



Reference: 0-29-25

Tuesday, 16 December 2025

NSW Treasury
52 Martin Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Re: NSW Financial Year 2026-27 Budget: Pre-Budget submission

Dear Sir / Madam,

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the NSW Government's FY2026-27 pre-budget consultation.

The SCCG is a regional organisation of councils, established in 1989 to promote collaboration among member councils on environmental issues relating to the sustainable management of the urban coastal and estuarine environment. The group comprises nine councils adjacent to Sydney marine and estuarine environments and associated waterways and represents nearly 1.3 million Sydneysiders. We are guided by the [SCCG's 2019-2029 Strategic Plan](#).

1. Please select the portfolio(s) your submission relates to:

- Climate Change, Energy, and the Environment
- Planning

2. Please select the policy area(s) your submission relates to:

- Environment, land and water
- Housing and construction

3. Please select a wellbeing theme(s) addressed by your submission:

- Sustainable:
 - The environment and our heritage is protected, enhanced and enjoyed
 - Communities and businesses reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

4. What challenge(s) would you like addressed in the 2026-27 NSW Budget, and why?

Additional funding is urgently required for the NSW Coastal and Estuaries Grants Program considering the NSW Audit Office's recent review of the Coastal Management Framework. The review highlighted that current funding allocations may be exhausted before the majority of Coastal Management Programs (CMPs) across the state achieve certification.

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW) estimates that the total cost of actions in the 17 CMPs already certified exceeds the funding currently available. This means there may be little or no funding to implement actions in the remaining 43 CMPs still in development, 11 of which are in the Sydney region and being prepared by SCCG or its member councils.

Councils and Regional Organisations of Councils (such as SCCG) have invested significant resources and years of effort to develop these CMPs. Without adequate funding for implementation, this investment and the opportunity to deliver critical coastal resilience outcomes will be at risk.

5. What are your ideas to address those challenges?

If additional funding cannot be secured, a clear prioritisation framework is essential to ensure the most critical CMPs and actions are delivered. While DCCEEW has committed to developing an implementation plan to identify priority areas, limited detail has been provided on its scope or timeline. Greater clarity and resourcing are needed to avoid delays and ensure equitable outcomes across NSW.

6. Are any programs in this policy area superseded by your proposal/s, or no longer necessary, or now a lower priority?

DCCEEW and Planning has committed to various initiatives following the outcomes of the audit. This includes a review of the Coastal and Estuaries Grants Program and development of an implementation plan. These are yet to be finalised and publicly released.

7. What new or alternate ways would you suggest to fund new, or continuing programs?

Alternative NSW Government funding sources should be explored such as a levy on cruise ships, similar to levies established for this industry in New Zealand. This could be easily justified for Sydney Harbour given the number of cruise ships, their potential environmental impact, and the sensitivities of the harbour. This may be relevant for other harbours and ports in NSW where CMPs are being developed.

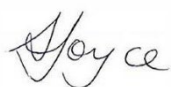
Currently, CMPs are being developed for Outer Sydney Harbour and Inner Sydney Harbour both of which are over two years away from certification and therefore funding to deliver these CMPs is not secure.

8. Please provide the executive summary of your submission:

The NSW Audit Office's review of the Coastal Management Framework highlights a critical funding shortfall for implementing certified Coastal Management Programs (CMPs). Current allocations under the NSW Coastal and Estuaries Grants Program may be fully committed before 43 CMPs currently in development across the state are certified. Councils and Regional Organisations have invested significant resources and years of effort in developing these CMPs, yet without adequate implementation funding, this investment and essential coastal resilience outcomes are at risk.

If additional funding cannot be secured, a clear prioritisation framework is urgently needed to ensure delivery of the most critical CMPs and actions. Exploration of cruise ship levies is also warranted.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Penny Joyce
Executive Director