



Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc

Resilient coasts. Engaged communities. Local leadership. Regional impact.



2018-19 ANNUAL REPORT



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From The Chair

According to the 2018-19 annual survey, SCCG performed well throughout the year satisfying members needs and interests. SCCG responded proactively to challenges and opportunities, and achieved positive outcomes in sustainable coastal management for our Members through the implementation of the SCCG Business Plan with key focus areas catchment management, pollution reduction, and government reforms.

SCCG provided a strong voice meeting with Ministers and local Members of Parliament on key issues, and commencing quarterly meetings with Sydney Water and the NSW Coastal Council to advocate on members issues and concerns, and work collaboratively to achieve shared outcomes for water quality and Coastal Management Programs.

SCCG's key focus and activities for 2018-19 included:

- ⇒ Actions to improve integrated water management, water quality and ecosystem values
- ⇒ Advocating for mandatory Water Sensitive Urban Design standard provisions in LEP's/DCP's based on agreed standards and best practice
- ⇒ Advocating for better collaboration between Councils and the Marine Estate Management Authority and Council input into the Marine Estate Management Strategy
- ⇒ Acting as an effective conduit between Members to achieve collaboration, coordination and information sharing
- ⇒ Seeking new investment opportunities, in partnership with other stakeholders, and through investigation of options for potential expansion of our council membership
- ⇒ Collaboration with Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on the Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program.

I am extremely pleased to announce that the SCCG turned 30 during 2019, and through 30 years of action has been a key driver of sustainable and integrated coastal and estuarine management for the Sydney region.

Through the implementation of the new SCCG Strategic Plan 2019-2029, SCCG will continue to provide effective, efficient and well-directed services to members to advance the sustainable management of Sydney's coastal and estuarine environment.

I would like to thank SCCG member Councils and delegates for their valued contributions throughout the year and over the last 30 years. I would also like to thank the SCCG Secretariat for their ongoing hard work and commitment.



Cr Lynne Saville
SCCG Chairperson



About Us



Established in 1989, the Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc (SCCG) is a regional organisation of councils (ROC), advancing sustainable management of Sydney's urban coastal and estuarine environment.

SCCG is made up of the Secretariat and four core Committees, namely the Executive Committee, Full Group Committee, General Managers Forum and Technical Committee.

The functions, operations, activities and committees of the SCCG are facilitated by the Secretariat, made up of an Executive Officer, Manager Projects and Programs and Support Officer.

The Full Group Committee provides a forum for Councillors and Senior staff of SCCG member Councils to share information and direct core activities.

The General Managers Forum provides strategic direction and advice on the development and implementation of the SCCG Business Plan/Strategic Plan.

The Technical Committee enables council technical staff to exchange information, network and learn from their peers, collaborate on current and emerging needs and develop regional projects.

The Executive Committee undertake decision-making on specific strategic and governance matters. The Executive Committee nominated at the 2018 AGM for 2018-19 representation are below:

- Chairperson: Cr Lynne Saville, Willoughby City Council
- Vice-Chair Estuarine: Cr Ian White, Northern Beaches Council
- Vice-Chair Ocean: Cr Paula Masselos, Waverley Council
- Secretary: Cr Kathy Neilson, Randwick Council
- Treasurer: Cr Andrew Tsounis, Bayside Council

SCCG Vision

Resilient coasts. Engaged communities. Local leadership. Regional impact.

Mission

To lead sustainable management of the coastal and estuarine environment through collaboration, capacity building, advocacy and research.

Goals

We work towards our vision and mission through the implementation of activities under four key goals: collaboration, capacity building, advocacy and research.

Sydney Coastal Councils Group in a Snapshot

OUR MEMBER COUNCILS



OUR WORK IN 2018-19



Coordination of:

9

SCCG & guest presentations

Involvement in:

83

external committees, meetings, workshops & events



Facilitation of:

54

internal committee meetings; and

4

capacity building workshops, forums & events



Advocacy via:

5

comprehensive submissions

11

meetings with Ministers/MP's

OUR REGION

Landscape



An area consisting of: drowned river valley, beaches, headlands, bays, lagoons and rivers.

801.29 km² total land area

87 beaches/
swimming sites

Population



Sydney Coastal Councils
Group represented:

1.3 million
Sydneyiders across
9 LGA's

Economy



Gross Regional Product
(GRP) of the SCCG region:

\$101.27 Billion GRP

18.94% of the NSW
GRP

Our Performance in 2018-2019

Financial Performance

The SCCG financial position for 2018-19 is provided below.

