

**NT GOVERNMENT  
PLANS INSIDE?**

# Darwin Harbour Mangroves or the Gold Coast?

**September 2000**

In Darwin we have a unique Harbour at our doorstep. Darwin Harbour and its catchment cover approximately 450 square kilometres and include significant mangrove communities. These important ecosystems sustain the Harbour. Darwin Harbour is under continued threat from incremental urban and rural developments. In 1990 the NT Government produced the 'Darwin Region Land Use Structure Plan' which includes plans to dam several arms of Darwin Harbour. The plan is still considered current and there is no conservation reserve system or management plan in place for the Harbour. The following information outlines the reasons why Darwin Harbour is important and gives you the opportunity to decide which future you want for our



Harbour.



## **Environment**

Darwin Harbour is home to many animals and plants including:

- more than half of all mangrove species recorded worldwide
- over 100 species of coral
- at least 175 species of birds, 25 of which are listed under international migratory bird agreements
- at least 340 species of fish
- dugongs and dolphins
- five species of marine turtle



The natural and cultural values of Darwin Harbour have been nominated to be listed on the register of the National Estate.

## **Recreation**

Low wooded hills, mangrove forests, rocky foreshores, cliffs and sandy beaches combine to make Darwin Harbour a beautiful place with high environmental and recreational values. Fishing, boating, scuba diving, sailing, water skiing and beach use are popular activities enjoyed by residents and visitors.

## **Indigenous**

The mangrove forests of Darwin Harbour are relied on by Aboriginal people, particularly local Larrakia people for traditional foods. The use of the Harbour's natural resources by Aboriginal people is an essential part of Aboriginal culture.

## **Did you know?**

The mangroves provide protection from storm surge and improve water quality by acting as a sink for sediments and

