

COASTAL CURRENTS WINTER 2014

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP ED 72

FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the Winter edition of our quarterly newsletter, Coastal Currents. We are gearing up to celebrate 25 years of caring for our coast. Since our establishment in 1989, when we spear-headed the campaign to get rid of sewer along Sydney's iconic beaches, we have grown to become a recognised leader in sustainable coastal and estuarine management. Now with 15 Member Councils, the Group represents over 1.4 million Sydneysiders. To commemorate our Anniversary, we are hosting a celebratory Conference on Friday 29 August 2014. The event will provide an opportunity for Members of the Group, past and present, stakeholders and affiliates to celebrate significant milestones, achievements and

persons associated with our Group over its 25 year history.

In 2014 we are also reviewing our Strategic Plan to guide operations through to 2019. This document sets the strategic direction for the Group and is updated every four years. The review considers the context of significant uncertainty and change in relation to planning, coastal management, and potential restructures in Local Government. Outcomes from the 25th Anniversary Conference and related activities will help to inform the review and ensure our new Strategic Plan is reflective of Member Councils' interests.

Cr Cathy Griffin

SCCG Chairperson



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SCCG PROJECTS UPDATE

Sydney's Salty Communities – Turning the Tide on Blue+Green Carbon

We are finalising the formation of the project's independent Reference Group. This group of eminent individuals will provide specialist technical input, guide and/or undertake research, review prioritisation and evaluate sub-projects under the devolved grants program. Members of the Reference Group have expertise in Sydney's coastal ecosystems, ecological restoration, urban biodiversity and organisational capacity-building and will provide critical help to achieve project outcomes.



We are about to seek external expertise to undertake a Coastal Biodiversity Literature and Practice Review. We are also developing the process for assessing project proposals for Salty devolved grants. Funding will be available to fill research and policy gaps, provide key resources and to primarily undertake on-ground planting, weed control and rehabilitation of remnant coastal vegetation communities and key habitats across Sydney.

Visit the project web page for more information:
http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/salty_communities

The SCCG was established in 1989 to promote co-ordination between Member Councils on environmental issues relating to sustainable management of the urban coastal environment.

The Group consists of 15 Member Councils adjacent to Sydney marine and estuarine environments and associated waterways in Sydney; Botany, Hornsby, Leichhardt, Manly, Mosman, North Sydney, Pittwater, Randwick, Rockdale, Sutherland, Sydney, Warringah, Waverley, Willoughby and Woollahra. The Group collectively represent over 1.4 million Sydneysiders.

Emergency Risk Management: A Health Check for Local Government



We are working with Local Government and emergency services officers to develop a 'Health Check' tool for Councils to self-assess their preparedness and capability for emergency management, and support an integrated approach to emergency

management. Following consultation on the draft Health Check in February, a revised Health Check has been released for trial. The trial involves all SCCG emergency management contacts and the rural and regional councils involved in the project. Outcomes from the trial will inform final refinements to the tool, which is due for release later this year.

The project has been made possible by funding from the Natural Disaster Resilience Program. For more information please visit the project web page:
http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/Emergency_Management_Planning_Project

Sydney Harbour Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) Scoping Study

On 16 April 2014 the Project consultant, GHD Pty. Limited, conducted the first of two stakeholder workshops. The workshop was conducted to capture the knowledge and expertise of stakeholders pertaining to Sydney Harbour.



SCCG Web Sites

www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au
www.summerama.com.au
www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au



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SCCG PROJECTS UPDATE (cont.)

Input was sought on the priority issues that should be addressed and managed on a whole-of-system basis when dealing with coastal zone management for Sydney Harbour.



A key deliverable for the consultant is to investigate, evaluate and synthesise in a report literature and data related to management and use of the Harbour. The Project Advisory Committee and a stakeholder survey assisted to populate the literature evaluated. The consultant has completed a draft of the Literature Review which was sent to the Advisory Committee for review and comment. The consultant is now addressing those comments and the final Literature Review will be available shortly.

