



Coastal Currents

Edition 57 The Newsletter of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group June/ July 2010

From the Chair Welcome to the June /July Coastal scale the Group has done a lot of work lately on Currents, I am pleased to start this newsletter by prioritising future areas of focus and action for letting readers know that debate on the *Coastal* councils on coastal issues of national significance as *Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2010* identified in documents including the Standing (the Bill) has been delayed until the Spring session of Committee inquiry "Managing our Coastal Zone in a NSW parliament. This will allow coastal councils and *Changing Climate: the Time to Act is Now*". At the the communities they represent the time to consider recent Australian Council for Local Government and understand the full impact of the changes meeting I was able to share this work with other proposed in the Bill. The SCCG looks forward to Councillors and Australian Government working with State and Local Governments as well as Representatives and inquire about progress on the residents to ensure that any changes made to coastal implementation of the Inquiry's recommendations. management in NSW provide certainty for coastal local councils and their communities. On the national

Clr Wendy WcMurdo
Chairperson



MAJOR PROJECTS IN 2010

Welcome to Jodie Savage

The SCCG Secretariat welcomes the new Coastal Projects Officer, Jodie Savage. Jodie originally from the UK has been provided with an initial 4 month temporary contract. Jodie comes to the SCCG well qualified with a B.Sc. in Marine Geography, a M.Sc. in Tropical Coastal Management and recently completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Environmental Education.

NSW Coastal Reform Package

In response to the *Coastal Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2010* (the Bill) as well as the Emergency Coastal Protection Works Ministerial Requirements and Guidelines the SCCG has consulted with its Member Councils and technical experts on the potential outcomes of these aspects of the reform package. This consultation identified that SCCG Member Councils had a number of concerns with the intent and implementation of the proposed reforms as well as the extremely short consultation period. In response the SCCG formally wrote to the NSW Minister for Planning requesting further time for consultation in relation to the Bill; the associated Minister's requirements for Temporary Coastal Protection Works and the Guide to the Statutory Requirements for Emergency Coastal Protection Works. Following this letter the SCCG worked with the NSW LGSA to produce a joint press release seeking the NSW Government delay debate and decision on the Bill until the next NSW Parliamentary Session to enable wider consultation and allow for the preparation of the Guidelines which are referred to in the Bill.

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Stop Press: On Tuesday the 22nd of June the SCCG was informed that the NSW Government would be postponing debate on the Coastal Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2010 until the spring session of parliament. The SCCG believes this decision will allow the necessary time for the NSW Government to consult meaningfully with coastal councils and communities and ensure complete understanding and better outcomes that are acceptable to all.

Sydney Coastal Councils Group Strategic Plan

Following the second meeting of the SCCG Strategic Planning Directional Committee, the SCCG Strategic Plan for 2010 - 2014 is being finalised. The plan which will set out the Group's strategic direction for the next four years will be provided to Member Councils for their endorsement in July. Once finalised, the plan will be tabled at the SCCG Annual General Meeting on September 11 2010 and available on the SCCG website.



SCCG News and Upcoming Events

Extreme Weather Cooperative Research Centre

The SCCG has partnered as an end user with a proposal for the establishment of an Extreme Weather Cooperative Research Centre (CRC). The aim of the CRC is to increase the wealth, safety and well-being of Australian and international businesses and communities by turning climate and weather science into applied risk management technologies, practices and tools. The research undertaken by the CRC will be designed to create practical tools that will assist the insurance, energy, planning and legal sectors to manage risk in ways that would not otherwise be conceived. This will enable short-term management decisions and long-term strategic planning, through rigorous analysis and the application of world leading science.

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

The partnership program is designed for the SCCG Member Councils and the IES to jointly focus on addressing contemporary and strategic environmental management issues. This is through the facilitation of collaborative seminars and workshops associated with the design and implementation of partnership projects. The project being undertaken for the first session of 2010 is titled: *Efficacy versus Impacts: An evaluation of beach nourishment practices overseas and in Australia.*

Sustainability Tool Selector

The Urban Sustainability Support Alliance's, of which the SCCG is a founding member, has release the Sustainability Tool Selector - *A Guide for Local Government* showcases ten tools assisting councils with evaluation, decision making, performance indicator development and tracking progress towards sustainability at an organisational and project level. The Tool Selector can be found at www.lgsa-plus.net.au/resources/documents/ussa_report_web.pdf

Underwater Australia - Education Partnership

The SCCG Secretariat is developing a partnership program with Underwater Australia for the production of a marine education program that centers around the production of individual websites for each of SCCG council tailored to promote the unique marine environment of that council. More information can be found at: www.underwateraustralia.com.au

Mapping and Responding to Coastal Inundation Project

This project is being delivered in three stages. The first stage involves mapping the effect of sea level rise in Sydney. The project will run throughout 2010, with the mapping methodology to be defined shortly and the sea

SCCG providing Lidar to Member Councils via Geosciences Australia (Commonwealth Government)

The SCCG is entering into a licensing agreement with the Commonwealth for the provision of Lidar as well as a "hydro-enforced DEM" for all SCCG Member Councils. Member Councils will be provided with the data and copy of the data licence agreement shortly.