- Total Income: \$381,005
- Total Assets: \$556,700
- Total Expenditure: \$379,920
- Total Liabilities: \$394,362
- Total Equity: \$162,338

Annual Members Survey

The Annual Members Survey provides an opportunity for our member Councils to evaluate performance, identify their continuing and future needs, and inform the SCCG's future activities. The survey findings provide direction and build the capacity of SCCG to continuously improve services to member Councils.

Snapshot of 2018-19 Annual Survey Results:

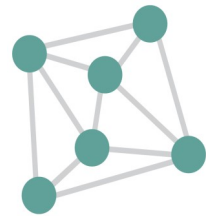
- 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the SCCG's performance during 2018/19.
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that SCCG represents member Councils interests.
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that SCCG promotes cooperation, collaboration and coordination among member Councils and facilitates exchange of information.
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that SCCG build member Council capacity by providing advice, information and updates, while 89% agreed that staff capacity was built through the provision of useful tools/resources.
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that SCCG is performing well at advocating on behalf of members, an increase of 18% comparative to 2017/18.
- 78% agreed that SCCG research activities were comprehensive and involved collaboration with experts, although 67% considered all research activities to be relevant to their individual council.
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that SCCG membership provides access to skills and knowledge, peer to peer learning and information sharing, networking opportunities, capacity building and advocacy services.

Achievements and Highlights

- SCCG turned 30 in 2019! Celebrating 30 years in operation as an Incorporated Association leading and achieving sustainable coastal management in collaboration with our member Councils.
- Implementation of the SCCG Business Plan.
- Launch of the newly redeveloped SCCG Website including a user friendly resource hub.
- Extensive member Council consultation in the preparation of SCCG's new draft Strategic Plan 2019-2029.
- Completion of the grant program 'Prioritising and Adapting Coastal Recreational Infrastructure for Climate Change', developing a tool for local councils to assess asset risk and adaptability to climate change.
- Actively engaged with local councils, stakeholders and the NSW Government on the Marine Reforms and the Marine Estate Management Strategy.
- Hosted a workshop for our member Councils on the Local Strategic Planning Statements to build capacity and achieve consistent outcomes.
- Represented and advocated for member Councils' interests through the preparation of 5 major submissions to Government policy, legislation, reviews and announcements.
- Prepared key coastal management policy recommendations for the state and federal government elections.
- Established regular meetings with state government agencies and instigated 11 meetings with Ministers/Members of Parliament throughout the year to advocate for sustainable coastal management and address core issues and impediments to councils.
- Delivered the Summerama coastal activities program which saw over 1403 participants attend 27 events in January 2019 across 5 SCCG Member Councils.
- Partnered with the Catchment Groups (Parramatta River Catchment Group, Cooks River Alliance, Georges RiverKeeper) to implement the Get the Site Right Program.
- Participated in the Australian Microplastics Assessment Project as a project partner.
- Hosted an Information Session on the proposed Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program attended by councils, state and federal government agencies.
- Engaged by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to establish and facilitate a Steering Committee for the development of the Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program.

GOAL 1: Collaboration

Facilitate cooperation between, and coordination of, actions by Member Councils



Summary

SCCG represented members on external committees and at stakeholder workshops, enabling greater collaboration and partnerships; providing an interface of communication and ensuring SCCG remained up-to-date on emerging issues, trends, programs and best practice approaches.

Highlights include:

- SCCG Core partner of the Australian Microplastics Assessment Project (AUSMAP), developing a citizen science program for schools and community and sampling methodology for microplastics in aquatic environments.
- Commenced quarterly meetings with Sydney Water to review and re-establish commitment to the Memorandum of Understanding and Schedule of actions achieving shared goals/outcomes.
- Commenced quarterly meetings with the NSW Coastal Council to discuss issues, challenges and opportunities of coastal management programs.
- Collaboration with the Sydney Catchment Groups on the need for national leadership and strong policy direction on integrated water management for healthy waterways and water sensitive cities.
- Collaborations with Research Institutions on potential grant-based project applications.

Our Full Group and quarterly Technical Committee meetings provided a valuable forum for networking, peer to peer learning and information / knowledge sharing between member Councils.



**IS YOUR SITE
RIGHT?**



Get the Site Right

During 2018-19 SCCG partnered with the Parramatta River Catchment Group, Cooks River Alliance, Georges River Keeper, Lake Macquarie Council, NSW EPA and NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to implement the Get the Site Right Campaign.

