reference

01846

18 February 1992

Dr B. Head
Executive Director
Cabinet Secretariat
Floor 13, Executive Building
100 George Street
BRISBANE Q 4000

Dear Dr Head

Enclosed are 55 copies of Cabinet Submission entitled:

**PROPOSED LISTING OF PARTS OF MORETON BAY AND BOWLING GREEN BAY
NATIONAL PARK UNDER THE RAMSAR CONVENTION**

A total of 56 copies of the submission have been produced. I have arranged distribution of the submission:-

<u>Copy No.</u>	<u>Department/Branch</u>	<u>Officer</u>
56	Director-General Department of Environment and Heritage	C.A. Emerson

For further information please contact me on 227 8849.

Yours sincerely

Graham Inglis
Cabinet Legislation and Liaison Officer



OFFICE OF THE CABINET

BRIEFING REQUEST: CABINET DOCUMENT

Minister: Environment and Heritage

Submission Title: Proposed Listing of Parts of Moreton Bay and Bowling Green Bay National Park under the RAMSAR Convention

Number: 01846

Security Classification: Secret Restricted Confidential
Submission Type: Submission Memorandum Authority to Prepare
Authority to Introduce Subordinate Legislation
Appointment Information Paper

Received by Cabinet Secretariat: 18.2.92
11.20 am

Received by Briefing Officer:

Briefing Paper to be prepared by: SPU

In consultation with:

Previous Cabinet Decisions:

Matters arising from Draft Submission: DS 83/91 (SPU - A. MacDONAGH)

Originating Department CLLO: Mr Graham Inglis Telephone: 23 78849

Date and Time Briefing Paper Completed by Briefing Officer:

Date and Time Briefing Paper Submitted to Director-General:

Date and Time Briefing Paper Submitted to Cabinet Secretariat:

Briefing Paper to Premier:

PLEASE PROVIDE INFORMATION REQUESTED OVERLEAF
AND RETURN FORMS TO CABINET SECRETARIAT 13TH FLOOR

Security and Consultation

Security: List people to whom you have shown this document:

Name Department Contact No.

Nil

Consultation: List people you have consulted in preparing the Briefing Paper.

Name Department/Organisation

Nil

Other Matters:

PLEASE PROVIDE THE NECESSARY INFORMATION ABOVE

OFFICE OF THE CABINET
CABINET BRIEFING PAPER

SUBMISSION NO.1846
PROPOSED LISTING OF PARTS OF MORETON BAY AND
BOWLING GREEN BAY NATIONAL PARK UNDER THE RAMSAR CONVENTION

MINISTER Environment and Heritage

BACKGROUND

1. This submission seeks Cabinet approval to nominate two areas of Queensland for listing as Wetlands of International Importance under the International Ramsar Convention. The two areas are:
 - i. that part of Moreton Bay proposed for preservation and habitat protection under the draft Moreton Bay Strategic Plan; and
 - ii. part of existing National Park No. 767 adjoining Bowling Green Bay, near Townsville.
2. These areas would be the first Wetlands of International Importance to be designated in Queensland, which has some of Australia's most important wetland areas. The proposed listing will enhance the significance and importance of these sites with the Moreton Bay site considered to be one of the most important in Australia.
3. These wetland areas are proposed to be listed under the Ramsar Convention, an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for international co-operation for the conservation of wetland habitats. Australia was one of the first signatories to the Convention.
4. It is recognised that conservation of migratory species requires such international co-operation. Species regarded as endangered in the world context are to be found at the Moreton Bay site.
5. Wetland sites are currently under review in Australia by the Commonwealth as a result of an initiative of the Australian New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZEC) Working Group on International Agreements relating to Migratory and Wetland Birds. Listing of these Queensland sites would take place in 1992. The Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade are the responsible Commonwealth agencies in this listing process.
6. Environment and Heritage have indicated that time constraints associated with the review by the Commonwealth Government of the existing Ramsar sites in Australia have pushed the nomination of Moreton Bay to Cabinet before the Moreton Bay Strategic Plan has been resolved. The proposed Moreton Bay site is consistent with the areas proposed for preservation and habitat protection in the draft Strategic Plan.

ISSUES

7. There is one issue which needs to be resolved by Cabinet
 - i. Cabinet should resolve whether Department of Housing and Local Government is a member of the committee.and three issues which may be raised in Cabinet:
 - i. the impact of the convention on State sovereignty
 - ii. obligations which may be incurred under the Convention
 - iii. limits the convention may place on future use of nominated sites

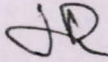
8. The Department of Housing and Local Government has an increasing role in Regional land use planning which is a central aspect of developing an ESD strategy. It is therefore appropriate that the Department of Housing and Local Government be included on the IWG.
9. There may be some concern that the listing of the areas might prejudice the sovereign rights of the state to make land use decisions which may affect the sites. At the time of accession to the Convention the Commonwealth agreed that the responsibility for management of nominated sites should rest with the respective State or Territory Governments.
10. The obligations which arise from the convention include:
 - i. consideration of wetland conservation in land use planning;
 - ii. promotion of wise use of wetlands
 - iii. promotion of conservation of wetlands through the declaration of reserves.



