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Invasive Species Working Group
NSW Department of Primary Industries
Locked Bag 21
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CM049-07

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Re: NSW Invasive Species Plan 2007-2015

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) would like to take this opportunity to provide comment on the *NSW Invasive Species Plan*. As noted in the vision, the Plan provides an opportunity for government, industry and community to establish collective ownership of invasive species management and work together to achieve beneficial outcomes for NSW. To achieve this, the SCCG believes the following issues need to be addressed to ensure effective and coordinated delivery of the Plan:

1. Development of an agreed and funded implementation plan.
2. Addressing the potential impacts of climate change.
3. Assisting councils to support the Department of primary Industries to control and eradicate marine invasive species including *Caulerpa Taxifolia*

1. Development of an agreed and funded implementation plan

Without an implementation plan the *NSW Invasive Species Plan* risks becoming a document containing a wish list of goals that do not translate to practical invasive species management for Local Government and other stakeholders. The development of an implementation plan for the *NSW Invasive Species Plan* would result in:

- Coordinating the delivery of actions amongst different stakeholder groups;
- Providing a framework for prioritising actions;
- Establishing a process for ongoing monitoring and evaluation; and
- Identifying funding needs and gaps in resource allocation.

Each of these outcomes would assist in adding value to the existing actions and commitments from all stakeholders involved in invasive species management. Additionally, they would ensure a clear process for reporting and achieving the outcomes outlined in the *NSW Invasive Species Plan*.

2. Addressing the potential impacts of Climate Change

Climate Change is likely to have a significant impact on the geographic range of invasive species as well as the number of invasive species. To address this, the SCCG recommends that the following actions be included in the *NSW Invasive Species Plan*:

- Develop a priority list of alien species, both plants and animals with the potential to become invasive as a result of changing climates;
- Model the likely impacts of changing climates on invasive species; and
- Provide a risk analysis for future decision making processes with respect to the management of such species and future climate change.

The uncertainty surrounding potential impacts of climate change is a significant issue across all State and Local Government activities. Specific actions that look to define and address the impacts of climate change on invasive species are essential to ensure that:

- All stakeholders have enough information to make informed management decisions;

- The ongoing benefits of current actions and spending are assured; and
- The impact of emerging invasive species is minimised.

Through the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI), the NSW Government must demonstrate leadership on the management of the impacts of climate change on invasive species. The development of a plan that will be in place until 2015 offers a unique opportunity to achieve this. If the *NSW Invasive Species Plan* does not address the impacts of climate change on invasive species, the capacity of all stakeholders to manage this issue in a coordinated and effective manner will be significantly reduced.

3. Assisting Councils to support the Department of primary Industries to control and eradicate marine invasive species including *Caulerpa Taxifolia*

The management of marine invasive species is a difficult task for Local Government. This is because the characteristics and impacts of marine invasive species are not as well understood as terrestrial invasive species. Additionally, broader community understanding and acceptance of marine invasive species management techniques is limited and an ongoing challenge. However, the potential for marine species to be introduced into NSW waters and the impacts of these introductions is significant.

To address the impacts of one such marine invasive species, *Caulerpa Taxifolia*, the SCCG has established the *Caulerpa Taxifolia* Task Force. The Task Force is made up of stakeholders from Local Government, the NSW DPI (Fisheries), NSW Maritime, and NGOs including the Boating Industry Association and the National Parks Association. Through the facilitation of this Task Force the SCCG has found the following in relation marine invasive species, specifically *Caulerpa Taxifolia*:


- The long term management of marine invasive species is an activity that requires cross government, community and industry coordination;
- Further research into the extent and impact of marine invasive species is required;
- The success of current management techniques for marine invasive species is unclear;
- The long term impacts on native marine species from marine invasive species are largely unknown;
- Opportunities for community education and participation in management options for marine invasive species need to be investigated; and
- Greater resourcing of monitoring and evaluation of existing and future management techniques for marine invasive species is required.

Based on this experience this SCCG request the NSW DPI urgently incorporate specific benchmarks and funding allocations to manage marine invasive species in the *NSW Invasive Species Plan*. This should be underpinned by liaison with all stakeholders to secure a commitment for implementation. Each of these actions would ensure that the appropriate management actions and identified and prioritised for marine invasive species.

Conclusion

I trust that the information provided in this submission will receive appropriate attention when assessing submissions for the *NSW Invasive Species Plan*. If you wish to clarify any matter in the submission or require further information, please contact Craig Morrison (Coastal Projects Officer) on 9246 7702 or craig@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au

Yours sincerely



Mr Geoff Withycombe
Executive Officer