



# Coastal Currents

**Edition 60      The Newsletter of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group March 2011**

**From the Chair** Welcome to the first Coastal Currents newsletter of 2011. 2011 looks like being an interesting year for coastal councils in NSW. The implementation of the reforms to coastal management in NSW and State Election will have a significant influence on the way coastal councils manage their natural environments and plan for the impacts of climate change. I am pleased to inform you all that the SCCG website has been rebuilt to make the site easier for visitors to find information about the broad range of activities that the SCCG undertake. The year the Secretariat have already produced a number of grant applications and funding

proposals and look forward to informing you all in future newsletters of the range of new projects the SCCG has gained funding for in 2011 to complement the existing work undertaken by the Group. Finally, I'd like to conclude on a positive note that the 2010 SCCG Member Council Survey confirmed that the SCCG continues to provide a strong platform for information, advocacy and delivery of regional projects and. These activities are playing an important role in the management of Sydney's coastal and estuarine environments.

Clr Wendy WcMurdo  
Chairperson



## MAJOR PROJECTS IN 2011

### Reforms to Coastal Management in NSW

The *Coastal Amendment and Other Legislation Bill* 2010 was passed by the NSW Parliament on 20 October 2010 and proclaimed on 1 January 2011. The SCCG had collated all its, correspondence, submissions and reports on the reforms into a single document that has been sent to all Member Councils and is available on the SCCG website. The document contains a foreword, an introduction to the reforms, a history of coastal management in NSW, the SCCG correspondence to the NSW government; commissioned legal advice as well as the presentations from all the workshops the SCCG facilitated on the reforms. This document can be found at [www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au](http://www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au)

### 2011 NSW Election Information Package

In preparation for the 2011 NSW State Election the SCCG formerly resolved to requests that political parties contesting the election outline their policy positions on the following 9 key coastal management issues.

- An independent review into coastal management in NSW
- An independent coastal advisory body for NSW
- A consistent and coordinated approach to climate change adaptation in the NSW coastal zone
- Funding for Local Government and community coastal programs and initiatives
- Decision making based on local plans and regulation as well as public participation
- Maintenance of public ownership and public access in the coastal zone
- The delivery of total water cycle management for urban coastal environments
- Maintenance and enhancement of coastal biodiversity through the NSW planning framework
- A NSW Marine Management Strategy

In identifying these issues and developing the associated policy positions the SCCG Secretariat undertook extensive consultation with Councillor and staff delegates of SCCG Member Councils. This has ensured that the issues identified and policy positions represent the views all SCCG Member Councils. The SCCG received responses from the Labor, Coalition and Greens Parties. These can be found at:

[www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au/sites/default/files/2011\\_nswstate\\_election\\_information.pdf](http://www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au/sites/default/files/2011_nswstate_election_information.pdf)

### New SCCG Website

The new SCCG website has arrived! It has a professional and modern look, improving on the usability and functionality of the old site. There is more to come later in the year with an eLibrary collating useful resources of projects and programs (available to be downloaded) and a Member Councils 'Members Area' to allow better facilitation of information sharing and promotion of events. Take a look at the new website at [www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au](http://www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au) and let us know your thoughts.

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### SCCG News and Upcoming Events

#### **Beach Sand Nourishment Scoping Study: Maintaining Sydney's beach amenity against climate change sea level rise**

The SCCG is pleased to announce the release of the Beach Sand Nourishment Scoping Study: Maintaining Sydney's beach amenity against climate change sea level rise report. For more information about the report including an Executive Summary, Frequently Asked Questions as well as Facts and Figures can be found at [www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au](http://www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au)

#### **Invitation for SCCG consultation with councils**

In the interest of hearing 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 Officer and the Executive to discuss work and current projects of the Group. Member Council delegates interested in arranging a meeting or presentation should contact the Groups, Executive Committee Officer, Geoff Withycombe, on (02) 9246 7791 or [geoff@sydneycostalouncils.com.au](mailto:geoff@sydneycostalouncils.com.au)

#### **SCCG/ CSIRO Planning for Coastal Inundation Workshop**

In 2009 the Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) was awarded funding under the Natural Disaster Mitigation Program to undertake the *Mapping and Responding to Coastal Inundation Project*. To assist Member Councils understanding and input into stage two of the project the SCCG in partnership with the CSIRO is facilitating the Planning for Coastal Inundation Workshop. The workshop consulted with staff from Member Councils on their issues and needs in relation to implementing and communicating the land use planning and development assessment responses to sea level rise and the associated coastal inundation. A final workshop report will be available shortly.

#### **Landslide Risk Management Seminars**

The Australian Geomechanics Society (AGS) and the SCCG are conducting Landslide Risk Management (LRM) seminars around the Australia from March to June 2011. Presentations will be as two half-day sessions - with a concentration on presentation to regulators in the morning session (and a concentration on presentation to geotechnical practitioners in the afternoon session). Staff from SCCG Member Councils are encouraged, and are welcome, to attend both sessions. The Sydney workshop will be held at the Engineers Australia Sydney Division, Harricks Auditorium, 8 Thomas Street, Chatswood on Wednesday 11 May 2011. Delegates wanting more information should contact the Secretariat.