The Department of Environment and Heritage argue that the draft Moreton Bay Strategic Plan would meet the obligations which arise from the convention.

11. There may be some concern that the Convention will limit the possible future use of the nominated areas. The Department of Environment and Heritage point out that the boundaries can be altered or deleted, even after listing and that many issues such as coral dredging at Green Island will be taken into account when the boundaries of the nomination proposal are settled by the relevant Ministers.

RECOMMENDATION

12. Supported subject to the Department of Housing and Local Government being included in the IWG.


John Ridgway/Angela MacDonagh
Social Policy Unit
Ext. 58004
21 February 1992

Unit Director  _____
Deputy D-G  _____

CONFIDENTIAL
CABINET MINUTE

Brisbane, 24 February 1992

Decision No. 01938 (Sub. No. 01846)

TITLE: Proposed Listing of Parts of Moreton Bay and Bowling Green Bay National Park Under the RAMSAR Convention.

CABINET decided:-

1. That detailed boundaries for the following sites be prepared and resubmitted to Cabinet prior to submission to the Commonwealth Government for listing as Wetlands of International Importance under the RAMSAR Convention:
 - (i) Part of National Park 767 adjoining Bowling Green Bay as indicated on Figure 3 attached to the Submission; and
 - (ii) Part of those areas of Moreton Bay proposed for preservation and habitat protection in the draft Moreton Bay Strategic Plan as indicated on Figure 2 attached to the Submission.
2. That the recommended boundaries of the designated areas are to be developed by the Honourable the Minister for Environment and Heritage in consultation with the Honourable the Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government, the Honourable the Minister for Transport, the Honourable the Minister for Primary Industries and the Honourable the Minister for Resource Industries.

CIRCULATION:

Implementation Responsibility

Department of Environment and Heritage and copy to Minister.

Departmental Records

Department of the Premier, Economic and Trade Development.

Treasury Department.

Public Sector Management Commission.

Department of Housing and Local Government and copy to Deputy Premier.

Department of Transport and copy to Minister.

Department of Primary Industries and copy to Minister.

Department of the Attorney-General.

Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs.

Department of Lands.

Department of Resource Industries and copy to Minister.

Perusal and Return

All other Ministers and Chief Executives.

B.M. Head

Secretary of Cabinet



CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION "C"

SUBMISSION NO. **01846**

CABINET SUBMISSION

COPY. NO. **20**

COVER SHEET

TITLE

Proposed listing of parts of Moreton Bay and Bowling Green Bay National Park under the RAMSAR CONVENTION.

MINISTER

Minister for Environment and Heritage

OBJECTIVE OF SUBMISSION

To seek Cabinet's approval for the submission to the Commonwealth Government of nomination of part of Moreton Bay and part of National Park 767 adjoining Bowling Green Bay for listing under the RAMSAR Convention as Wetlands of International Importance.

BACKGROUND

Context

The RAMSAR Convention is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for international co-operation for the conservation of wetland habitats. Australia was one of the first signatories to the Convention and is also signatory to the Japan-Australia (JAMBA) and China-Australia (CAMBA) migratory bird agreements. Sites presently listed in Australia cover three million hectares (Figure 1). Queensland is the only State that does not have any listed sites despite having some of Australia's most important wetlands.

The Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS) has been requested by the RAMSAR Bureau to revise the documentation for each of the 40 sites currently listed in Australia. The review of sites in conjunction with the Wetlands Program in Queensland, funded by ANPWS, enables the Queensland Government to propose significant wetland sites in Queensland to be nominated for listing.

Previous Consideration By Government

Nil.

MAJOR POINTS OF POLICY REQUIRING RESOLUTION

This Submission is brought to Cabinet in view of the requirement that Cabinet be informed of matters relating to International Treaties and the impact they could have on the ability of the State Government to manage areas under its administrative control.

The Commonwealth Government is the contracting party to the Convention and is responsible for ensuring that obligations imposed by the Convention are met by Australia. However, under an agreement reached between the Commonwealth and the States when Australia acceded to the Convention, the States clearly have the responsibility for managing the nominated sites. A copy of relevant correspondence on management arrangements is at Attachment 1.

The proposed Moreton Bay nomination site (Figure 2) coincides with those areas which are proposed for preservation and habitat protection in the draft Strategic Plan for Moreton Bay.

The Department of Resource Industries has requested that a number of dredging sites in Moreton Bay be excluded from the listing. These are the sub-fossil coral dredging sites near Green Island and Wellington Point, the sites of foundry and industrial sand extraction in the Rous Channel and a proposed silica sand loading facility at Myora, as indicated on Figure 2.

