



# Coastal Currents

Edition 56 The Newsletter of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group March 2010

**From the Chair** Welcome to the first Coastal Currents newsletter of 2010. The Group has been very busy this year. Already the Secretariat has released the Natural Resource Management Funding Guide, I submitted a number of grant applications and partnered with Sydney Water to facilitate a Sydney Coastal Councils Group and Sydney Water—Water Recycling Opportunities Forum. I, along with Executive Officer Geoff Withycombe, was pleased to be invited by the Australian Government to represent the SCCG at the National Climate Change Forum - Adaptation Priorities for Australia's Coast held in Adelaide during February. The forum

highlighted the issues coastal communities will face in response to climate change and significant role councils will play in both adaptation and mitigation. The rest of 2010 looks like being just as productive. I am particularly looking forward to the development and delivery of the Coastal Inundation Project and imminent release of the beach sand nourishment scoping study. Both of these projects should make a very significant contribution to building the capacity of councils in understanding, planning for and communicating the impacts of sea level rise.

Chr. Wendy WcMurdo  
The forum Chairperson



## MAJOR PROJECTS IN 2008

### SCCG Environment Monitoring Site

The SCCG is pleased to announce the launch of the SCCG Environment Monitoring Site, [www.monitor2manage.com.au](http://www.monitor2manage.com.au). This site promotes sustainable environment management through an improved understanding of monitoring and good decision-making. Effective monitoring is integral to good environmental management. Therefore the site aims to assist users in identifying monitoring needs, designing monitoring programs, dealing with data management and analysis as well as reporting. This will improve the likelihood of good decisions leading to improved environmental outcomes.

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To celebrate the launch of the Environment Monitoring Site, visitors to the site between February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010 (World Wetlands Day) and March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010 (World Water Day) were offered the opportunity to go into the draw for a handheld Magellan Explorist 300 GPS tool. The SCCG is pleased to announce that Adrian Turnbull was the winner of the GPS tool.

### Sydney Coastal Councils Group and Sydney Water – Water Recycling Opportunities Forum

In March 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 partnership with Sydney Water. The forum is the result of a desire from both the Sydney Coastal Councils Group and Sydney Water to work more collaboratively on water recycling and re-use projects. The content and structure of the forum were prepared to facilitate a one day forum including presentations, case studies and facilitated workshops on water recycling opportunities. A forum report including a summary of the workshops and future actions to build collaboration and information exchange between Sydney Water, the SCCG and its Member Councils will be produced shortly.

### National Climate Change Forum - Adaptation Priorities for Australia's Coast

The SCCG Chair, Chr. Wendy McMurdo, and Executive Officer, Geoff Withycombe attended the National Climate Change Forum: Adaptation Priorities for Australia's Coast in Adelaide on 18-19 February 2010. At the Forum, local, state and federal decision makers discussed the latest science on climate risks for coastal communities and resulting issues for, among other things, planning frameworks, disaster management and construction standards. The Forum was also tasked with contributing to the development of a national strategy for coastal adaptation. The workshops included: risk guidance and standards; science for capacity building; and urban and regional planning. More information about the forum can be found at:

[www.climatechange.gov.au/government/initiatives/national-coastal-risk-assessment/national-climate-change-forum.aspx](http://www.climatechange.gov.au/government/initiatives/national-coastal-risk-assessment/national-climate-change-forum.aspx)



### SCCG News and Upcoming Events

#### Invitation for SCCG consultation with councils

In the interest of continuing to hear from Member Councils and keeping them informed and actively engaged in SCCG activities, the SCCG Secretariat has written an invitation to provide interested Member Councils an opportunity to meet with the Executive Committee and Executive Officer to discuss work and current projects of the Group. Member Council delegates interested in arranging a meeting or presentation should contact the Groups, Executive Officer, Geoff Withycombe, on (02) 9246 7791 or [geoff@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au](mailto:geoff@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au)

#### Finalisation of the "Beach Sand Nourishment Scoping Study - Maintaining Sydney's Beach Amenity Against Climate Change Sea Level Rise"

The project has examined information and data on the environmental, physical, social and economic aspects of utilising offshore marine sands to meet immediate and medium term requirements of the adopted nourishment strategies at selected beach environments. With the aim of improving protection and augmentation of beach systems under immediate threat from coastal storm activity and Sea level Rise. The final report has now been prepared by AECOM and will be released publically shortly.

