

From the Chair Welcome to the June /July Coastal Currents, I am pleased to start this newsletter by telling readers that the SCCG Alternative Energy for Coastal Cities Forum was a resounding success. Over 70 people heard about current innovations in renewable energy production, development and planning issues for councils, world energy demands and energy efficiency technologies. More information about the forum can be found on page 3 of the newsletter. As always all those involved with the SCCG has been extremely busy. Members of the Executive and Strategic Plan Directional Committee have began developing the SCCG Strategic

plan for the next four years. On issues relevant to the Sydney coastal region and beyond, representatives of the SCCG met with the Hon. Kristina Keneally MP, Minister for planning to discuss opportunities for the effective integration of risk management strategies and climate change adaptation in the coastal zone of NSW with the NSW Planning System. As this newsletter reflects to broad range of work being undertaken by the SCCG and other matters of interest I'm sure you will all enjoy reading it.

Clr Wendy WcMurdo
Chairperson



MAJOR PROJECTS IN 2009

Assessing the vulnerability of buildings to Catastrophic marine Flooding

In 2008, the SCCG partnered with the University of New South Wales and its Natural Hazards Research Lab and the Department of Environmental Science as well as the University of Bologna, Italy to undertake a research project that tests a newly developed and highly novel GIS tool to assess the vulnerability of coastal infrastructure and buildings to catastrophic marine floods (Tsunami). The outputs of the assessment will aid Councils in making decisions about long-term strategic planning and development. The project used two selected case study sites with this Randwick and Manly Council Local Government Areas) and a flood associated with a locally generated submarine-landslide tsunami just off-shore of the Sydney coast. Outcomes equally applicable for the assessment of building vulnerability to storm surge floods. All materials and outcomes are being provided to Member Councils and will be available for other interested parties via the SCCG Secretariat shortly. For more information please see: www.sydneycostalcouncils.com.au/documents/SCCFactSheet-CoastalFloodModellingProject.pdf



Mapping and Responding to Coastal Inundation in the SCCG region

This project, recently awarded grant funding under the Natural Disaster Mitigation Program, will map all areas of risk in the SCCG region utilising sophisticated modelling together with Councils own information sources (including Digital Elevation Models) to determine risk and develop consistent model planning and management responses in consultation with relevant state government agencies and the broader community. This project to be undertaken in partnership with the CSIRO will achieve the following:

Stage 1 Effect of Climate Change on Sea level Rise and Extreme Sea Levels

- A set of high resolution hydrodynamic model simulations will be produced in order to obtain current climate, as well as 2030 and 2070 storm tide return level estimates and sea level rise considerations

Stage 2: Development of Model Planning provisions to integrate sea level rise and extreme sea level events into relevant planning strategies of the SCCG

- Assess existing planning strategies (Australia and Internationally)
- Identify gaps in information, knowledge, capacity or external barriers
- Develop model provisions, actions and implementation strategies

Stage 3: Develop and distribute community risk disclosure information and corresponding community and stakeholder education program

- Assess existing education strategies within Australia and Internationally for addressing and communicating sea level rise and flooding impacts.
- Consultation with member councils and targeted community groups and individuals to identify gaps in information, knowledge and capacity as well as internal and external barriers for message transfers.
- Utilising outcomes of stage 1 and 2 and incorporating the above to develop and deliver freely available educational tools that build the understanding and capacity of relevant stakeholders.

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SCCG News and Upcoming Events

SCCG presents to NSW Mid North Coast Councils

In Mid April SCCG Executive Officer and Senior Coastal Projects Officer were invited to speak to representatives from Bellingen, Coffs Harbour, Gloucester, Great Lakes, Greater Taree, Kempsey, Nambucca and Port Macquarie-Hastings Councils at the Greater Taree City Council Climate Change Forum. Council representatives at the forum sought information about the Systems Approach to Climate Change Adaptation project, the *Coastal Councils Planning for Climate Change Report* as well as the views of Secretariat and Member Councils on the NSW Government Draft Sea Level Rise Policy Statement.