The Department of Transport has requested that some flexibility be retained to allow for possible future developments such as roads and bridges. These future needs will be taken account of when the boundaries of the nomination proposal are settled by the relevant Ministers.

The proposed Bowling Green Bay nomination site (Figure 3) covers part of the existing National Park and there are no conflicting land uses over this site.

Management of these sites within the framework of the Convention would be a Queensland Government responsibility. The draft Strategic Plan for Moreton Bay and the Management Plan proposed for Bowling Green Bay National Park would adequately meet the Queensland Government's management obligations.

CONSULTATION

The following Departments and Authorities have been consulted:-

- Office of Cabinet
- Department of the Premier, Economic and Trade Development
- Department Housing and Local Government
- Department of Transport
- Department of Resource Industries
- Department of Primary Industries
- Department of the Attorney-General
- Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs
- Department of Lands
- Port of Brisbane Authority

The parts of Moreton Bay to be nominated for RAMSAR Listing have been identified in the Moreton Bay Strategic Plan as important biological habitats. This plan has been open to public review. The proposed management plan for Bowling Green Bay National Park will be open for public consultation and will include discussion of the management implications of the RAMSAR Listing.

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

Three main areas of concern were raised during consultation:-

- . The respective roles of the State and Commonwealth Governments.
- . The effect listing might have on current and proposed uses in Moreton Bay and to a lesser extent Bowling Green Bay National Park.
- . The need to clarify sites of possible future development in Moreton Bay.

Clarification sought from the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (Attachment 1) confirmed that although the Commonwealth Government is responsible for nominating sites for inclusion in the RAMSAR list, the State Government retains responsibility for managing the sites.

There is a management obligation on Queensland that the sites will be managed within the framework of ecologically sustainable use and habitat protection so that the ecological character of the wetlands is maintained. Human use, including traditional use, of the natural resources found at the sites should be managed in accordance with this principle. This conforms with the approach of State Government agencies to the management of these two areas.

The submission seeks approval to proceed with the nomination of the Bowling Green Bay site and with the nomination of the Moreton Bay site subject to the agreement of relevant Ministers on the final boundaries of nominated areas.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Listing of these sites is not expected to involve any additional financial considerations for the State. Management of areas within the listed sites would still be the responsibility of the relevant Department or Authority under whose jurisdiction they are held.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION

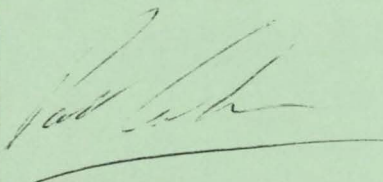
The proposed nomination will demonstrate the Government's recognition of the international importance of the State's wetlands. Based on responses received in relation to the draft Moreton Bay Strategic Plan and those areas proposed for preservation and habitat protection in particular, the proposed RAMSAR listing of Moreton Bay can be expected to have wide public support.

Similar support could be anticipated for the Bowling Green Bay nomination. A draft media release is attached for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the following sites be submitted to the Commonwealth Government for listing as Wetlands of International Importance under the RAMSAR Convention:

- (1) Part of National Park 767 adjoining Bowling Green Bay as indicated on Figure 3.
- (2) Part of those areas of Moreton Bay proposed for preservation and habitat protection in the draft Moreton Bay Strategic Plan as indicated on Figure 2, the final boundaries of which are to be settled by the Honourable the Minister for Environment and Heritage in consultation with the Honourable the Minister for Resource Industries and the Honourable the Minister for Transport and the Honourable the Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development.



PAT COMBEN
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

18/2/92

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION "C"

CABINET SUBMISSION

BODY OF SUBMISSION

OBJECTIVE OF SUBMISSION

1. To seek Cabinet's approval for the Commonwealth Government to nominate part of Moreton Bay and part of National Park 767 adjoining Bowling Green Bay for listing under the RAMSAR Convention as Wetlands of International Importance.

BACKGROUND

2. The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for international co-operation for the conservation of wetland habitats. It is often referred to as the RAMSAR Convention after its place of adoption in 1971, in Iran. Australia was one of the first signatories to the Convention and is also signatory to the Japan-Australia (JAMBA) and China-Australia (CAMBA) migratory bird agreements. Sites presently listed in Australia cover three million hectares (Figure 1).
3. Much wetland fauna is made up of migratory species whose conservation and management require international co-operation. Wetlands, therefore, are truly international habitats and the broad objectives of the Convention are to stem the loss of wetlands and to ensure their conservation. The Convention was amended on 3 December, 1982 to provide for wetlands to be also selected for listing based on their international significance in terms of ecology, botany, zoology, limnology or hydrology.
4. Queensland is the only State that does not have any listed sites despite having some of Australia's most important wetlands. The current revision of listed sites provides an opportunity to redress this situation. Both the Moreton Bay and Bowling Green Bay areas meet the criteria, established by Article 2(1) of the Convention, used to determine the suitability of an area for inclusion on the List.
5. The proposed Moreton Bay site (Figure 2) coincides with those areas on the draft Moreton Bay Strategic Plan which are proposed for preservation and habitat protection. The Bowling Green Bay site (Figure 3) covers part of the existing National Park NP. 767. The international importance of the proposed Queensland sites is illustrated by the species which occur there. Thirty migratory bird species listed in the agreements between Australia and China and Australia and Japan use the intertidal areas of Moreton Bay and seventy-eight species listed in both agreements inhabit Bowling Green Bay.