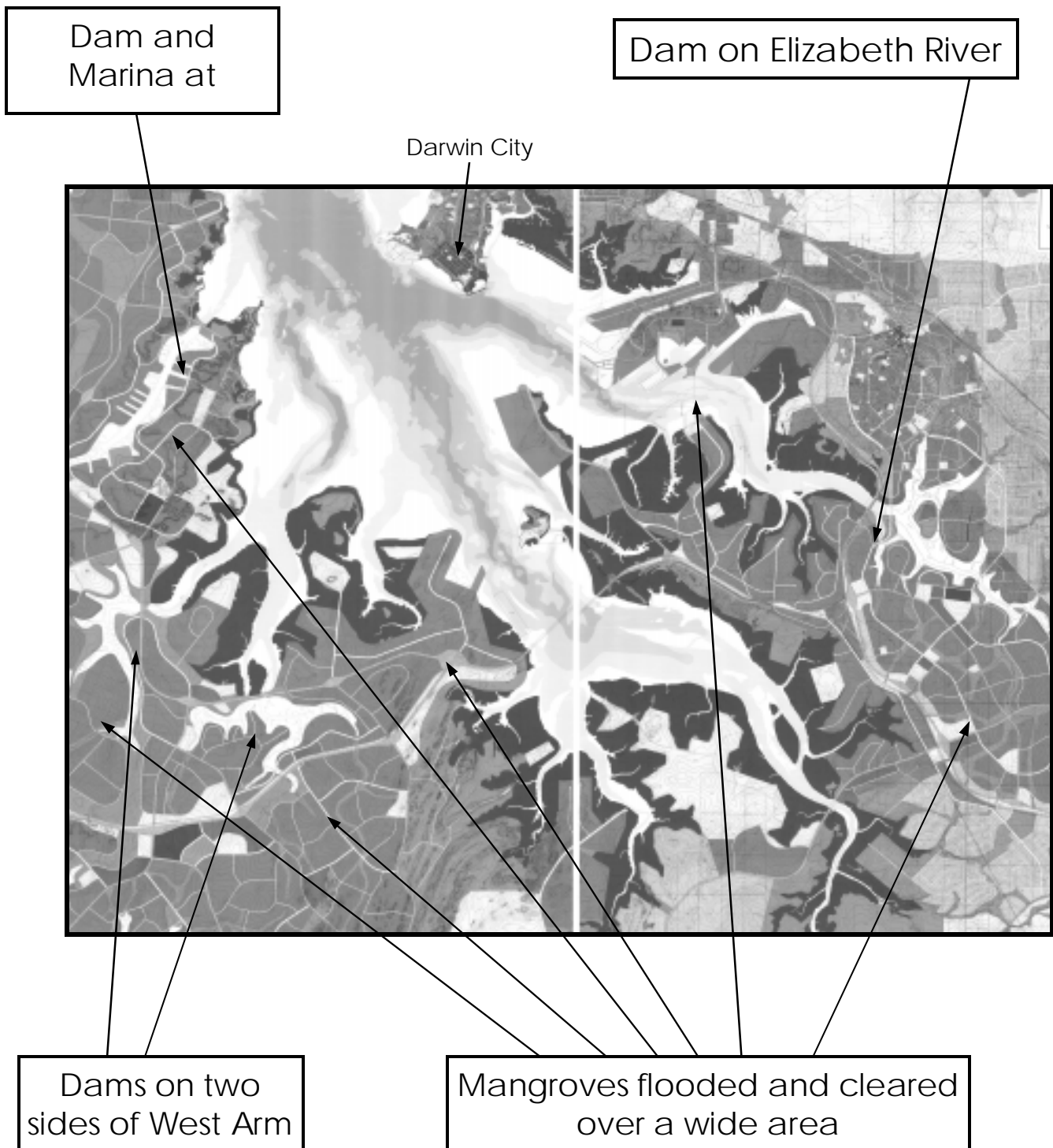
## **Economic**

Economically, the Harbour is important. Commercial uses rely on the continued health of the marine environment.

The mangroves and adjacent environments of Darwin Harbour are in relatively good condition, despite localised development in Frances Bay, Cullen Bay and Bayview Haven. Now is the time for careful land-use planning to ensure that increasing pressure on Darwin Harbour does not compromise the ecological, social, cultural and economic values enjoyed by the local community and visitors to Darwin.

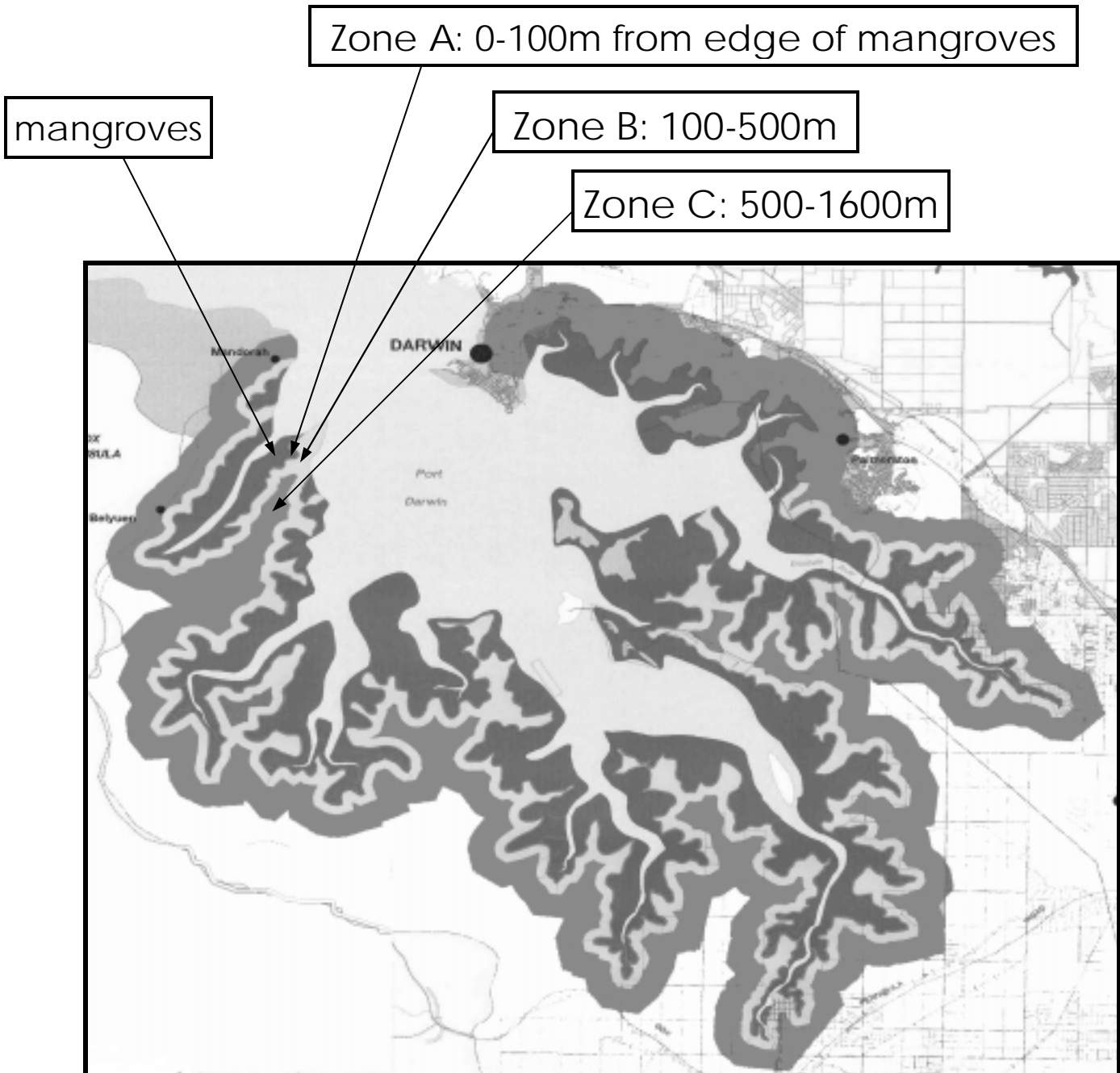
Turn the page for two possible versions of the future for Darwin Harbour...

