



Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Communications**

COMMUNIQUE

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CHRISTMAS ISLAND STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP

The Christmas Island Strategic Assessment Reference Group is a consultative forum comprising Christmas Island community members, which was created in August 2019 to help inform the development of the Christmas Island Strategic Assessment Plan.

The Christmas Island Strategic Assessment will consider future land uses and development opportunities, including urban, rural, mining, infrastructure and tourism development, in an open and transparent manner, and provide greater certainty to stakeholders. At the same time, it will protect Christmas Island's environment, including its unique rainforest, birds and crabs.

The Reference Group met on 10 July 2020 to discuss the first draft of the Land Use Plan which will form the basis of the Strategic Assessment Plan and Report. This first draft is the result of a process that has seen the Group's members provide their time, expertise and advice over the course of the last year to build a strong future for the Island.

The Land Use Plan sets out where and what type of development can occur. The Strategic Assessment will ensure that development will not compromise our unique environment and its diverse species.

The Reference Group supported the proposed approach taken to consider land use and activities for inclusion in the Strategic Assessment. Members considered the draft Land Use Plan generally balanced social, economic and environmental considerations appropriately. Issues discussed included ensuring flexibility for different types of land uses and allowing sufficient options for tourism developments.

Members also discussed the appropriate timeframe for the Strategic Assessment and there was strong consensus that a 30-year timeframe would provide certainty for the community, investors and developers while also allowing flexibility to meet future challenges and opportunities. Members also noted lease arrangements and length were separate considerations outside of the Strategic Assessment framework.

This first draft of the Land Use Plan has been updated to address the Reference Group's feedback, and detailed environmental assessment will now commence. The draft Strategic Assessment Plan and Report will be prepared for release for public comment, expected to occur in late 2020.

Membership for the Reference Group can be found [here](#).

For more information: www.regional.gov.au/territories/Christmas/strategic-assessment/