SHARK BAY WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

FOUR NATURAL CRITERIA FOR OUV

CRITERIA (vii)

To contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance

- Stromatolites
- Hypersaline environment of Hamelin Pool
- Faure sill
- Wooramel seagrass bank
- Coastal scenery - Zuyltdorp cliffs, Dirk Hartog Is, Peron Peninsula, Heirisson and Bellefin Prongs
- Fragum beaches of L’haridon Bight
- Inundated birridas and lagoons such as Big Lagoon.
- Strongly contrasting colours of the dunes/cliffs, beaches and adjacent ocean of Peron Peninsula
- Abundance of marine fauna (dugongs, dolphins, sharks, rays, turtles and fish)
- Annual wildflower season display.

CRITERIA (viii)

To be outstanding examples representing the major stages of the earth’s history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features.

- Stromatolites and microbial mats of Hamelin pool
- Hamelin Pool and L’haridon Bight and Holocene deposits

CRITERIA (ix)

To be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals.

Marine Environment

- Unique hydrological structure, banks and sills, steep salinity gradients, three biotic zones
- Faure sill
- Hypersaline environment of Hamelin Pool
- Microbial communities
- Fragum eragatum shell deposits
- High genetic biodiversity (e.g. snapper, venerid clams, bivalves)
- Seagrass meadows, and their role in the evolution of the marine environment
- Wooramel seagrass bank, expanse of meadows and diversity of seagrass species
- Carbonate deposits and sediments
- Northern limit of transition region between temperate and tropical marine environments, resulting in high species diversity (e.g. 323 fish species, 218 bivalve species, and 80 coral species)
**Terrestrial Environment**

- Botanical province transition zone, most pronounced in the southern parts of Nanga and Tamala
- Range limits (145 plant species at northern limit, 39 species at southern limit, and 28 vascular plant species endemic).
- Isolation of fauna habitats on islands and peninsulas resulting in survival of threatened species
- Range limits and fauna species richness (100 species of herpetofauna – 9 endemics, 230 species of birds representing 35% of Australia’s total species)
- Species evolution illustrated in Rufous Hare Wallaby and Banded Hare Wallaby.

**CRITERIA (x)**

To contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

- Five out of Australia’s 26 endangered mammals (Shark Bay mouse, Banded Hare-Wallaby, Rufous Hare-Wallaby, Western Barred Bandicoot, and Burrowing Bettong) survive in Shark Bay
- Bernier Island subspecies of Ash-grey mouse
- 12 threatened reptiles (e.g. Baudin Island Skink and Woma)
- Endemic Sandhill Frog
- 35 migratory bird species
- Threatened Thick Billed Grasswren
- Endemic Dirk Hartog subspecies of the southern emu-wren
- Dugong (approx. one eighth of the world’s population)
- Humpback Whale and Southern Right Whale migratory staging post
- Loggerhead and Green Turtles (loggerhead rookery)
- Some threatened flora species