For more information on the project visit: <http://bit.ly/1kkeMf2>

MATTERS OF INTEREST

SCCG 25 Year Anniversary

The SCCG celebrates 25 years of caring for our coast in 2014. Since our establishment in 1989, when we spearheaded the campaign to end shoreline sewage outfalls off Sydney's iconic beaches, we have grown to become a recognised leader in sustainable coastal and estuarine management. Now with 15 Member Councils, the Group represents over 1.4 million Sydneysiders.



To commemorate this significant milestone we will be hosting a Conference on 29 August 2014. The event will bring together representatives from our 15 Member Councils, including Councillors and technical staff, state government agency staff and industry leaders, to reflect on our history and scope future directions for the Group over the next 25 years.

Review of SCCG Strategic Plan

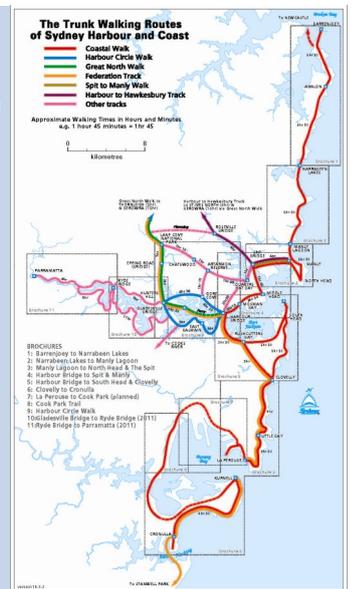
In 2014 we are also reviewing our Strategic Plan. Our existing Plan is to the end of the year, so we're embarking on the development of a new Plan to guide operations through to 2019. Outcomes from our Anniversary Conference will inform the review and ensure that our new Plan is reflective of members' needs. Our new Strategic Plan will be launched at the end of the year. To view our current Strategic Plan, visit: <http://bit.ly/1pW2MpK>

Inaugural Sydney Harbour and Coastal Walk

On Sunday 16 August 2014, a group of walking enthusiasts will commence a 30-day journey, walking Sydney's iconic coastal and harbour walkways, starting at Barrenjoey headland in the north and ending in the Royal National Park. The Inaugural Sydney Harbour and Coastal Walk is an initiative of the *Walking Volunteers* that aims to promote the benefits of walking, publicise foreshore walking tracks in Sydney, foreshore walking tracks in Sydney,

stimulate awareness of our environment and history, improve community health, both physical and mental, and encourage tourism. It will also provide an opportunity to promote two significant international conferences, the Walk21 Conference (www.walk21sydney.com) and the IUCN World Parks Congress (worldparkscongress.org), both of which are being hosted in Sydney in October and November respectively.

The SCCG and its Member Councils have partnered with the Walking Volunteers over the last seven years to develop the continuous 275 km walking route around the foreshores of Sydney and the associated website (www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au). We share a vision to promote public access to, and enhance the appreciation and recreational enjoyment of, Sydney's coastline, harbour and estuaries for the people of Sydney and visitors to the city.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Since the last edition of our quarterly newsletter, there has been a change of Premier and a number of new Ministers in the NSW Government. We welcome the appointment of Rob Stokes MP as the new Minister for the Environment under the newly formed NSW Department of Planning and Environment. Minister Stokes has also been appointed Minister for Heritage, Minister for the Central Coast and Assistant Minister for Planning.



Representing the electorate of Pittwater, Minister Stokes has long been affiliated with the Group and supportive of our work. We look forward to working collaboratively with the Minister and the newly formed Department to see through the planning and coastal reforms currently underway

CAPACITY BUILDING

Project Launch: Becoming Social

On 24 July we will be launching the outcomes from our social media project *Becoming Social*. The launch will provide an opportunity for participants to learn all about social media - connect with colleagues, demystify what platforms to use, increase confidence creating campaigns and get the resources!

The *Becoming Social* project was designed to increase Councils' understanding and use of social media as a relationship and policy development tool to engage, consult and educate coastal communities in relation to local and regional coastal environmental issues. The project has three key outputs:

1. A **survey** among SCCG Member Councils exploring application, adoption and use of social media, and, in particular its use to address environmental issues.
2. **Literature Review and Report** investigating, summarising and synthesising social media and its use in Government engagement, consultation, education and policy development.

CAPACITY BUILDING (cont.)

