



# Sydney's Salty Communities

MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER

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It has been another busy few months for Sydney's Salty Communities. The Supplementary Grant Round has been awarded and another suite of excellent projects is now underway. We have also finalised the Climate Ready Tool which CSIRO has developed to assist Councils to identify and respond to adaptation challenges. Some tremendous work has been going on with Main Round projects and these are already over half way through. In total the Salty program has issued 17 grants worth just over \$1.25million for projects valued at \$2.75million.

## Community of practice

The community of practice has continued to grow as program participants make new links, both between practitioners and between practitioners and researchers and academics. This collaboration has been assisted through a series of workshops around the Climate Ready Tool and a focus on evidence based projects. The program team and the Expert Reference Group worked closely with the working group and others to

### PROJECT BACKGROUND.

Sydney's headlands, harbours, bays and foreshore environments support a range of salt-dominated and salt-influenced ecosystems with unique biodiversity and carbon sequestration rates equivalent in parts to tropical rainforests. *Sydney's Salty Communities* allows SCCG and partners to support on-ground projects at local and sub-regional scales to address pressures from pollution, weeds, feral animals, degradation, neglect, inundation and erosion. Coastal land managers (especially councils and their local communities) restore, enhance and maintain biodiversity values and functions in these critical areas.



develop Supplementary Round proposals and this has increased knowledge sharing.

### Working Group

All SCCG member Councils and other Councils in the Commonwealth designated Rivers and Coasts Sydney Metro area were invited to join our Working Group. This group provides information for the Literature, Data and Practice Review and forms the basis of the community of practice, providing input into areas where they see the need for further focus or research. They have been instrumental in the development of the Climate Ready tool, providing input through webinars, email, phone link ups and face to face workshops. We are looking forward to sharing more of the lessons of the existing projects with this community through site visits and workshops over the coming months.

### Expert Reference Group

The Expert Reference Group members comprise academics, scientists and other experts in the coastal biodiversity sphere. The group assists with providing strategic direction to the program. An independent assessment panel of these experts reviewed grant applications and provided technical advice and feedback to applicants. In addition to these experts we have also been fortunate to secure further specialist advice.

### Climate-ready biodiversity management

#### A tool to help design biodiversity projects in the face of climate change

The tool was developed by CSIRO and refined and tested through a series of workshops for use by local government officers undertaking biodiversity conservation initiatives that might need to consider climate change, such as on-ground projects and strategies. It is applicable to many in the natural resources management sphere, particularly agencies who are seeking to incorporate long-term adaptation into their programs. The tool is designed to facilitate the process of assessing conservation initiatives and

revising them so they better incorporate climate adaptation. It can be applied to existing and proposed initiatives, and to on-ground projects as well as plans and strategies. The tool was trialled and tested in a series of workshops and webinars with member councils and working group members. The focus of the tool is helping biodiversity planners and managers understand the nature of long-term adaptation and the implication for near-

the introduction of *Cyrtobagous salviniae* beetles. The 'Hollows as Homes' project involves ambitious community engagement goals to preserve and maintain vegetation for habitat. A collaboration between the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, University of Sydney and Australian Museum, it covers 30 metropolitan LGAs. Under the leadership of SSROC the other major project for this round, 'Connected Corridors for Biodiversity', will identify



term initiatives. The tool introduces key adaptation concepts and provides opportunities for people to work with them to build their capacity to use the concepts in planning biodiversity management. The tool is available on the program [webpage](#).

## Grants

### Main Round (due for completion June 2016)

Main Round projects are well underway. We have seen success with an increase in media and community awareness and engagement, better partnerships with other local land managers, increased wildlife sightings, reduction in invasive weed cover and greater bushland resilience. There have been challenges in gaining ethics approval for feral animal monitoring. A unique issue in the intertidal zone exists with jurisdictional overlap which has led to challenges gaining planning and approval advice from government agencies with multiple boundary and legislative jurisdictions. Other challenges have included extreme wet and hot weather. One area has identified the need to update Aboriginal Heritage records as a result of indigenous engagement with their project.

In total eleven grants worth nearly \$950,000 were awarded for projects valuing over \$2,030,000 over twenty local government areas. Visit the [webpage](#) for more information on individual projects.

### Supplementary Round (due for completion December 2016)

A significant focus for the assessors in this round was ensuring that the legacy from these projects will be a long one. Six grants with a total value of just over \$300,000 were awarded, for projects to the value of almost \$740,000.

The successful projects are varied and interesting and range from a holistic approach to lagoon management in Dee Why to an integration of education and citizen science in the biocontrol of a wetland invasive species through

and map opportunities for ecosystem connectivity across Council boundaries and integrate these into planning and management.

Projects in this round had a greater emphasis on collaboration and community engagement and many successful applicants were able to improve their projects thanks to their involvement in the CSIRO workshops on the Climate Ready Tool.

Visit the [webpage](#) for the [full list](#) of successful Supplementary Round projects.

#### Expert Reference Group members

Mr Mark Beharrell (Pittwater Council)  
Mr Jeffrey Bell (Natural Resources Commission)  
Assoc Prof Melanie Bishop (Macquarie University)  
Prof Gee Chapman (University of Sydney)  
Prof Ross Coleman (University of Sydney)  
Mr Dan Cunningham (Sydney Water)  
Mr Bill Dixon (Greater Sydney LLS)  
Dr Michael Dunlop (CSIRO)

Ms Erin Fardy (Sydney SW Regional Weeds Committees)  
Mr Ben Khan (NPWS)  
Dr Richard Major (Australian Museum)  
Mr Michael Miller (Department of the Environment)  
Dr Kerrylee Rodgers (University of Wollongong)  
Mr Simon Rowe (OceanWatch Australia)  
Dr Jennifer Taylor (Australian Catholic University)  
Mr David Watts (Aboriginal Heritage Office)  
Mr Geoff Withycombe (SCCG)

#### Images

##### Overleaf

Top: Looking out to sea, Fishermans Walk, Freshwater

Bottom, inset: *Nasutitermes walkeri* nest in an *Angophora*, Balls Head.

##### Above, left to right

- Indigenous fox management training, Rockdale.  
- Bird survey and community outreach,

Lane Cove National Park, Willoughby.

- Pest monitoring, Balls Head  
- Revegetation, Waverley.

##### Below

Left: Oceanwatch's Andy Myers and Simon Rowe trial coir bags for the 'Living Shorelines' project.

Inset: White-faced heron *Egretta novaehollandiae*, Dee Why Lagoon.



## PROJECT CONTACT.

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