The campaign targets erosion and sediment control on construction and building sites and aims to raise awareness of the effects of sediment laden runoff on our waterways.

The campaign was run during May 2019, with the Blitz day held on 14 May. In total, 1181 building site inspections were conducted across 20 local government areas. 63% of sites were compliant with sediment and erosion controls, a 13% improvement in compliance comparative to the last campaign in May 2018.

Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program

In 2019, the SCCG was engaged by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to facilitate a Steering Committee and Partners Group, and develop a Project Governance Plan for the development of the Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program (CMP).

An initial Information session was held in February 2019 for the 21 Councils and state agencies within the Sydney Harbour Catchment, with these councils/agencies plus additional stakeholder organisations being invited to participate in the development of the Sydney Harbour CMP through involvement in the Steering Committee and/or Partners Group.

Collaboration on the Sydney Harbour CMP will continue through 2019/20.

Summerama Program

The SCCG Summerama Program, celebrated its 16th year in January 2019, providing a platform for the community to enjoy, discover, interact and connect with Sydney's coastline through fun filled and family orientated coastal activities, from kayaking, snorkelling, boat and adventure tours to rock pool rambles, walk 'n' talks and surf safety.

Summerama 2019 saw over 1403 participants attend 27 activities across the 5 participating council areas, including Northern Beaches, Randwick, Waverley, Willoughby, and Woollahra.



Blue Event

In April 2019, SCCG participated in the Blue Event' hosted by the Director of Blue the documentary, Pew Charitable Trusts, Australian Marine Conservation Society and the Save Our Marine Life Alliance as part of the Ocean Lovers Festival.

The Event included viewing the trailer and two vignettes from the documentary Blue followed by a panel discussion on two important issues: marine conservation and plastic pollution.

SCCG's Manager Projects and Programs took part in the panel discussion representing SCCG and its member councils, highlighting local government leadership on these issues, and noting actions being implemented by councils and their communities to reduce plastic pollution and protect and conserve the marine environment.



GOAL 2: Capacity Building



Develop and exchange knowledge and tools to support the role and build the capacity of Members

Summary

SCCG continued to build Member Council and stakeholder capacity through regular updates on coastal related news and policy in the *Coastal Currents* quarterly newsletter. In January 2019, the Annual Funding Guide was developed for SCCG Member Councils, including information on relevant funding programs and award opportunities.

Workshops/Presentations

- ⇒ In February 2019 SCCG hosted an Information Session for the Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program
- ⇒ Participation in the Greater Sydney Water Smart Cities Forum
- ⇒ Participation in Resilient Sydney, attendance at strategy launch
- ⇒ SCCG and member Councils attended a briefing on the Marine Estate and Sydney Marine Park Proposal
- ⇒ Hosted a delegation from India, providing a presentation, site visit and exchange of information on coastal management.
- ⇒ Participation in the Wetland/Mangrove Seminar and Urban Wetland Talk Seminar hosted by Sydney Olympic Park Authority.
- ⇒ Participation in the Cooks River Alliance Biodiversity Workshop
- ⇒ Attended the Coastal Management Mini Symposium and NSW Coastal Conference
- ⇒ Participation in the Integrated Planning for Better Places and Environment Outcomes Workshop
- ⇒ Attended Sydney Water customer briefing, webinar on water restrictions and presentation on Microbial Source Tracking Project.

Member Capacity Building

Flying-fox Count Method Training

In August 2018, as part of SCCG's 'Regional Approach to Flying-fox management', SCCG hosted a training session at Centennial Park for member Council staff and community volunteers. The training held by CSIRO was on the flying-fox count methodology and aimed to build capacity of staff/volunteers to more accurately count flying-fox numbers at camps on a more regular basis.

AUSMAP Training

In October 2018, SCCG hosted a training workshop in Woollahra for member Council staff to become accredited in the AUSMAP microplastics sampling method. Certified Council staff can now run microplastic sampling days within their community at nominated beaches, bays, creeks and/or rivers, contributing to the database and research into microplastics in the aquatic environment.

Website Redevelopment

SCCG developed its new website, going live in September 2018. The website includes a members area for our technical staff as well as a resource hub providing access to tools, reports, guidance documents and studies.

Climate Change Project

SCCG, in partnership with Manly Hydraulics Laboratory, Engineers Australia, and the National Committee on Coastal and Oceans Engineering, implemented its grant based project 'Adapting Priority Coastal Recreational Infrastructure for Climate Change', funded through the 'Building Resilience to Climate Change Grants Program'.