3. An innovative **online tool** (and associated resources) to enable Councils to use social media as a relationship, project and policy development tool.

The launch is aimed at environmental managers, educators and other relevant staff (such as those in communications) who have limited social media experience but who currently or propose to undertake a social media initiative.

If you would like to attend the launch, please register by 17 July via Eventbrite:
<http://becomingsocial.eventbrite.com.au>.

Numbers are limited and registration is on a first come first served basis. It is a free event if you register and attend.

SUBMISSIONS, ADVOCACY, GRANTS AND AWARDS

Crown Lands Management Review

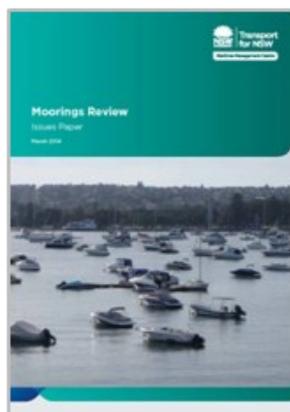
We recently made a submission on the NSW Government's *Crown Lands Legislation White Paper*. The Paper contains proposals to develop one new piece of legislation to replace eight existing Acts, streamline existing provisions, simplify the management of Crown reserves and reduce red tape. It follows a recent review into the management of Crown lands, which examined legislation, financial management, governance and business structures. The review was overseen by a high level-interagency steering committee independently chaired by Mr Michael Carapiet.



Our submission highlighted the need to balance community assets and private use, as well as environmental and social values. It also stressed the importance of community engagement in decisions relating to Crown lands. The submission is available on our website at: <http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/Submissions>. For more information on the review, visit: <http://bit.ly/1ojZlHP>

Moorings Review

The Maritime Management Centre (MMC) in Transport for NSW is undertaking a review of the policy and regulatory framework governing the administration of moorings in NSW. MMC has produced an Issues Paper to assist scope the range of issues and potential reform options to be considered as part of the Review. They are seeking feedback on responding to existing and future demand for moorings and modernising the regulatory and policy framework.



We are preparing a submission to the Issues Paper in consultation with our Member Councils.

Our submission will highlight the need for a holistic and integrated approach to boating management generally, taking account of the multiple values and competing demands on our waterways, and the direct and indirect impacts of boating on our environment and communities. It will be available on our Submissions page from 1 August 2014: <http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/Submissions>.

Feedback on the Issues Paper is invited until 1 August 2014. For more information on the Review, visit: <http://bit.ly/1ovc1Yv>

Environmental Grant opportunities

The Public Reserves Management Fund – NSW Trade & Investment

The Public Reserves Management Fund provides financial support for the development, maintenance and improvement of public reserves. More than \$135M has been allocated by the Fund over the last ten years. Round 2 applications are expected to open in August 2014. <http://bit.ly/1zljKQk>

Conference Grants - The Ian Potter Foundation

The Conference grants program is an important aspect of the Ian Potter Foundation's commitment to excellence, particularly as it relates to exchanging and sharing knowledge. The program allows organisations to bring keynote speakers of international renown to Australia. Round 3 opens 14 July - 16 September 2014. <http://www.ianpotter.org.au/funding-objectives-conference>

Waste Less, Recycle More - NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA)

Over five years, \$465.7 million in grants is being awarded to local governments, businesses, industry and the community to stimulate new investment and transform waste and recycling in NSW. There are a number of grant programs funded under the *Waste Less, Recycle More* initiative, and applications for Round 2 are expected to open from August 2014. <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/waste/grants.htm>

Environmental Award opportunities

Green Globe Awards

The NSW Government's Green Globe Awards are the leading environment awards, recognising environmental excellence, leadership and innovation in NSW. Businesses, government, community groups and individuals who can demonstrate significant environmental achievements in NSW are encouraged to apply for a Green Globe Award. Nominations are open until Monday 21 July 2014. <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/greenglobes/>

Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards (LGNSW)

The annual Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards were initiated in 1998 and are open to all councils in NSW. The Awards culminate in two prestigious Local Sustainability Awards: one for overall council performance, and one to recognise the individual achievements of a council staff member or elected Councillor in the field of sustainability. Entries close 4 August 2014. <http://www.lgsa.org.au/events-training/environment-awards>

