



Great Parks Network Benchmarks

***An analysis of membership
management performance***

About Parks Forum

- Industry association of park management agencies
- Representing agencies
- All agencies eligible to join
- Continuum of parks
- Currently 37 members
- Affiliates/Associates





Parks Forum Purpose

To enhance and increase the significant range of environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits that parks provide to the community.





Program Areas

- Best Practice and Standards
- Values and Research
- Leadership and Relationships
- Networking and Conferencing
- Healthy Parks Healthy People



Parks Forum and Benchmarking

- ‘Parks Industry Performance Framework’
- Benchmarking program consists of benchmarks to measure agency performance
 - Environmental, economic, social, cultural & management
- Promote best practice
- Articulate community outcomes





Parks Forum and Benchmarking

- Developed from membership input, IUCN Management Effectiveness and operational measures.
- Benchmarking process identifies
 - Industry strengths
 - Best/leading practice
 - Areas for development/improvement



Benchmarking Process

- Benchmarks developed and members surveyed (2007)
 - Performance against benchmark
 - Source of the information
 - Importance of benchmark
- Results compiled & analyzed
- Report released August 2008



Major Findings

- High degree of conformity in management influences and perspectives
- Highlighted differences between PAs and LGAs
- Industry issues
 - Economic benefits of parks
 - Visitor facilities
 - Ongoing monitoring
 - Adjust practices
 - Learning culture





Benchmarking Lessons

- Need to differentiate performance level
- Policy and systems used to guide management at agency level
- Quantitative measures better suited to a separate instrument
- Benchmarks need refining





Future Work

- Refining of benchmarks to account for diversity and geared to agency level
- Development of a web-based format
- Frequency of reporting
- Sustainability measures separate
- Promote adaptive management
- Greater collaboration



In Conclusion

- Recognise commitment of industry to measuring and reporting on the effectiveness of managing the parks estate.
- Hierarchy of measurement models required to understand organisational performance, management of individual parks and parks systems as well as operational activities.