#### Mapping and Responding to Coastal Inundation Project

This project, being delivered in partnership with the CSIRO will be conducted in three stages. The first stage involves mapping the effect of sea level rise in Sydney. To progress this action a stakeholder technical workshop was facilitated in December to finalise key project expectations and deliverables for SCCG Member Councils. The project will run throughout 2010, with the mapping methodology to be defined shortly and the sea level rise maps produced and distributed mid year.

#### Valuation of Sydney's Beaches Project

PhD candidate Dave Anning and SCCG have submitted the final report to funding partners DECCW. The project will now focus on more in-depth analysis and writing for completion of the PhD component of the project. The project team are also working on developing practical tools to assist SCCG Member Councils in the implementation and application of the valuation methodology to their own coastal and estuarine foreshores, and exploring additional funding opportunities to expand the Sydney Beaches Valuation Project to other areas within NSW.

#### Rock Pool Antifouling Technologies Project

Coastal Councils are faced with a continual challenge of algae growth on foreshore areas resulting in a need for continual cleaning via a variety of applications to reduce slip risk. Approaches historically used include mechanical cleaning and use of various biocides, particularly chlorine based bleaches. The second stage of this project undertaken in summer 2009/2010 further tested the best performing applications from the first stage of the project. The final project report including future actions is being finalised and will be available shortly.

### Matters of interest

#### Coastal Inundation at Narrabeen Lagoon Optimising Adaptation Investment

This case study analyses the impact of climate change on flooding from Narrabeen Lagoon in the northern Sydney local government area of Pittwater. The report which analyse the benefits and costs of adaptation in response to risks of climate change, will be used to inform the Australian Government's discussion on policy responses to the risk that climate change will increase infrastructure investment and maintenance costs. Find out more at: [www.climatechange.gov.au/~media/coastal-flooding-narrabeen-lagoon.ashx](http://www.climatechange.gov.au/~media/coastal-flooding-narrabeen-lagoon.ashx)

#### North Harbour Coastline Management Plan

At a Council meeting in late February the North Harbour Coastline Management Plan was endorsed by Manly Council. The plan covers the area both seaward and landward from the shoreline between Federation Point and Welling Reserve. Included in the study area are rocky intertidal platforms, sandy beaches, grassed reserves, a swimming pool, sandstone cliffs, bushland, recreational, commercial, and residential areas. The plan can be found at [www.manly.nsw.gov.au/North-Harbour.html](http://www.manly.nsw.gov.au/North-Harbour.html)

#### NSW State of the Environment Report

The NSW State of the Environment Report 2009 (SoE 2009) has been released by the NSW Government. SoE 2009 reports on the state of the environment across all of NSW for the three-year reporting period 2006-2009. SoE 2009 provides credible, scientifically based, statewide environmental information to inform and assist the community, government and private sector involved or interested in environmental policy- and decision-making and management of the state's natural resources. For more information, go to [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2009/](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2009/)

#### State of the Beaches Report 2008-09

This report describes the results of Beachwatch and Harbourwatch water quality monitoring and reporting activities at Sydney Metropolitan, Hunter and Illawarra ocean beaches and Sydney estuarine beaches for the period May 2008 to April 2009. The Beachwatch program was established in 1989 and Harbourwatch in 1994. Both programs involve routine monitoring and reporting of bacterial indicator levels to determine water quality at swimming locations in the Sydney region. The State Government extended Beachwatch to the Hunter and Illawarra regions in 1996. For more information go to: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/beach/ar0809/index.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/beach/ar0809/index.htm)