6. One of the largest concentrations of feeding green turtles in Australia occurs in Moreton Bay. This species is regarded as vulnerable in Australia but endangered in the world context. Within Australia the loggerhead turtle is listed as an endangered species and the most significant concentration of loggerhead turtles is to be found in Moreton Bay.
7. The inclusion of a wetland does not prejudice the exclusive sovereign rights of a Contracting Party (i.e. Australia) in whose territory the wetland is situated. There is provision for Contracting Parties to extend the boundaries of wetlands on the List or, **because of urgent national interests, to delete or restrict the boundaries of wetlands already included.**
8. However, placing an area on the List does increase public recognition of the global importance of the site and places certain **obligations** on the Contracting parties, such as:
 - a general obligation for the Contracting Parties to include wetland conservation considerations within their national land use planning;
 - to formulate and implement this planning to promote, as far as possible, the wise use of wetlands of their territories; and
 - to promote the conservation of wetlands in their territory (whether or not they are included on the List) through the establishment of reserves.
9. Significantly, the Contracting Parties have interpreted the requirements for wise use to mean the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetlands and have adopted a definition of the concept as well as guidelines for its implementation. The goal of the draft Strategic Plan for Moreton Bay - "to provide for the ecologically sustainable use of Moreton Bay and for protection of its natural, recreation, cultural heritage and amenity values" approximates this wise use concept.
10. Management of these areas as required under the Convention would be met by the draft Strategic Plan for Moreton Bay and the proposed Management Plan for the National Park at Bowling Green Bay.

MAJOR POINTS ON POLICY REQUIRING RESOLUTION

11. The major policy point is whether Cabinet is agreeable to the Australian Government nominating the two Queensland sites referred to for inclusion on the RAMSAR list.

12. In Australia, responsibility for nature conservation, including legislation, management of wetlands and conservation of waterfowl is vested with the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments in their respective areas of jurisdiction. The Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS) has Federal responsibility for administering the RAMSAR Convention and the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC) forum serves to ensure that the respective States and Territories keep the Commonwealth informed.
13. The Commonwealth Government, through the ANPWS, liaises with the relevant State or Territory agency in the event that international concern is expressed regarding the management of a RAMSAR site or approval is sought for the involvement of foreign capital in a development associated with a RAMSAR site.
14. The ANPWS established a Wetlands Program in early 1990 and is undertaking several initiatives aimed at improving the conservation and management of Australia's expansive wetland reserves. This includes funding assistance to the States and Territories for wetland mapping and the development of management strategies as well as actively promoting wetlands conservation. Queensland has received a generous proportion of these funds.

CONSULTATION

15. The following Departments and Authorities have been consulted:-

Office of Cabinet
Department of the Premier, Economic and Trade Development
Department Housing and Local Government
Department of Transport
Department of Resource Industries
Department of Primary Industries
Department of the Attorney-General
Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs
Department of Lands
Port of Brisbane Authority

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

16. Office of Cabinet

Offered no objection.

17. Department of Housing and Local Government

Offered no objection, but questioned the effects that listing of the areas might have on adjacent areas and Local Authorities.

18. Department of Transport

Supported the listings provided there was flexibility to delete or restrict the boundaries of the listed sites but considered the Moreton Bay Strategic Plan should be finalised first as transport development, such as major roads and bridges in the Moreton Bay area and proposed development of a deepwater port at Cape Cleveland, could have an effect on the wetlands.

19. Port of Brisbane Authority

Supported the proposed listings but with respect to the Moreton Bay proposal expressed concern that the Port of Brisbane's ability to expand should be protected. The provision in the Convention to provide for the restriction or deletion of areas from listing because of urgent national interests was noted in this regard.

The key port areas corresponding with the current Port Development Area and the future expansion area are part of the Moreton Bay Strategic Plan and are not included in the areas proposed for listing under the RAMSAR Convention.

20. Department of Resources Industries

Offered no objection to the listing of the wetlands adjacent to Bowling Green Bay, but was concerned about the effects that listing of the Moreton Bay site could have on a number of resource extraction and mining infrastructure sites within the Habitat Protection areas as outlined in the Moreton Bay Strategic Plan. These included the sub-fossil coral dredging sites near Green Island and Wellington Point, the site of foundry and industrial sand extraction in the Rous Channel and a proposed silica sand loading facility at Myora. These requirements will be taken into account when the boundaries of the nomination proposal are settled by the relevant Ministers.

21. Department of Primary Industries

Sought advice on a number of aspects relating to the Convention as well as the three main areas of concern to most Departments. All of these points were clarified to the Department's satisfaction.