The project involved the development of assessment methodology and a decision framework for priority recreational coastal infrastructure assets.

The assessment method is a tool to evaluate the condition and vulnerability of a recreational asset to coastal hazards and climate change, and support capital expenditure applications. The tool can assist in determining the strengths and weaknesses of an asset type, indicate options and costs for adaptation strategies, rank assets to aid in prioritisation of resources, and set trigger levels for future adaptation work.

Case studies have been prepared based on various public recreational infrastructure assets within three NSW council areas.

This project was finalised and launched at the NSW Coastal Conference in November 2018.

The project resources and tool can be downloaded from the SCCG [website](#).



Local Strategic Planning Statements

During February 2019, SCCG held a workshop for member Councils on the Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPS).

The workshop included presentations and Q&A by staff from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (former Planning, and Office of Environment and Heritage) and the Government Architect NSW, presenting information on the LSPS process and expectations, the Green Grid and the Risk-based Framework and northern beaches water quality model.

This workshop brought together planning and environment staff from member Councils to build knowledge and capacity and workshop consistent environmental priorities and actions across our region for inclusion in the LSPS.

Consistent topic areas for discussion included water quality, water sensitive urban design, marine biodiversity, the green grid, coastal inundation / hazards and resilience.

Priorities were identified as:

- ⇒ Protect & improve health and enjoyment of waterways
- ⇒ Improve & maintain water quality in catchments
- ⇒ Assess & manage coastal hazards and minimise risks associated with hazards
- ⇒ Protect & enhance natural environment in accordance with community values
- ⇒ Protect & extend biodiversity corridors and restore disturbed ecosystems
- ⇒ Advocate for state legislative change (e.g. biodiversity, WSUD)

An outcomes report was prepared for member Councils to refer to in the development of their LSPS.

GOAL 3: Advocacy



Provide a regional and cohesive voice representing Member Councils.

Summary

Advocacy was a major focus for the SCCG in 2018-19, taking three main forms; i) formal submissions to government; ii) participation in relevant external committees and/or advisory bodies, and/or; iii) direct communications / correspondence with government agencies, elected representatives, and Ministers

Submissions 2018-19

- ⇒ Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Marine Parks Proposal - September 2018
- ⇒ Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link - December 2018
- ⇒ Submission to Minister for Environment on Coastal Management Programs - Impediments to Councils - December 2018
- ⇒ Recommendations on Key Coastal Management Issues—NSW Election 2019
- ⇒ Key Coastal Policy Recommendations—Federal Election 2019

SCCG submissions are available at www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/submissions/

Meetings with Ministers and Local Members

- ⇒ 21 September 2018 - Meeting with Bruce Notely-Smith MP, Member for Coogee
- ⇒ 21 September 2018 - Meeting with Mark Speakman MP, Member for Cronulla
- ⇒ 26 September 2018 - Meeting with Michael Daley MP, Member for Maroubra
- ⇒ 26 September 2018 - Meeting with Brad Hazzard MP, Member for Wakehurst
- ⇒ 5 October 2018 - Joint Catchment Group Meeting with Anthony Albanese MP, Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development
- ⇒ 26 October 2018 - Meeting Rob Stokes MP, Member for Pittwater
- ⇒ 30 October 2018 - Meeting with Gabrielle Upton MP, Minister for the Environment
- ⇒ 15 May 2019 - Meeting with Rob Stokes MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
- ⇒ 24 May 2019 - Meeting with Chief of staff for Matt Kean MP, Minister for Energy and Environment
- ⇒ 12 June 2019 - Meeting with James Griffin MP, Member for Manly, Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment

Advocacy

During 2018/19 SCCG undertook advocacy, via correspondence, meetings, media, and briefings on the following issues:

- ⇒ Bunker Fuel Emissions—cruise ships in Sydney Harbour
- ⇒ Water Sensitive Urban Design in planning controls/BASIX improvements
- ⇒ Water quality
- ⇒ Marine wildlife incidents and user conflicts (e.g. Little Penguin)
- ⇒ Marine Estate Management Strategy, and greater council/MEMA collaboration on initiatives

Key Coastal Management Issues—NSW Election

SCCG identified key coastal management issues that should be on the agenda for the NSW state government elections to achieve sustainable coastal management. These issues were identified as:

- ⇒ Urban sustainable water management
- ⇒ Climate change adaptation in the coastal zone
- ⇒ Action on plastic pollution
- ⇒ Marine biodiversity conservation
- ⇒ Funding for coastal programs in greater Sydney, including Coastcare

Key Coastal Policy Recommendations 2019

For the 2019 Federal elections, SCCG identified four coastal management issues to be addressed at a national level including; coastal management, climate change, water management and plastic pollution.