# NT Government's plans to dam Darwin Harbour



These maps were obtained from the NT government in late 1999. The Minister for Lands Planning and Environment has not ruled out damming arms of the Harbour and the NT Government has recently undertaken a feasibility study for the damming of the Elizabeth River.

# A Community Vision for Darwin Harbour



**Zone A:** buffer zone around mangroves, no development

**Zone B:** limited development, rural buffer blocks, no residential

**Zone C:** limited development, restricted rural.

Residential beyond Zone C.

1600m from mangroves is minimum distance required by World Health Organisation for residential development due to risks of insect-borne diseases.

The Community Vision for Darwin Harbour would see the mangroves protected and the integrity of the Harbour ecosystem maintained while allowing continued use and enjoyment of the Harbour.

# How you can help

If you don't want to see dams destroy Darwin Harbour

If you support the Community Vision for the Harbour

If you want the Harbour protected for all to enjoy

Here are some things you can do:

◆ Write to Tim Baldwin, Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment c/- Parliament House, Darwin, 0800.

Ask him to:

- protect the Harbour and its catchment from all dams,
- conduct a thorough public review of the 1990 Land Use Structure Plan and
- establish a conservation area that protects all of Darwin Harbour's mangroves.



◆ Become involved in the community consultations for the Strategic Plan for Darwin Harbour. Make your suggestions about preservation and the future of the Harbour. Contact 1800 500 667 or 8981 1984 for more details.

◆ Write to the Australian Heritage Commission supporting the nomination to include Darwin Harbour on the register of the National Estate. Address letters to Dr Annabel Wheeler, Australian Heritage Commission, GPO Box 787, Canberra, ACT, 2601.

◆ Write to your local paper and ring talk back radio supporting the protection of Darwin Harbour.

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Yes, I enjoy the unique values of Darwin Harbour and want it to be preserved as it is.

- Please keep me informed about what else I can do
- I have written to Minister Baldwin expressing my concerns
- I would like to distribute copies of this information

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Please return this slip to:

The Darwin Harbour Alliance

GPO Box 2120, Darwin, 0801