Collaborative Partnership Program with SCCG & Institute of Environmental Studies (Uni Of NSW)

The partnership program is designed for the SCCG with its Member Councils and the IES to jointly focus on addressing contemporary and strategic environmental management issues. The projects being undertaken for the first session of 2009 are:

- Emission trading benefits for local government: How can emissions trading help local governments reduce greenhouse gas emissions in conjunction with existing abatement programs? (Randwick Council); and
- Water quality snap shot of Sutherland Shire's freshwater streams (Sutherland Shire Council)

Climate Change and Environmental Impacts on Coastal Communities Inquiry

As noted in the previous newsletter the SCCG Chairperson and Senior Coastal Projects Officer appeared at the Australian Government Inquiry into Climate Change and Environmental Impacts on Coastal Communities.

Transcripts from the 22 public hearing conducted around Australia can be found at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ccwea/coastalzone/hearings.htm

Groundwater Education Workshop Series - Workshop Materials

The SCCG is pleased to announce the workshop materials for Groundwater Education Workshop Series run in late 2008 are now available. The aim of the Workshop Series was to deliver a series of free workshops, information and training on sustainable groundwater management targeting councils and industry. The education materials integrate information on the regulatory aspects of groundwater management with increased awareness of the dynamic nature of groundwater. The materials can be downloaded from www.sydneycostalcouncils.com.au/groundwater.htm

SCCG Jobs Fund Application

The SCCG recently submitted a grant application to The Australian Government Jobs Fund for a project called Cooling CALD Communities (CCC). The purpose of the CCC project is to increase the economic and environmental sustainability of participating Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities in the Sydney region, build resilience to the impacts of extreme heat resulting from climate change and promote regional growth and employment in the sectors of energy saving and efficiency.

Matters of interest

Water restrictions in Sydney eases

Water restrictions across greater Sydney have been eased, with new WATER WISE RULES replacing the previous tougher restrictions. These rules reinforce the importance of using water responsibly and minimising waste. For more information www.sydneypwater.com.au

North Steyne named Australia's cleanest beach

North Steyne Beach was declared Australia's Cleanest Beach for 2009 at the annual Keep Australia Beautiful Australian Clean Beaches Awards. As well as winning the overall Australian title, North Steyne picked up the Community Partnership, Environmental Innovation, Energy Conservation and Young Legends categories as well. More information can be found at www.manly.nsw.gov.au

NSW Diffuse Source Water Pollution Strategy

The NSW Dept of Water and Climate Change has developed a new Diffuse Source Water Pollution Strategy, which for the first time provides a framework for coordinating efforts in reducing diffuse source water pollution. The Strategy promotes partnerships, provides a guide for investment, and provides a means to share information on projects and their outcomes. For more information www.environment.nsw.gov.au/water/dswp.htm

NPWS takes to the sky to carry out bitou bush control

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) will use helicopters to conduct an aerial spraying program to control bitou bush, one of the State's worst coastal weeds, in Myall Lakes National Park north of Newcastle in late June. The aerial spraying is funded by the Federal Government's 'Caring for our Country' Community Coastcare program and is part of a larger integrated strategy to treat bitou bush in the internationally important Ramsar wetlands of the Myall Lakes. For more information:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/mediaDecMedia09061903.htm

Coastal Councils join forces to combat anti-social behaviour

Sydney's beachside councils are taking a stand against alcohol-related violence, anti-social behaviour, vandalism and graffiti at seaside hotspots. Six councils - Manly, Pittwater, Randwick, Sutherland, Warringah and Waverley - have put forward a proposal for change to the State Government after banding together to develop ways to fight this growing problem. The six councils have jointly developed a paper containing proposals which will be submitted to relevant State Government Ministers for action.