Matters of interest

First Biobanking Agreement Approved

The NSW Government has announced the first BioBanking agreement with a private landowner to protect 80 hectares of high conservation land south of Camden in Western Sydney. The agreement protects 36 hectares of Cumberland Plain Woodland, and habitat for 17 threatened animal species. 607 ecosystem credits will be purchased with over \$1.7 million from the Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program. This program receives levies from developers operating in the south-west and north-west Sydney Growth Centres. Two-thirds of the credits have been purchased now, with the remaining third to be purchased in August. For more information: www.environment.nsw.gov.au/biobanking/

The first solar-powered LED light at Bondi Beach

The solar powered LED light won by Waverley Council at the SCCG 2009 Alternative Energy Forum (pictured below) has been installed at Bondi Beach. Compared to a traditional street light, it will run every night using 100% free clean energy from the sun, last more than five times longer and reduce greenhouse gas-emissions by 11 tonnes over its life-time. More information about solar powered LED lights can be found at www.solarstreetscapes.com.



Sydney Water Stormwater Harvesting - Tools and Resources

Across greater Sydney, about 20 recycled water schemes recycle around 27 billion litres of treated wastewater each year. To assist, Sydney Water has developed a series of online recycling and reuse tools, including a Stormwater Harvesting Guideline and Stormwater Harvesting Agreement for accessing Sydney Water's stormwater system. For more information go to the

www.sydneywater.com.au/Water4Life/RecyclingandReuse/RecyclingAndReuseInAction/

NSW LGSA Cost shifting survey

The LGSA cost shifting survey is an annual survey which seeks to establish the extent of cost shifting by the Australian and NSW Government on to NSW Local Government. The survey measures the amount of cost shifting for a representative sample of the 152 general purpose councils in NSW, calculates a cost shifting ratio for each council to estimate of the amount of cost shifting on to the whole of NSW Local Government. The survey can be found at www.lgsa-plus.net.au/

NSW Heritage Grants

The NSW Department of Planning Heritage Branch runs a diverse and targeted funding program to assist owners and managers of state significant heritage items, Aboriginal heritage and local government heritage management in New South Wales. There are various closing dates, for more information go to: www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/02_index.htm



RECENT SCCG AWARDS/ SUBMISSIONS / CONSULTATIONS

SCCG Websites:

In addition to the SCCG website www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au the SCCG has two other websites that may interest readers of the monthly update:

The SCCG Environment Monitoring Page www.monitor2manage.com.au/

The Walking Coastal Sydney Website www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au

SCCG Capacity Building Activities

Since March the Capacity Building Program has been active delivering services to Member Councils for 2010 including:

- Finalisation and wide distribution of the SCCG Natural Resource Management / Coastal Grants list Guide
- Engaged consultant and undertaking update of the SCCG Web site and associated "ETools Library"
- Finalising the Capacity Building Activities Proposals 2010
- Undertaking the (SMCMA) - SCCG Coastal Community Engagement Grant
- Review and re-engagement of the SCCG Capacity Building and Education Steering Committee

SCCG Submissions, Advocacy and Grants

Water Recycling opportunities forum recommendations

In March 2010 the SCCG and Sydney Water partnered to facilitate a workshop for SCCG Member Councils to discuss actions and projects that facilitate water recycling and re-use projects in Sydney. The forum was attended by 27 participants from 12 SCCG Member Councils and 10 representatives from Sydney Water. Representatives from the NSW Office of Water, the Department of Climate Change and Water as well as the National Water Commission were also present at the forum. Specific recommendations coming from the forum were made in relation to the following actions or issues:

- The establishment of a joint SCCG Sydney Water Working Group.
- The Development of a "Handbook" which provides all SCCG Member Councils with information on issues, including processes for identifying, implementing and evaluating projects.
- Ongoing collection and access to technical and project specific information.

The SCCG intends to work with Sydney Water on implementing the actions identified during the forum. This will ensure that the forum achieves its aim of improving collaboration and assisting with the identification and implementation of water recycling and re-use projects.

