

NSW Coastal Management Performance Audit – Implementation Plan

SCCG response in relation to Outer Sydney Harbour CMP

No.	Question	SCCG response
3	In your view, what should the Coastal and Estuary Management Program primarily do? Please list up to three objectives for the Program.	1. To protect and manage public safety and infrastructure on the coast and clarify council and state-owned coastal assets. 2. To protect and improve the coastal environmental, social, public health and amenity, economic and cultural values. 3. To reduce current and future risks of managing the coast in the face of climate change and reduce financial risk to councils. 4. To clarify and strengthen coordinated governance, data sharing and stewardship.
4	What changes or benefits should the Coastal and Estuary Management Program achieve over time? Please list up to three long-term outcomes you would like to see achieved.	1. Progression to catchment-based outcomes. 2. Incentivised outcomes with appropriate funding and cost-sharing among councils and state agencies. 3. Improved overall governance in line with current and future SEPPs and streamlined approvals. 4. Ecosystem resilience and migration in face of climate change.
5	In your view, what is the optimal role for local councils in the Coastal and Estuary Management Program? Please list up to three things that councils should be accountable for.	CMPs require the delivery of not only Councils but also SCCG and other catchment groups who are leading the development of multi-Council CMPs. It is disappointing that the important role that these organisations play is not recognised in the survey. If you require greater clarity on our role, we are happy to set up a meeting to discuss. The following answer to this question is therefore delivered in two parts - the role of Councils and the role of SCCG who is currently delivering the Outer Sydney Harbour CMP involving eight Councils and three state agencies. <u>Councils' role:</u> 1. deliver local CMP actions and manage owned coastal assets 2. collect and report local environmental hazard data to support CMP implementation 3. lead community engagement and local stakeholder partnerships <u>SCCG's role:</u> 1. coordinating regional-scale governance across multiple councils and agencies 2. delivering shared technical studies (e.g., harbour-wide hydrodynamics, sediment transport, sea-level rise interpretation), providing regional data platforms, tools and capacity building 3. advocating for state and federal funding and policy reform and ensuring consistency across CMPs and avoiding duplication
6	In your view, what is the optimal role for NSW Government agencies in the Coastal and Estuary Management Program? Please list up to three things that NSW Government should be accountable for, including the name of specific NSW Government agencies where possible.	1. Providing authoritative, consistent, state-wide coastal hazard and environmental data. 2. Leading cross-agency coordination, regulatory alignment and whole-of government implementation eg a. NSW Transport responsible for coastal assets below the mean high water mark in Sydney; b. Sydney Water responsible for beach water quality and Beachwatch program as sewage is the main polluter. 3. Provide long term funding, technical guidance and assurance for CMP delivery and addressing impediments
7	What changes or improvements to the Program would help your council to deliver coastal management more effectively? Please list up to three improvements to the Program you would like to see implemented as a priority.	1. Integrate catchment-scale management into the program; funding is currently restricted to the coastal zone despite management needed within the catchment to reduce coastal risks. 2. Stable funding for Councils to conduct major foreshore works, hazard mitigation and monitoring and adaptation programs. The current grant-based model is short-term, competitive and administratively heavy. 3. Strengthen whole-of-government coordination and require NSW agencies to participate in CMP delivery in a collaborative partnership. 4. Formalize catchment groups as leaders of multi-council CMPs and recognize delivery role for region-wide actions.

No.	Question	SCCG response
8	In your view, what would make monitoring, evaluation, reporting and continuous improvement (MERI) on coastal management practical and meaningful for councils? Please suggest up to three ideas that could support MERI activities.	It is critical to understand that MERI would be of benefit not only to the current version of the CMP but also would guide future versions of the CMP. Therefore, SCCG suggests the following to support MERI activities: 1. A simple standardized MERI framework with core indicators used across all CMPs. Councils currently use different monitoring programs, methods and data sets; a standardized MERI framework would reduce cost, duplication and uncertainty. 2. State-funded, regionally coordinated monitoring programs and shared data platforms. MERI becomes meaningful when councils can access high quality, long term datasets without carrying the full costs. 3. Clear accountability and participation from NSW agencies in MERI. Many CMP actions and the pressures they address, relate to state-owned assets and state-regulated activities; MERI must reflect this. Councils cannot report meaningfully on outcomes when major drivers of estuary condition sit outside their control.