

Prioritising Coastal Adaptation and Development Options for Local Government FACT SHEET

Coastal Adaptation Decision Pathways Project (CAP)



SCCG Region

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) "Prioritising Coastal Adaptation and Development Options for Local Government" project aims to enhance the ability of coastal decision makers to evaluate and act on social, economic and environmental interests at the Local Government (LG) scale in the face of climate change. Furthermore, the SCCG aims through the project, to develop a comprehensive framework for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of coastal management and development decisions to assist in building the capacity of LG stakeholders to evaluate the success of implemented management responses with respect to reducing vulnerability of coastal development to climate change. Project collaborators include the SCCG, University of the Sunshine Coast Sustainability Research Centre and Oak Ridge National Laboratory Climate Change Science Institute.

Regional Needs

Sydney's coastline, estuaries and waterways are facing increasing environmental, social and developmental challenges. The SCCG and its Member Councils have been, and will continue to be pro-active in increasing awareness and insight regarding these challenges and by providing appropriate mechanisms in a changing climate. This project is being led by the SCCG.

Who is SCCG?

The Sydney Coastal Council's Group (SCCG) is represented by each of the 15 Local Government Authorities in Sydney that have coastal and / or estuarine boundaries: Botany Bay; Hornsby; Leichhardt; Manly; Mosman; North Sydney; Pittwater; Randwick; Rockdale; Sutherland; Sydney; Warringah; Waverley; Willoughby; and Woollahra. SCCG provides a coordinating body with an existing track record of research and coordination on related issues in this region.

Key Project Outcomes

The project will result in the following outcomes and flow-on benefits:

- Improved understanding of the diversity of values associated with coastal lands and the transparent identification of the criteria used by Local Government (LG) in coastal management decision-making and their relative importance;
- Enhanced ability of coastal decision makers to evaluate and act on social, economic and environmental interests at the LG scale in the face of climate change;
- Improved capacity for coastal decision makers to understand the implications of their climate change response decisions through monitoring and evaluation, including the economic costs and benefits of their response; and
- Improved engagement of end users in the understanding of coastal climate change issues and in the development and refinement of practical tools to assist coastal decision-making in response to climate change at the LG scale.



What is the high level rationale for this work?

Climate change presents unavoidable challenges for coastal decision makers. In particular, the ability to understand the multiple costs and benefits of their decisions on various sectors and stakeholders is currently limited by the lack of tools to integrate the complexities of social, economic and environmental criteria in coastal decision-making. The project will develop information on the range of available adaptation strategies and provide guidance for Local Governments and include both NSW and Queensland case studies and asset managers in how to implement feasible options. Providing such decision support requires the integration of information regarding potential risk, plausible management strategies, and the broad range of criteria by which the performance of those strategies can be evaluated. The central component of this project will involve developing a multi-criteria analysis framework. The multi criteria analysis (MCA) will be designed to support consideration of diverse adaptation management alternatives around future protection, development, or redevelopment of coastal lands. The project will also produce a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the impacts of coastal decisions.

What are the opportunities and how will this work advance knowledge and practice?

The project presents an opportunity to bring together a range of coastal decision makers to better understand and improve coastal decisions. Moreover, the participatory nature of the project will help to facilitate the adoption of the project findings. The project aims to directly advance coastal decision-making practice through the development of a decision support tool specifically targeted addressing the impacts of climate change. The project also provides an opportunity to integrate climate change adaptation science with practice through the involvement of both researchers and decision makers. The tool will be piloted in selected localities in NSW and incorporates a monitoring and evaluation framework for assessing the implementation of the MCA tool. Hence, the M&E framework will be designed to be used and assessed internally by the local governments. This project will work with a range of NSW LGAs to assist in facilitating an increased state wide focus and enhanced project promotion and distribution of project outcomes and outputs. The project will also be expanded to include an additional case study in Queensland (Sunshine Coast Council) in order to facilitate greater transferability nationally. This Project is scheduled to be completed in 2012.

Project Management

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Australian Government

**Department of Climate Change
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