22. Department of Attorney-General

Provided verbal advice that there were no problems of a legal nature.

23. Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs

Commended the proposed listings but was concerned that the listing should not limit the use of Moreton Bay and Bowling Green Bay by Aboriginal people as a cultural resource.

Requested that there be consultation with local Aboriginal communities regarding cultural use and exercise of traditional rights. These concerns will be considered as part of the public review of the draft Moreton Bay Strategic Plan.

24. Department of Lands

Offered no objection.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

25. Listing of these sites is not expected to involve any additional financial considerations for the State. Management of areas within the listed sites would still be the responsibility of the relevant Department or Authority under whose jurisdiction they were held.

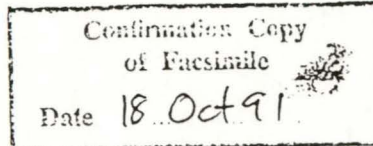
PUBLIC PRESENTATION

26. The proposed nomination will demonstrate the Government's recognition of the international importance of the State's wetlands. Based on responses received in relation to the draft Moreton Bay Strategic Plan and those areas proposed for preservation and habitat protection in particular, the proposed RAMSAR listing of Moreton Bay can be expected to have wide public support.

Similar support could be anticipated for the Bowling Green Bay nomination. A draft media release is attached for consideration.

HEAD OFFICE

G.P.O. Box 636
 Canberra, ACT 2601
 Telephone (06) 2500200
 Facsimile (06) 2500399
 Telex AA62971



DIRECTOR: Peter Bridgewater Ph.D



360/4/1
 BP/BP

18 October 1991

17

91/19876

S

Mr D Boyland
 Acting Director
 Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service
 PO Box 155
 NORTH QUAY QLD 4002

Dear Mr Boyland

I refer to your letter of 15 October 1991 to Dr W Phillips of this Service seeking clarification of several matters relating to the proposed nomination of two sites in Queensland as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention.

Before responding to your questions, may I say how delighted the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service is that the Queensland Government is considering this initiative. Australia has 40 "Ramsar" sites at present. Of the Australian States and Territories, only Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory do not have recognised Wetlands of International Importance at present.

With respect to your specific queries, I have provided comments in the same order as your questions were presented.

1. The Commonwealth Government is legally the Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention and this carries with it a responsibility to ensure that obligations imposed under the Convention are met by Australia. However, recognising that in Australia the State and Territory Governments have the legislative responsibility for land management, it was agreed at the time of Australia's accession to the Convention that the responsibility for upholding the obligations under the Ramsar Convention should rest with the respective State and Territory Governments.

Coordination of Australia's implementation of the Ramsar Convention is affected through the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC), under which an expert Working Group operates. Dr Phillips of the ANPWS chairs this Working Group.



In the past this arrangement has worked very effectively and the ANZECC forum serves to ensure that the respective States and Territories keep the Commonwealth informed of any management problems being encountered with a particular site. Likewise the Commonwealth, through this Service, liaises with the relevant State or Territory agency in the event that international concern is expressed regarding the management of a Ramsar site or approval is sought for the involvement of foreign capital in a development associated with a Ramsar site.

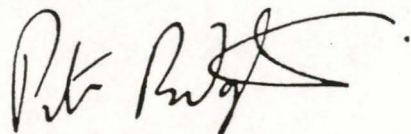
2. While the Ramsar Convention urges Contracting Parties to establish management or strategic plans for Ramsar sites there are many examples where these have not been prepared. Ramsar Convention expects that the Contracting Party will abide by the management plans and guidelines established for the site and, as agreed, this will be the responsibility of the respective States or Territories. Naturally there is an obligation that the sites will be managed within the framework of sustainable use and habitat conservation and that the ecological character of the wetlands should be maintained.

3. The comment provided above relates to this query also. In addition, the Ramsar Convention actively promotes the wise use of wetlands, which in Australia is interpreted as the ecologically sustainable use of any natural resources found at the site. Provided human use, be it by Aboriginals or others, is in accordance with this principle, then the ecological features of the wetland should remain unchanged.

4. With regard to how the proposed Ramsar site nominations will effect land claims under the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991*, this would appear to be a matter for the Queensland Government to resolve. At the time of accession to the Ramsar Convention, each State and Territory gave assurances to the Commonwealth that the legislation needed to adequately implement the Convention was in place. Any legislation subsequently enacted would need to be considered with Ramsar obligations in mind. The comments made under 2. and 3. above pertain to the question of landuse subsequent to Ramsar Listing.

I trust these comments will answer your questions and allow for a progression of this important initiative in the near future. If I can be of further assistance, don't hesitate to contact me.