#### National WSUD Guide released

The Australian Government has released a guide supporting the implementation of water sensitive urban design (WSUD). The guide entitled *Evaluating Options for Water Sensitive Urban Design - A National Guide* was developed by the Australian Government to contribute to meeting urban water reform requirements under the National Water Initiative. It identifies risks and issues associated with WSUD and discusses evaluation techniques. The guide is available at [www.environment.gov.au/water/publications/urban/water-sensitive-design-national-guide.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/water/publications/urban/water-sensitive-design-national-guide.html)



### **SCCG Capacity Building Activities**

Recent activities undertaken as part of the SCCG Capacity Building Program that are aimed at increasing the capacity of SCCG Member Councils and those involved in Natural Resource Management include:

#### **The Natural Resource Management Funding Guide 2010**

The SCCG has compiled an extensive grants list of all available grants and funding opportunities available for Natural Resource Management activities. The complete list can be found at [www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au/documents/2010SCCGFundingGuide.pdf](http://www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au/documents/2010SCCGFundingGuide.pdf)

#### **2010 SCCG Summer Activities Program**

The SCCG Summer Activities Program has been completed for another year. The program which aims to promote coastal educational activities during January was a huge success. Over 2000 people enjoyed the 80 events offered. The SCCG would like to congratulate all Councils who participated in the program and thank Coastcare for their ongoing support and Sony for supporting the 2010 Program.

#### **SCCG Annual Member Council Survey**

The SCCG Annual Member Council Survey is undertaken in December every year to enable the Secretariat to identify activities that assist Member Councils and identify avenues and activities to further enhance the services provided to Member Councils. Overall respondents were pleased with the ongoing services and outcomes provided by the Secretariat to the Group in 2009. Delegates noted a number of areas in which they found being a member of the SCCG beneficial. This included the opportunities for collaboration and sharing information with other Councils, the fact that the SCCG was seen as a respected advocate who represented the interests of Member Councils effectively as well as the provision of information and data coming from SCCG projects. Delegates considered it important that the Group continue to retain a focus on climate change adaptation, water saving and re-use projects and maintenance of biodiversity in the region.

### **SCCG Submissions, Advocacy and Grants**

#### **SCCG Submission on the NSW Government Sea Level Rise Risk Management Guides and Draft NSW Coastal Planning Guideline**

To assist with the preparation of a regionally representative submission on the Risk Management Guides and Coastal Planning Guideline documents the SCCG facilitated a workshop on 1 December 2009 attended by representatives of all 15 Member Councils. The content of the final submission reflects the discussion at the workshop as well as additional targeted consultations undertaken by the SCCG with its Member Councils', academics and coastal engineers and legal experts. It summarises the key issues and needs of SCCG Member Councils in applying the Risk Management Guides and Coastal Planning Guideline. In addition the SCCG engaged HWL Ebsworth Lawyers to prepare a report on the *Legal issues and considerations for the implementation of the Draft NSW Coastal Planning Guideline*. The submission and associated legal advice have been provided to every coastal council in NSW.

#### **Standing Committee on Natural Resource Management (Climate Change) Water Management Inquiry**

The SCCG took the opportunity to provide a submission to the Standing Committee on Natural Resource Management (Climate Change) Water Management Inquiry. The submission noted that combined with population growth, climate change will have a significant impact on the way coastal communities collect, store and utilise water resources. Building the resilience of the NSW water supply to climate change will require considerable planning and investment in strategies and actions that:

- reduce demand on potable water supplies;
- store and transport stormwater more efficiently; and
- identify water recycling opportunities.

The SCCG believes that addressing these issues will require the application of integrated water cycle management and a whole of Government approach to identify, assess and implement the necessary solutions.

#### **Grant success: Summer Activities Program and Coastal Connection Strategy**

The SCCG was recently successful in attaining \$20,000 in funding for the Summer Activities Program and Coastal Connection Strategy through the SMCMA Coastal Community Engagement Grants. This project aims to increase community awareness, engagement and participation of coastal management and conservation.