NSW Coastal Management Awards

Nominations for the NSW Coastal Management Awards are now open. The annual Awards are presented to publicly recognise and acknowledge the contributions of individuals, groups, organisations and agencies toward the ecologically sustainable management of the NSW coastal zone. The Awards will be presented at the NSW Coastal Conference Dinner in November. Entries close Friday 10 October 2014. For more information, visit: <http://www.coastalconference.com/#sthash.qMFxxMEW.dpuf>

COASTAL NEWS

2014 National General Assembly of Local Government

The 2014 National General Assembly of Local Government was held on 15-18 June in Canberra. At the Assembly a number of SCCG Member Councils put forward motions from our Coastal Policy Recommendations for the 2013 Federal Election, calling upon the Australian Government to play a leadership role in facilitating a collaborative national response to coastal planning and management involving all three levels of government. A number of the motions put to the Assembly were successfully resolved (Resolutions 23-28), demonstrating bipartisan, nation-wide support for a coordinated, national response to coastal management issues. We will monitor developments in relation to the resolutions and report on any outcomes in the next edition of our newsletter. For more information, visit: <http://alga.asn.au/?ID=11679&Menu=36,303>



Biodiversity Legislation Review

The Minister for the Environment has released the terms of reference for a comprehensive review of the legislative framework for threatened species and native vegetation management in NSW. An independent panel will consider the policy settings, programs and funding arrangements that support the management of biodiversity, threatened species and native vegetation in the State. The review aims to establish simpler, streamlined and more effective legislation that will:

- facilitate the conservation of biological diversity
- support sustainable development
- reduce red-tape.

For more information visit: <http://bit.ly/1iMBgT3>

Changes to approvals processes under the EPBC Act

In December last year, the Federal and NSW Governments signed a bilateral agreement to create a single Environmental assessment process under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). The agreement, which was signed within two days of the close of public submissions, means that the Commonwealth Government will no longer undertake its own assessment for certain projects impacting matters of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act. Instead it will rely on the assessment process undertaken in NSW.

Submissions were recently sought on a second bilateral agreement which proposes to extend this arrangement to approval processes.

NSW COASTAL NEWS (cont.)

This means that, for certain projects, if NSW has approved the proposal, it may also receive approval from the Commonwealth Government without going through their approval process. Submissions on the draft agreement closed on Friday 13 June 2014. For more information, visit: <http://bit.ly/1c0QbYj>

Meanwhile, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment is undertaking an inquiry into "streamlining environmental regulation, 'green tape', and one stop shops." For information on the inquiry, <http://bit.ly/1ZK6qv>

Audit into compliance under the EPBC Act

The federal Auditor-General has also released a report on compliance under the EPBC Act following a recent performance audit on the federal Department of the Environment. The report finds that the Department is "yet to establish mature administrative arrangements to effectively discharge its regulatory responsibilities in relation to approved controlled actions", and therefore assurance over compliance is "limited".

The Auditor-General has made a number of recommendations relating to compliance programs, monitoring and reporting, risk management, and response to non-compliance, all of which the Department has agreed to undertake. For more information, visit: <http://bit.ly/1n2eyXv>

Marine Estate Community Survey – Stage 1 results now available

The Marine Estate Management Authority is in the process of conducting a survey to canvass the variety of views and values held by the community for the NSW marine estate. Feedback obtained during the survey will inform development of the Marine Estate Management Act and Regulations, threat and risk assessments of the marine estate, new management plans for marine parks and a Marine Estate Management Strategy.



Stage 1 of the survey assessed the views on the environmental, social and economic values of the marine estate. A Report summarising the results from Stage 1 is now available and a final report is due to released in the coming months. For more information, visit: <http://bit.ly/1vU8Dt8>

UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

NSW Coastal Conference – 11-14 November 2014

The 23rd NSW Coastal Conference will be held on 11-14 November in Ulladulla, NSW. The three day event is comprised of plenary sessions, concurrent sessions, field trips (addressing some of the local coastal, estuary and marine management issues), networking events and the Annual NSW Coastal Management Awards. To register, or for more information visit: <http://bit.ly/1jja7x1>