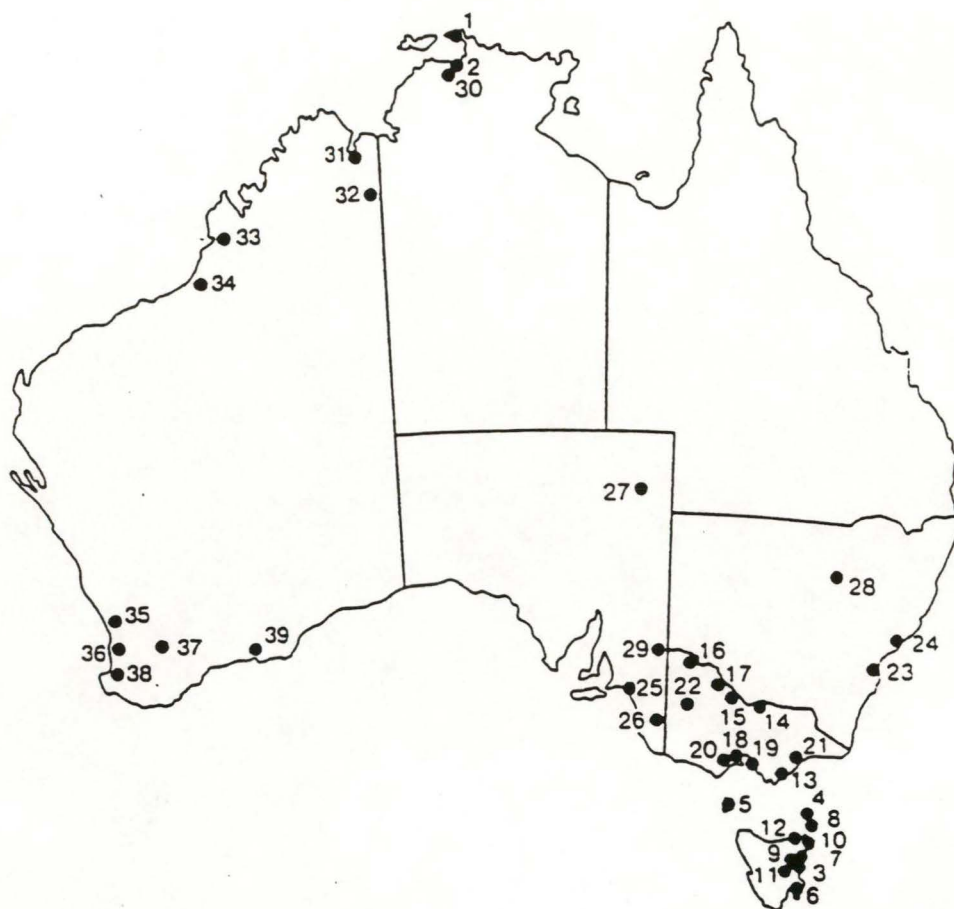
Yours sincerely



Peter Bridgewater
Director

**WETLANDS DESIGNATED BY AUSTRALIA
TO THE
LIST OF WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE**

●40



LOCATION	Area (ha)	LOCATION	Area (ha)	LOCATION	Area (ha)
1. Coburg Peninsula Aboriginal Land and Wildlife Sanctuary	191 660	14. Barmah Forest	28 500	28. Macquarie Marshes Nature Reserve	18 200
2. Kakadu National Park Stage I	667 000	15. Gunbower Forest	19 450	29. "Riverland"	30 600
3. Moulting Lagoon	3 930	16. Hattah-Kulkyne Lakes	1 018	30. Kakadu National Park Stage II	692 940
4. Logan Lagoon Conservation Area	2 320	17. Kerang Wetlands	9 172	31. Ord River Floodplain	102 000
5. Sea Elephant Conservation Area	1 730	18. Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula	7 000	32. Lakes Argyle and Kununurra	150 000
6. Pittwater-Orielton Lagoon	2 920	19. Western Port	52 325	33. Roebuck Bay	55 000
7. Apsley Marshes	940	20. Western District Lakes	30 182	34. Eighty-mile Beach	125 000
8. East Coast Barren Island Lagoons	4 230	21. Gippsland Lakes	43 046	35. Forrestdale and Thomsons Lakes	754
9. Flood Plain Lower Ringarooma River	1 650	22. Lake Albacutya	10 700	36. Peel-Yalgorup System	21 000
10. Jocks Lagoon	70	23. Towra Point Nature Reserve	281	37. Lake Toolibin	437
11. Northwestern Corner of Lake Crescent	270	24. Kooragang Nature Reserve	2 206	38. Vasse-Wonnerup System	740
12. Little Waterhouse Lake	90	25. Coorong and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert	140 500	39. Lake Warden System	2 300
13. Corner Inlet	51 500	26. Bool and Hacks Lagoons	3 200	40. Hosnie's Spring	<1
		27. Coongie Lakes	1 980 000		
				Total Area	4 454 861