Seagrass friendly Moorings

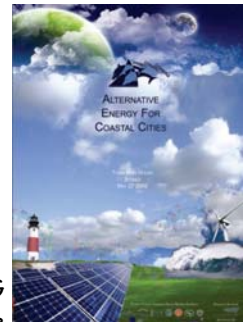
Through funding provided by the Australian Government Bringing Back the Fish Program Pittwater Council is a partnership project with the Hawkesbury Nepean CMA, NSW Department of Primary Industries and NSW Maritime to trial seagrass friendly moorings in an attempt to minimise the impact of boating on seagrass beds. In Pittwater over 45 trail moorings have been installed. Monitoring of their benefits will begin shortly. More information about seagrasses and seagrass friendly moorings can be found at www.waterways.nsw.gov.au/



SCCG Capacity Building Program

SCCG Alternative Energy for Coastal Cities Forum

Addressing the current and future energy demands was an important issue for coastal councils. The SCCG Alternative Energy for Coastal Cities Forum held on 27 May showcased current innovations in renewable energy production, development and planning issues for councils, world energy demands and energy efficiency technologies. All presentations from the day and the final workshop report are available from <http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/AAECC.htm>



Estimating Sea-Level Extremes in an Uncertain Future

To assist SCCG Member Councils in addressing the uncertain impacts of sea level rise the SCCG arranged for the Antarctic Climate & Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre to provide training specifically for SCCG Member Councils in the use of an interactive, web-based tool which determines appropriate design specifications based on location, asset life, greenhouse emission scenario and acceptable level of risk.

Participants learnt how to: Assess the risk to existing infrastructure; Set guidelines for maintenance of existing and new infrastructure and Set appropriate design codes for new infrastructure. Over 40 staff from SCCG Member Councils participated in this workshop delivered on the June 9 2009. More information about the web-based tool can be found at www.sealevelrise.info/

Release of the USSA Report: Barriers and Drivers to Sustainability in Local Government

The Urban Sustainability Support Alliance (USSA), of which the SCCG is a partner organisation, aims to help councils progress towards sustainability. The latest outcome of this project is the Barriers and Drivers to Sustainability in Local Government report produced by the Institute of Sustainable Futures. The report documents the research undertaken by the ISF and covers: The main drivers and barriers in relation to achieving sustainability in Local Government experienced by council staff; The tools and approaches being used by NSW councils to measure progress towards sustainability; and A summary of evaluation frameworks and tools used more broadly in Australia and overseas. Thirty two councils participated in the research undertaken from late November 2008 through to early February 2009. The report and more information about the USSA can be found at www.lgsa-plus.net.au/

SCCG meets with the Hon Kristina Keneally MP, NSW Minister for Planning

On the July 9 representatives of the SCCG including SCCG Chairperson Cllr Wendy McMurdo and Vice Chairperson Cllr David James met with the Hon Kristina Keneally MP, NSW Minister for Planning to discuss opportunities for the effective integration of risk management strategies and climate change adaptation in the coastal zone of NSW with the NSW Planning System. At this meeting the SCCG representatives outlined the views of the group on the need for the following issues to be address to assist councils risk management and climate change adaptation:

1. Data collection and provision;
2. Consistent integration and application of risk management and climate change adaptation considerations into the relevant Regional Strategies, appropriate Environmental Planning Instruments and other legislative frameworks; and
3. The consistent disclosure of hazards in the coastal zone to coastal communities.

SCCG Submissions and Advocacy

SCCG provided comment on the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework Bill and Regulation as well as the Manual and Guidelines. Both submissions focused on providing recommendations that would assist in the consistent delivery of social, economic and environmental services to all communities in NSW. In relation to the Bill and Regulation the SCCG recommending that any amendments to the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) resulting from the *Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Bill 2009* (the Bill) must not limit the role of elected representatives in setting local policy or place unreasonable or onerous demands on the already stretched resources of Councils in NSW. Additionally the SCCG believes to enable regional and state-wide consistency in the development delivery and reporting through the Community Strategic Plan, Operational Plan and Annual Reporting processes will require addressing the following issues:

- Ongoing support for the development and implementation of plans;
- Guidance in selecting regionally significant themes and ensuring consistency in delivery;
- The provision of a standard monitoring and evaluation framework for State of the Environment reporting; and
- Partnerships with NSW and Australian Government Departments, Agencies and Authorities.