Sydney 2100: Managing Perceptions of Changing Coastal Environments

The SCCG has partnered with Think Insight and Advice to develop an application for the *Sydney 2100: Managing Perceptions of Changing Coastal Environments* Project under the NSW Environmental Trust Environmental Research Program. The project will develop and apply a method to assess community knowledge, attitudes, values and beliefs in response to the impacts of climate change. The outcomes will include messages and tools for consultation and communication on climate change impacts, such as sea level rise. These will then be applied to develop a broad vision for Sydney 2100 which will articulate the required levers for behaviour change to be applied when selecting and implementing the desired adaptation responses of coastal communities. Ultimately the project will generate new information and tools to facilitate the identification of local solutions to the impacts of climate change. These outcomes will provide all spheres of Government with the necessary resources to build the resilience of communities to climate change.

National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) - Settlements and Infrastructure National Adaptation Research Plan

The SCCG partnered with Sydney Water, Risk Frontier and DECCW to submit the Vulnerability Assessment of Critical Infrastructure project proposal to the NCCARF Settlements and Infrastructure National Adaptation Research Plan. Following the Expression of Interest phase the project partners were invited to submit a full application for consideration. The project aims to Assess the vulnerability of critical infrastructure to climate change extreme events, based on historical evidence and future projections. It is expected that successful applications will be announced in early July.

Sydney Metropolitan Strategy Submission

SCCG took the opportunity to provide input into the *Metropolitan Strategy Review: Sydney towards 2036*. The SCCG Managing existing social, environmental and economic pressures as well as adapting to climate change presents a number of challenges for State and Local Government in relation to strategic planning and policy implementation. The submission identified a number of issues and solutions in relation to the implementation of the strategy. These included: Consistency with other regional strategies; Consistency with other NSW Government policy direction; Recognising the recreational and environmental values of Sydney's coastal and estuarine environments; and Selecting the appropriate sea level rise adaptation options for Sydney.



National and International Coastal News

Victorian Council pays for breaching EPBC Act

Pyrenees Shire Council in Victoria will pay \$155,000 towards the future conservation of protected natural temperate grasslands of the Victorian Volcanic Plain after road works destroyed some of the nationally listed, endangered ecological community. This outcome highlights the need for all councils to seek federal government approval before the start of any activity that could have an impact on a nationally protected matter under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1993. For more information:

www.environment.gov.au/about/media/dept-mr/dept-mr20100414.html

Carbon pricing may reduce deforestation

Carbon pricing has the potential to reduce deforestation and encourages investment in commercial forestry more than in environmental forestry, according to a paper released by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE). Preliminary simulation results indicate that a higher carbon price: (i) discourages land clearing, both legal and illegal, (ii) reduces net emissions from land use change, (iii) reallocates land mainly from livestock production to forestry activity, and (iv) encourages investment in commercial forestry more than in environmental forestry as logs from native forests become more expensive. The paper is available at:

www.abare.gov.au/publications_html/conference/conference_10/CarbonPricing.pdf

Crocodiles surf ocean currents

Saltwater crocodiles, the world's largest living reptiles, travel hundreds of miles and cross large areas of open sea by surfing ocean currents, scientists have discovered. The estuarine, or saltwater, crocodile, is found in rivers and estuaries throughout South East Pacific with a range stretching from East India to Fiji and southern China to north Australia. Biologists have often been baffled by how the large predators, which can grow to be up to 18 feet in length, have managed to spread so far and occupy so many isolated islands despite being notoriously poor swimmers. By analysing data from satellite tracking tags, the scientists found that the crocodiles exploit surface currents around coastlines and out to sea to help them travel large distances. By riding these currents, the crocodiles are able to hop between oceanic islands and make long migrations around the Australian coastline. For more information:

www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/australiaandthepacific/7806139/Crocodiles-surf-ocean-currents.html

Conferences

6th Groundwater for Decision Makers Course: 14 July 2010, Melbourne. www.flinders.edu.au/ncgrt/fms/documents/Groundwater%20industry%20training/GW-Dec-Makers-Flyer-2010.pdf

6th Australia-New Zealand Climate Change and Business Conference: 10-12 August 2010 Sydney. www.climateandbusiness.com/index.cfm

8th Annual Green Building and Design Conference: 3-4 September 2010, State Library of Victoria. www.rmit.edu.au/cfd/gbd2010

Coast to Coast 2010 - Actions for Change: 20- 24 September 2010, Adelaide. www.coast2coast.org.au

The Local Government Sustainable Development Conference 2010: August 24 - 25th 2010, Dockside Convention Centre, Sydney. www.halledit.com.au/lgsd2010

2010 Nation EMS Conference: 12-13 October 2010, Deakin University, Geelong. www.ems.asn.au/events/2010/

NSW Coastal Conference "Coastal Management - all aboard, making it work!": 10-12 November 2010, Batemans Bay. 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**

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