Figure 2

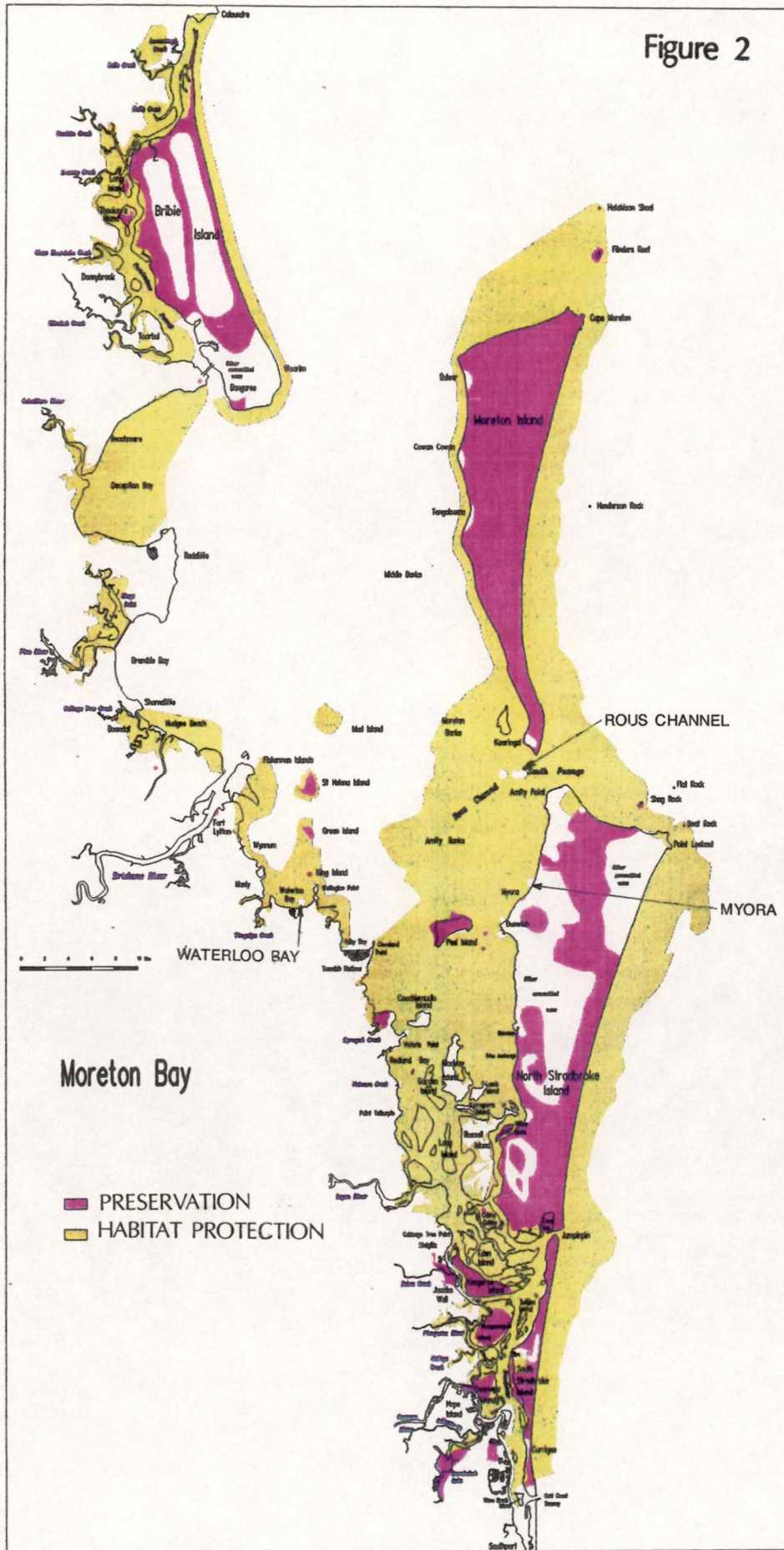
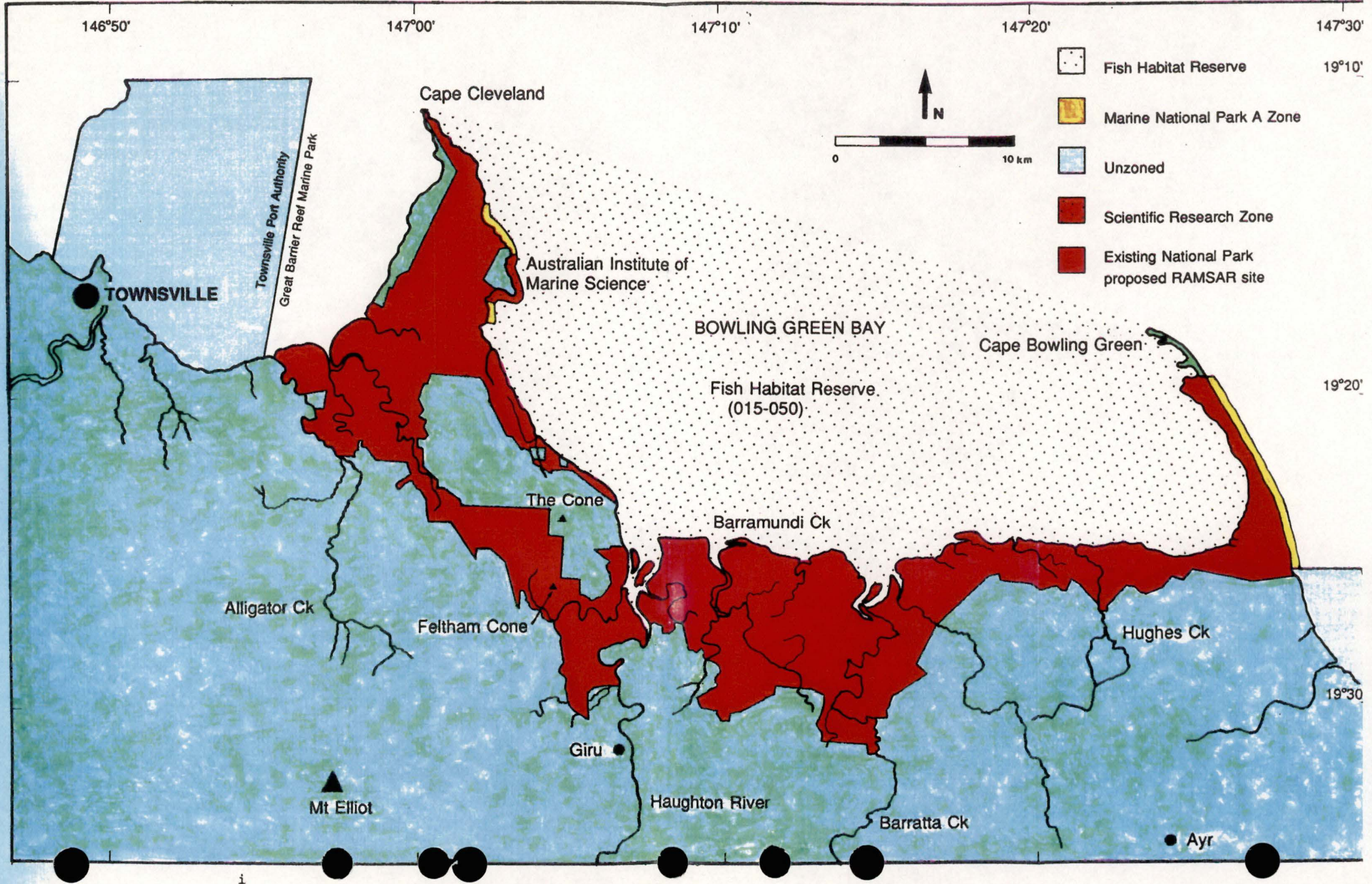