SCCG's key recommendations for national actions to ensure long-term sustainable management, conservation and protection of Australia's coastal environment included:

- ⇒ Develop a National Coastal Policy/Act that sets the vision and direction for the sustainable management, conservation and protection of the coast.
- ⇒ Develop a coast and marine conservation strategy that provides a robust framework for increasing the spatial network of marine parks.
- ⇒ Further funding allocated for national coast care programs
- ⇒ Establish a national ban on single-use plastics
- ⇒ Develop industry regulations and set ambitious targets for industry packaging reduction and recycling under a mandatory Australian Packaging Covenant, with clear and comprehensive monitoring, auditing and public reporting outcomes.
- ⇒ Develop a national Integrated Water Management Plan for sustainable management of Australia's water supply, equitable use, and environmental flows for healthy river systems.
- ⇒ Development of a national Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Strategy that achieves >85% renewable energy and net-zero carbon pollution.

Marine Park Proposal

SCCG continued to strongly support and advocate for the protection, conservation and enhancement of marine biodiversity in the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion through the establishment of a multi-use marine park.

The SCCG [submission](#) to the Marine Estate Management Authority, highlighted the need for a comprehensive, adequate and representative multi-use marine park including well placed and spatially representative sanctuary zones, a comprehensive monitoring program and well-resourced compliance team, to facilitate sustainable management of the marine estate and reduce up to twenty priority threats identified in the Threat and Risk Assessment (TARA) process.

GOAL 4: Research

Identify and address current and emerging regional coastal issues.



Summary

During 2018-19, SCCG continued to engage with our government and academic partners to further our knowledge and promote and distribute research outcomes to our member councils.

Healthy Waterways Action Plan

SCCG has completed research actions identified in the SCCG Action Plan - Systems Approach to Healthy Waterways, developed in consultation with members and Sydney Water; including:

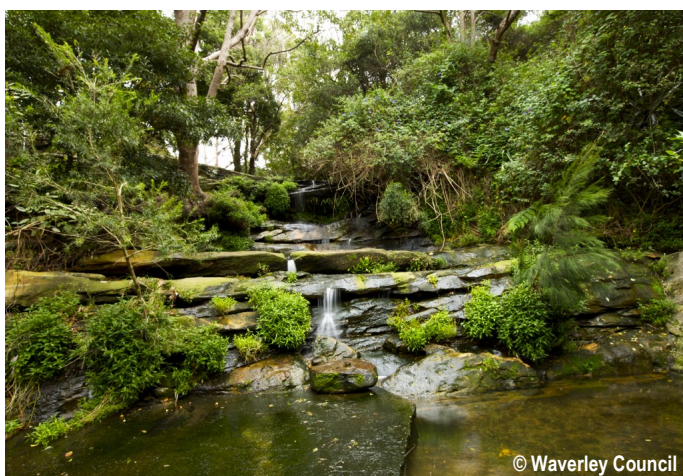
- ⇒ Development of a resource information hub
- ⇒ Establishment of a database of water sensitive urban design policies, provisions, actions
- ⇒ Literature Review on issues relating to cross contamination of sewer / stormwater and the impacts on the catchment
- ⇒ Water Pollution Hotspot Survey of member Councils and preparation of an Outcomes Report and Water Pollution Hotspot Map for the SCCG region.

MyCoast NSW Study

The MyCoast NSW Study was undertaken by UNSW in partnership with SCCG and NSW Surf Life Saving, and funded through the joint State and Commonwealth Natural Disaster Resilience Program. MyCoast NSW explores what the NSW community understands about coastal erosion and inundation as well as the driving forces behind these hazards, highlighting knowledge, perceptions, values and attitudes of NSW coastal communities in relation to 'their coast' and key themes related to management issues and strategies. The purpose of the Study was to provide an evidence-based platform that will assist local councils and coastal management professionals in the future development of suitable and effective educational strategies and programs to improve the ability of NSW coastal communities to adapt sustainably to the risk of coastal erosion and inundation.

The findings were presented at the NSW Coastal Conference in November 2018. The Final Study Report, Fact sheets and a Teachers Guide can be accessed from the SCCG Website Resource [page](#).







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