#### **SCCG Constitution**

The SCCG Executive Committee and Full Group adopted the new SCCG Constitution. The old constitution was amended to include the new Outcome Statements in the Strategic Plan 2010 - 2014 and include changes in response to the amended Incorporated Associations Regulation 2010.

### Matters of interest

#### **Mapping Sea Level Rise**

The Commonwealth Government released the Sydney city web-based sea level rise visualisation tool(s) and associated inundation images on 15 December, 2010. The high resolution elevation data and imagery were used to develop tools to help communicate the risks of climate change for Sydney and other select regional areas. The release included sea level rise maps; sea level rise visualisation tool; and a National Elevation Data Framework (NEDF) Portal. For more information see [www.climatechange.gov.au/government/initiatives/australias-coasts-and-climate-change/adapting/mapping-sea-level-rise.aspx](http://www.climatechange.gov.au/government/initiatives/australias-coasts-and-climate-change/adapting/mapping-sea-level-rise.aspx)

#### **Coasts and Climate Change Council**

The SCCG would like to congratulate Professor Bruce Thom AM for his recent appointment to the Coasts and Climate Change Council. Acting on the advice of the Council, the Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, the Hon Greg Combet AM MP, announced its extension until December 2011. The principal focus of the Council will be on advising the Government on how to take action to prepare coastal communities for the impacts of climate change. More information can be found at: [www.climatechange.gov.au/en/government/initiatives/australias-coasts-and-climate-change/adapting/coasts-and-climate-change-council.aspx](http://www.climatechange.gov.au/en/government/initiatives/australias-coasts-and-climate-change/adapting/coasts-and-climate-change-council.aspx)

#### **NSW Coastal Panel and Coastal Protection Regulations**

The membership of the NSW Coastal Panel has been announced. The Coastal Panel, will be able to approve temporary or permanent coastal protection works in certain circumstances. Chaired by The Hon Bob Debus (previous NSW Environment Minister) the panel includes: Professor Andy Short, Ms Jane Lofthouse and Professor Bruce Thom representing Local Government, and Mr Derek Rutherford (DECCW), Ms Yolande Stone (Dept Planning) and Mr Craig Abbs (LPMA) representing the NSW Government. More information can be found at: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/coastalpanel.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/coastalpanel.htm)

#### **New strategy to guide natural resources monitoring, evaluation and reporting in NSW**

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) has published a strategy to guide the monitoring, evaluation and reporting efforts of natural resources in NSW over the next five years. The Natural Resources Monitoring, Evaluation Strategy focuses on developing links between local, regional, state and national data to provide better information to the community and government on how we care for the state's natural resources. More information can be found at [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/soc/10977nrmmmerstrat1015.pdf](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/soc/10977nrmmmerstrat1015.pdf)

#### **Standards for Bushfire Hazard Reduction in SEPP 14 coastal wetlands**

The NSW Department of Planning and NSW Rural Fire Service have developed standards to regulate bushfire hazard reduction in SEPP14 coastal wetlands. The standards aim to protect life and property as well as maintaining wetland values. More information can be found at: [www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au)



### SCCG Capacity Building Activities

#### Economics, Management and the Coastal Zone Forum



On 24 February 2011 the SCCG hosted a diverse and interesting Economics Forum at Customs House, Sydney. The day was a great success starting with presentations from the highest level of financial decision-making of State and Local Government, moving to key researchers in applied economic based projects, then hearing about international and national re-insurance, and ending the day discussing critical needs and considering future issues in relation to economic assessment and management of our precious coastal zone. The final report will be on the SCCG website shortly including bio's, presentations, summaries of panel discussions, & the evaluation results.

#### SCCG Annual Member Council Survey

The SCCG Annual Survey is undertaken in December every year to collect feedback from Member Councils on the services the SCCG provide. The results showed that overall delegates continue to be very happy with the level of service provided to them by the SCCG. Delegates believe the Group continues to provide a strong platform for information, advocacy and delivery of regional projects and research. Overall these activities are playing an important role in building the capacity of Member Councils to manage their coastal and estuarine environments. Key issues identified for the Group to address in 2011 were Climate Change impacts, adaptation, marine management and changing legislation issues.



#### 2011 Summerama: Summer Activities Program

The 2011 Summerama Program completed at the end of January and has been regarded as a resounding success. 92 activities were run throughout January (the most amount undertaken to date) by 12 out of the 15 SCCG Member Councils. The recorded number of attendance for the 2011 Summerama is 2,268, with some reports yet to be returned. A summary report will be produced interpreting the Summerama Champions feedback, that will be used to improve next years program. A huge thank you to everyone involved who put in so much effort to make this years program such a success.

#### Underwater Sydney Project

The SCCG has now signed a MOU with Underwater Earth to develop the Underwater Sydney website, and the research interviews with Member Councils have commenced. An "Understanding your Underwater" policy workshop will be held with Member Council Champions in April 2011 and the official launch date of the website has now be set as **8 June 2011 - World Oceans Day**. A fundraiser event will be held on 14 April 2011 premiering the Disneynature feature movie 'OCEANS'. For more information please contact the SCCG Secretariat on (02) 9246 7326.