The SCCG Secretariat has also recently written submissions on the following topics:

- Energy Australia Botany Bay Cable project - Modification Application
- Application Number: MP 08_0100 - Proposed Redevelopment of the Stamford Plaza Hotel, 33 Cross Street Double Bay



National and International Coastal News

Mapping the future of coastal assets in Victoria

Maps that will help protect Victoria's coastal assets and be used to prevent inappropriate development in coastal areas vulnerable to the impacts of climate change have been released by the State Government. The high resolution land-based Digital Elevation Model (DEM) is part of the government's \$13 million Future Coasts program. The latest DEM set completes the most detailed mapping of Victoria's coastline and shows the elevation of the state's coastal areas from sea level to a height of 10 metres. When combined with future CSIRO data on predicted storm events, coastal flooding and erosion, it will ensure authorities can take early action on locations that may be affected. The maps can be found from www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/

Select committee releases report into CRRS Bill inquiry

A Senate economics committee has issued the report from its inquiry into the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme Bill 2009 and related bills and a climate committee has issued the report from its inquiry into climate policy. The committee finds that the CPRS should not be passed in its current form, and that whilst the CPRS package has been revised on two occasions, the modelling continues to fail to take into account the impact of these changed economic circumstances. The committee considers the modelling undertaken by Treasury to be inadequate and recommends that the Government direct Treasury to undertake further modelling. The report and the full list of recommendations are available from www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/climate_ctte/report/index.htm

World's First Artificial Seaweed Reef off San Clemente

In order to mitigate damages to marine organisms caused by the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, Southern California Edison agreed to construct an artificial seaweed reef off of San Clemente, CA. Thirty five years later, this project has now been completed and over 175 acres of seaweed now grace an area south of the SC pier, providing habitat for almost 50 different varieties of fish and invertebrates. For more information <http://surf.transworld.net/2008/11/11/worlds-first-artificial-kelp-reef-completed-off-san-clemente-ca/>

Conferences

The 10th International Congress of Ecology (INTECOL) 16 - 21 August, Brisbane

The Congress will be hosted by the Ecological Society of Australia in partnership with the New Zealand Ecological Society. This is the first time that an International Congress of Ecology will have been held in the southern Hemisphere. More information can be found at www.intecol10.org/default.asp

4th Annual Local Government Sustainable Development Conference 18 - 19 August Albert Park, Melbourne The fourth annual Local Government Sustainable Development Conference is a two-day conference which will feature award-winning and leading-edge best practice case studies in sustainable development, including addressing challenges of sustainability, and providing advice from over 30 speakers on how local governments can achieve their sustainable development goals in a cost-effective manner. More information can be found at www.halledit.com.au/lgsd09

The 12th International Riversymposium, 21 - 24 September, Brisbane The 12th International Riversymposium, will be full of vibrant discussions and fora on factors influencing different areas of the catchments. The focus will be on the interactions between these catchments and the activities that take place within them. Themes will examine strategies for coping with changing conditions, uses and policies for catchments and their management now and in the future. More information can be found at www.riversymposium.com

18th NSW Coastal Conference 'Staying Afloat - Rising to the Challenges' 3- 6 November 2009, Ballina The NSW Coastal Conference attracts delegates from a wide range of areas, including: the public sector in State and Federal Government; Local Government; private sector consultants; coastal and marine consultants, planners and engineers; and community organisations. More information can be found at www.coastalconference.com/

The SCCG consists of 15 member councils with sea and harbour frontages in Sydney, including, Botany, Hornsby, Leichhardt, Manly, Mosman, North Sydney, Pittwater, Randwick, Rockdale, Sutherland, Sydney, Warringah, Waverley, Willoughby and Woollahra. Collectively we represent over 1.3 million Sydneysiders. The Group is concerned with the promotion, cooperation and coordination of member councils to achieve the sustainable management of the urban coastal environment. **Sydney Coastal Councils Group Contact Details:**
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