

MEDIA RELEASE

MARCH 23, 2010

WA Premier refuses to commit to protecting all Kimberley humpback whale calving grounds

The WA Premier refused to commit to protecting all Kimberley Humpback Whale calving grounds from Broome to Camden Sound in a meeting with Environs Kimberley on Saturday.

Environs Kimberley welcomed the Premier's decision to declare Camden Sound a whale sanctuary, but said the sanctuary would not protect all calving whales.

"Humpback whales are calving from south of Broome all the way up the Kimberley coast (see map below). Although we're glad to see Camden Sound protected, it's not enough, because not all calves are born there," Environs Kimberley Director Mr Pritchard said.

A Liberal Party election promiseⁱ to protect all Kimberley humpback whales is now unlikely.

"The Premier needs to keep his election promise to protect all Kimberley whales and put a comprehensive marine park in place. The Marine Parks and Reserves Authority, which provides scientific advice to the government, recommended in their Annual Report that '...the Government urgently protect the Kimberley through the establishment of a multiple use marine park over the whole of State waters in the Kimberley.'"

"Whales need to be protected from heavy industry in all their calving and migrating areas not just Camden Sound, if they aren't it will look like the Premier is more interested in protecting oil and gas interests rather than the Humpback's." said Mr Pritchard.

The Premier is also still contemplating allowing trawling and commercial fishing to continue in the marine park.

"If this marine park doesn't have proper sanctuary zones where all marine life is protected, and boundaries that protect the Humpback whale calving grounds from south of Broome to north of Camden Sound, then it will be a sham marine park, just meaningless lines on a map," said Mr Pritchard.

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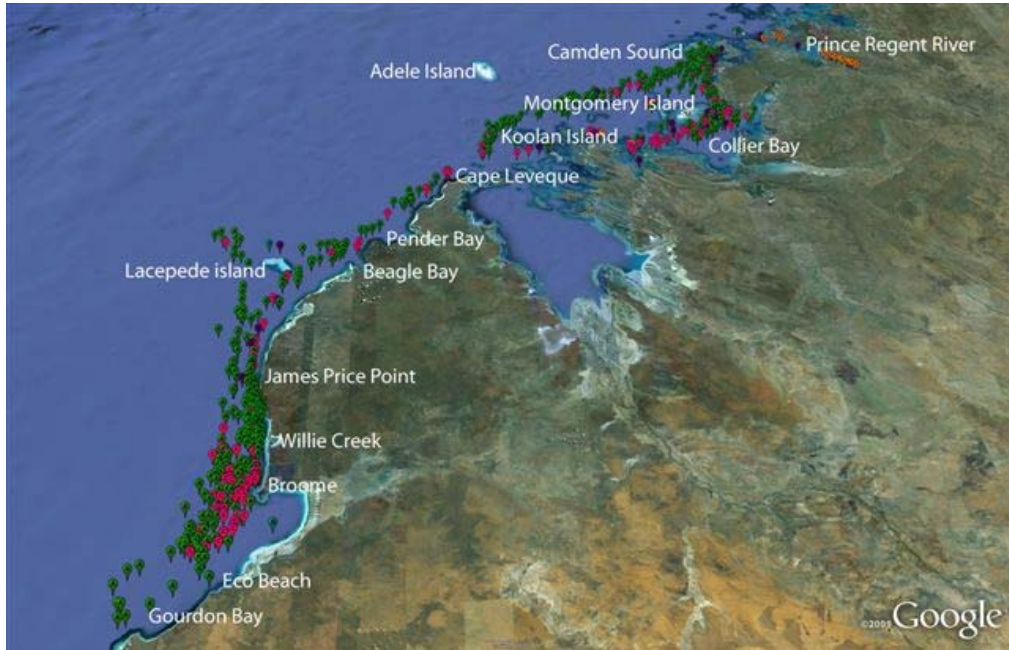
ⁱ Liberal Plan for Environmental Sustainability and Water Management (Page 6)

The Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy will

Study whale migratory and breeding patterns and work with Traditional Owners, Indigenous communities, conservation groups and industry to protect whale migratory routes and breeding areas ;

Kimberley Humpback Whale survey results 2009

(Adult Humpback Whale pods – Green, Humpback Whale cows with calves – Pink)



Source: Kimberley Whale Watching

http://www.kimberleywhales.com.au/Kimberley_Whale_Watching_-_2009_Cetacean_Survey.html