### SCCG Submissions, Advocacy and Grants

#### Biodiversity Strategy

The SCCG took the opportunity to provide comment on the *Draft New South Wales Biodiversity Strategy 2010 - 2015*. Biodiversity in New South Wales continues to face significant challenges. As well as addressing the legacy of past land-use impacts on biodiversity the NSW Government in partnership with councils and the communities they represent must begin to understand and tackle the cumulative impacts associated with climate change and population growth. For the quality of biodiversity in New South Wales to be maintained and improved, the SCCG believes the following actions are required from the NSW Government:

- An increase in funding and technical support for programs and activities that protect biodiversity.
- Prioritising the protection of biodiversity in land use planning and development assessment processes.
- A commitment to ensure all actions identified in the New South Wales Biodiversity Strategy 2010 - 2015 are implemented and monitored.
- Greater integration and coordination between the NSW Government and councils on biodiversity management activities.
- A long term monitoring and evaluation framework.

#### SCCG Funding Guide 2011

The SCCG Funding Guide is developed annually as part of the SCCG Capacity Building Program to assist Member Councils to identify relevant grant funding to undertake their programs. The 2011 Funding Guide will be available on the SCCG website by 9 April 2011. [www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au](http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au)



## National and International Coastal News

### Pacific Tsunami Warning System

In the wake of the magnitude 8.9 earthquake hit off the northeast coast of Japan on Friday 11 March 2011, causing widespread damage and triggering a tsunami reported up to 8 meters in height readers may be interested in reading about the work of the Pacific Tsunami Warning System (PTWS). The PTWS provides warnings for Pacific basin tsunamis that can cause damage far away from their source to almost every country around the Pacific rim and to most of the Pacific island states. More information can be found at: <http://ptwc.weather.gov/ptwc/index.php>

### Eucalypt-harming fungus here to stay

An exotic fungus that attacks native plant species including eucalypts, threatens to become endemic after thwarting containment on the NSW central coast and reaching North Queensland this summer. Biosecurity Queensland announced last week that plants infected with Myrtle Rust, or *Uredo rangellii* had been found at a Cairns nursery. It was the first time the disease has been identified so far north. Due to its rapid spread, the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service now says the fungus is unlikely to be eradicated. [www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2011/03/01/3151595.htm?topic=enviro](http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2011/03/01/3151595.htm?topic=enviro)

### Canada's unique wetlands under threat

Canada possesses one quarter of the planet's wetlands, half the world's lakes larger than 1km<sup>2</sup> in size, five of the 50 largest rivers and the single largest remaining unpolluted fresh water body, Great Bear Lake. Boreal lakes and river delta sediment, peatlands and wetlands are also the largest on-land carbon storehouse in the world, storing more than 400 trillion pounds of carbon, the study said. Forestry, oil and gas extraction, mining, and hydropower generation is rapidly increasing and negatively impacting the quality and quantity of boreal water and the surrounding ecosystems, the study warned. The report concludes that governments should protect entire river, lake and wetland ecosystems by keeping intact at least 50 percent of Canada's boreal forest. It also demands adherence to "sustainable" development in the rest of the forest. [www.physorg.com/news/2011-03-canada-unique-wetlands-threat.html](http://www.physorg.com/news/2011-03-canada-unique-wetlands-threat.html)

### Indian Ocean could help combat climate change

New research has found the Indian Ocean absorbs three times more carbon dioxide than the Atlantic Ocean. Scientists believe the findings mean the Indian Ocean could play a key role in combating climate change by acting as a huge offshore 'carbon sink'. More than 400 scientists across 10 countries are involved in the project which is conducting experiments on global change and deep water biodiversity. <http://australianetworknews.com/story.htm?id=38014>

## Conferences

**Sydney Metropolitan CMA Annual Community Forum:** 21 May 2011, Epping Club, Sydney. Contact Helen Kemp at the SMCMA on (02) 9895 6207 or at [helen.kemp@cma.nsw.gov.au](mailto:helen.kemp@cma.nsw.gov.au)

**Shires Association of NSW Annual Conference 2011:** 30 May-1 June 2011, Sofitel Wentworth Hotel. [www.lgsa-plus.net.au/www/html/3643-2011-shires-conference.asp?intSiteID=2](http://www.lgsa-plus.net.au/www/html/3643-2011-shires-conference.asp?intSiteID=2)

**NSW Sustainable Development Conference 2011:** 8-9 June 2011, Dockside Sydney. For more information see [www.halledit.com.au/nswsd2011](http://www.halledit.com.au/nswsd2011)

**Introduction to Writing Winning Grants Seminar:** 30 June 2011, 1:30pm-4:30pm, Hyde Park Inn & **Advanced Grant Writing Seminar:** 20 May 2011, 10:00am-3:00pm, Hyde Park Inn. [www.ourcommunity.com.au/training/calendar.form](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/training/calendar.form)

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)