Figure 3

APPENDIX 4: Map of the proposed RAMSAR site at Bowling Green Bay.



MEDIA STATEMENT



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February, 1992

STATEMENT BY ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE MINISTER PAT COMBEN

QLD TO JOIN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT TO PROTECT WETLANDS

Queensland will join an international convention to protect wetlands, the Environment and Heritage Minister, Mr Pat Comben, announced today.

The Minister said part of the Moreton Bay wetlands, in southern Queensland, and Bowling Green Bay wetlands in north Queensland would be nominated to the list of "Wetlands of International Importance" under the RAMSAR Convention.

(RAMSAR was the name of a city in Iran where the convention was adopted in 1971.)

Mr Comben said Queensland was the only State in Australia which did not have any listed sites despite having some of the country's most important wetlands.

"The previous National Party government refused to recognise any international treaties protecting the environment, so our wetlands were neglected," he said.

"Joining the RAMSAR Convention now is an important environmental initiative in this State for the Goss Government," Mr Comben said.

The Minister said the Government was already providing protection for the nominated sites. The Moreton Bay nomination site coincided with those areas proposed for "preservation and habitat protection" in the draft Strategic Plan for Moreton Bay.

The proposed Bowling Green Bay site covered part of the existing national park.

"Joining the RAMSAR Convention will give our Queensland wetlands the international recognition they deserve.

"The Convention also places responsibilities on the Government to properly protect these wetland areas," Mr Comben said.

"The Convention is a necessity because wetlands are a truly international habitat - many wetland birds and animals are migratory species.

"Moreton Bay is home to 30 migratory bird species and is a particularly important habitat for two endangered turtles species. It has one of the largest concentrations of feeding green turtles in Australia and has the most significant concentration of logger head turtles.

"Bowling Green Bay is renowned for its bird life - it hosts 78 migratory species of international importance," the Minister said.

He said management of these sites according to the Convention would be a Queensland Government responsibility. Management would be provided under the Government's Moreton Bay Strategic Plan, which proposed a Moreton Bay Marine Park, and a proposed Bowling Green Bay National Park management plan.

The Minister said the nomination soon would be forwarded to the Commonwealth, which was the official signatory to the RAMSAR Convention.

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