

# Prosecution Bulletin no. 2/2020

## Summary

- On 24 February 2020, Paul Isaacson was convicted of one offence of taking a saltwater crocodile, which is a protected animal, contrary to section 88(2) of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NC Act) and one offence of making a statement to a conservation officer that was false or misleading in a material particular, contrary to section 157(1) of the NC Act.
- Mr Isaacson was fined \$5,000 for the taking offence, with an additional penalty of \$1,500 on account of the crocodile's conservation value. He was also fined \$1,500 for making the false statement, and ordered to pay \$1,750 in legal costs. Convictions were recorded for both offences.

## Facts

During the afternoon of 18 September 2018, at a motel near Airlie Beach, Mr Isaacson was observed skinning a crocodile, following which he cooked the crocodile. Mr Isaacson also cut off the animal's head and told someone he intended to make a belt from its skin.

Police attended the motel the following day and discovered a crocodile skin hanging from the window of Mr Isaacson's apartment.

During a subsequent interview with investigators, Mr Isaacson said that a visitor from Cairns had brought the crocodile to the motel, skinned it and cooked the meat on a BBQ. Mr Isaacson described helping that visitor cook the crocodile by adding some garlic and throwing on spices while they drank some beers. Those statements about the visitor skinning and cooking the crocodile underpinned the charge for making a false and misleading statement.

## Outcome

The Proserpine Magistrates Court accepted Mr Isaacson's guilty plea to two offences against sections 88(2) and 157(1) of the NC Act on 24 February 2020.

He was fined \$5,000 for taking the crocodile, with an additional penalty of \$1,500 on account of the animal's

conservation value. He was also fined \$1,500 for making the false statement during the interview. Additionally, he was ordered to pay \$1,750 in legal costs. Convictions were recorded for both offences.

In sentencing Mr Isaacson, the Magistrate noted that wildlife offences are generally difficult to detect. The fine and the Magistrate's decision to require payment for the animal's conservation value sends a message that unauthorised taking of wildlife is a loss to Queensland's biodiversity.

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