

STOPDISNEY.COM



LAST CHANCE FOR
LIGHTHOUSE POINT

March 26, 2021

The Honourable Romauld Sotario Ferreira
Minister of the Environment and Housing
Member of Parliament (FNM)
Charlotte House (2nd Floor),
Shirley & Charlotte Street
P. O. Box N-4849
Nassau, N.P., The Bahamas

Dear Minister Ferreira,

Request for an extended public consultation process for Disney Cruise Line's draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for Lighthouse Point.

We are writing to request an extension of the public consultation process and additional information regarding the timeline for Disney Cruise Line's draft EIA for the proposed cruise ship port at Lighthouse Point in Southern Eleuthera.

We did not receive a response to our October 27th, 2020 letter, in which we provided a suggested timeline for the public consultation process prior to the release of Disney's draft EIA. On March 10th, Disney released its 551-page draft EIA for Lighthouse Point. On March 18th, the Department of Environmental Protection and Planning (DEPP) announced that a public Zoom meeting will be held on April 8th at 6:00 PM; on April 29th, final public comments are due.

At this point, there is no information about the format and agenda for the April 8th meeting. There is no available information about the details of the process or the timeline for the government's review of the EIA following the April 29th deadline. We cannot conduct a meaningful review of the EIA without a fully transparent public consultation process.

We are also dismayed by Disney's apparent role in receiving comments from the public. The Government of the Bahamas needs to assure that the comments are in fact seriously considered in the final decision on the project. We remain eager to work with you to make this public

consultation as effective as possible in providing a well-informed basis for the decision on the future of Lighthouse Point.

We request that you extend the public consultation period to 90 days. This is a more reasonable timeline to review a 551-page document that took Disney three years to develop and the Department of Environmental Planning and Protection more than a year to review. Prior to the release of the EIA, our experts repeatedly attempted to engage in discussions with Disney about its scope. Disney rebuffed their input. Disney chose to brief other Bahamian and international organizations about the EIA before it became publicly available but did not even provide our experts with advanced notice of its release.

Pursuant to these concerns, we would like to reiterate our previously recommended timeline for the EIA consultation process at Lighthouse Point:

1. Publication of Disney's draft EIA (March 10, 2021).
2. Two weeks' notice to the public, in accordance with the 2020 EIA regulations, of the start of the public consultation process. (Public consultation process to begin March 24, 2021).
3. The legally required consultation period for comment and hearings. As stated in our suggested revisions to the 2020 draft EIA regulations, this period should be ninety days minimum. This would include the April 8th meeting. We would suggest that there be other scheduled virtual hearings with members of the general public as well as Disney's and other associated experts. (Final public comments would then be due on June 22, 2021).
4. Revision of the draft EIA by Disney s to 1) address public comments and input from scientists and experts and 2) supplement the EIA with additional studies required to adequately address issues raised in the public consultation period.
5. Publication of Disney's supplemental draft EIA for public review.
6. A secondary public consultation as stipulated in Section 3.
7. Resubmission of the EIA and its consideration
8. Decision on the Environmental Authorisation by the Department.

We are eager for you to consider this timeline. Additionally, please provide any available information regarding the public consultation period as it stands, so that we and other members of the public may proceed with the review of Disney's draft EIA. We would also like to request access to the draft Environmental Management Plan so that we can fully review Disney's proposed measures to mitigate the environmental impacts outlined in the EIA.

Based on the response we have gotten from more than 440,000 supporters from The Bahamas and across the world who have signed onto our [change.org petition](#), it is clear that the world will be watching how the Government proceeds in its review of the draft EIA for Lighthouse Point.

Thank you and we look forward to your response.

Respectfully,



Sam Duncombe
Executive Director
reEarth



Casuarina McKinney-Lambert
Executive Director
Bahamas Reef Environment
Educational Foundation



Rashema Ingraham
Executive Director
Waterkeepers Bahamas



Joseph Darville
Chairman
Save the Bays



Marc Yaggi
Executive Director
Waterkeeper Alliance

cc: Rochelle Newbold, Director, Department of Environmental Planning and Protection
Kim Prunty, Vice President, Communications & Public Affairs
Dr. Mark Penning, Vice President of Animals Science and Environment