#### **NSW Environmental Trust Research Program**

The SCCG recently submitted three expressions of interest to the NSW Environmental Trust Research program in partnership with the CSIRO, Universities and private consultants to undertake the following projects:

- Sydney 2100: Managing perceptions of changing coastal environments.
- Managing sea level rise impacts on coastal aquifers in Sydney.
- Sydney's salty communities and the changing tide.

Each of these projects aims to build the capacity of SCCG Member Councils to adapt to the impacts of climate change.



## National and International Coastal News

### *The State of Australian Cities Report 2010 released*

The *State of Australian Cities Report 2010* has been released, to assist the Australian Government, in cooperation with state, territory and local government, and in partnership with the community and industry, to improve Australian urban policies. The report is designed to redress an information deficiency about economic, environmental, social and demographic changes, and to reveal trends and provide a platform of knowledge for the development and implementation of future urban policies. The report can be found at [www.apo.org.au/research/state-australian-cities-2010](http://www.apo.org.au/research/state-australian-cities-2010)

### **Adapting to Climate Change in Australia: An Australian Government position paper**

The Australian Government's position paper, *Adapting to Climate Change in Australia*, sets out the Government's vision for adapting to the impacts of climate change and proposes practical steps to realise that vision. It outlines the Australian Government's role in adaptation, which includes building community resilience and establishing the right conditions for people to adapt; taking climate change into account in the management of Commonwealth assets and programs; providing sound scientific information; and leading national reform. The position paper identifies six national priority areas for action: water, coasts, infrastructure, natural ecosystems, natural disaster management, and agriculture. It is available at: [www.climatechange.gov.au/publications/adaptation/position-paper.aspx](http://www.climatechange.gov.au/publications/adaptation/position-paper.aspx)

### **Australians using less water but more energy**

According to a new report released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Australians are using less water but more energy. *Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends* presents a snapshot of environmental factors affecting Australia. The ABS found that water use by agriculture has fallen by almost half in the past two years and between 1994 and 2007 the proportion of households using water-saving devices doubled. Further details can be found in *Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends 2010*, available from [www.abs.gov.au/](http://www.abs.gov.au/)

### **Second warmest year for Australia**

Australia's annual mean temperature for 2009 was 0.90°C above the 1961-90 average, making it the nation's second warmest year since high quality records began in 1910. High temperatures were especially notable in the southeast during the second half of the year, with Australia, Victoria, South Australia and NSW all recording their warmest July-December periods on record. According to NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, 2009 was also the warmest year in the southern hemisphere since records began in 1880, and tied for second warmest year globally together with 1998, 2002, 2003, 2006 and 2007. (The warmest year was 2005). The past decade has been the warmest globally since 1880. More information is available from at [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

## Conferences

**National Environment Conference: Transitioning to a climate resilient future**, 15-16 April, Sofitel, Melbourne. For more information: [www.mav.asn.au](http://www.mav.asn.au) (SCCG Senior Coastal Projects Officer, Craig Morrison, will be presenting on the topic of *Building climate change adaptation into coastal planning* at this conference.)

**Carbon footprinting for your product, your firm, your future**, April 8-9, University of NSW Water Research Centre, Kensington campus. For more information [water.unsw.edu.au/site/wp-content/uploads\\_carbon\\_footprint\\_brochure\\_2010.pdf](http://water.unsw.edu.au/site/wp-content/uploads_carbon_footprint_brochure_2010.pdf)

**Local Government Risk Management Summit**, April 28 - 29, Novotel Brighton Beach, Sydney. For more information [www.halledit.com.au/rm2010](http://www.halledit.com.au/rm2010)

**Sustainable Development Conference**, May 25-26, Zinc, Federation Square, Melbourne. For more information [www.halledit.com.au/vsd2010](http://www.halledit.com.au/vsd2010)

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: Website:** [www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au](http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au) **Email:** [info@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au](mailto:info@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au)

