

# COASTAL CURRENTS WINTER 2012

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP ED 64



## FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to our Winter edition of Coastal Currents.

I would like to congratulate SCCG staff; Stephen Summerhayes and Rachael Buzio. They have successfully completed performance reviews and have accepted fixed-term performance-based contracts. I'd also like to congratulate Dr Ian Armstrong, our CAPs Project Officer, who is now on a fixed term contract. It's fantastic to have a full Secretariat once again.

I am looking forward to the SCCG Boundaries and Barriers Forum, taking place on the 14 August. This forum will seek to clarify the management roles and responsibilities of Councils below the high tide mark (see the Capacity Building

Section on page 3 for more information).

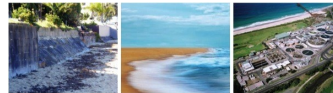
I would like to thank the Honourable Robyn Parker MP, NSW Minister for Environment and Heritage, for addressing the SCCG Full Group and answering their questions at the June meeting. See Matters of Interest for information on the Minister's presentation.

In closing, I would like to wish good luck to all those Councillors who are standing in the upcoming Local Government election in September. To those who aren't standing, I would like to extend thanks for their representation and contributions to the Group.

Clr. Wendy McMurdo  
SCCG Chairperson

## SCCG PROJECTS UPDATE

### CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROJECTS



Since we were awarded funding from the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency in July 2011, three projects have been established that focus on delivering tools and methods to adapt to, and build resilience for, the increasing risks associated with climate change. The projects are at a critical, and exciting, stage:

#### Multi-Criteria Approaches to Adaptive Coastal Development Project

The project has two main strands: a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and a Decision Support Tool, that are woven together to provide an integrated decision support framework for Local Government. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework incorporates templates to monitor and evaluate:

- Adaptation plans;
- Organisational capacity for adaptation;
- Performance of adaptation strategies.

The MCA component has incorporated available physical and social data into Bayesian Belief Networks. Further development of the software, and additional data, will be required before trialling and capacity building workshops later in the year.

#### Assessment and Decision Frameworks for Existing Seawalls

The final case studies evaluating existing seawalls at open coast and estuarine beaches are nearing completion. The open coast case study incorporates methods such as Ground Penetrating Radar and GPS data to evaluate existing seawalls where there are little or no data on the design and construction of the walls and much of the wall is buried and cannot easily be inspected.

A complementary report describing geotechnical factors relating to seawall stability has also been prepared. The emphasis is on identifying geotechnical issues relating to stability and how these may change with climate change, particularly rising sea levels.

Checklists and pro forma forms are being developed to assist Local Government engineers in the field to identify key:

- indicators for an appropriate and inappropriate structure; and
- data that may be collected and added to an asset management system over time.

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The SCCG was established in 1989 to promote co-ordination between Member Councils on environmental issues relating to sustainable management of the urban coastal environment. The Group consists of 15 Member Councils adjacent to Sydney marine and estuarine environments and associated waterways in Sydney; Botany, Hornsby, Leichhardt, Manly, Mosman, North Sydney, Pittwater, Randwick, Rockdale, Sutherland, Sydney, Warringah, Waverley, Willoughby and Woollahra. The Group collectively represent over 1.4 million Sydneysiders.

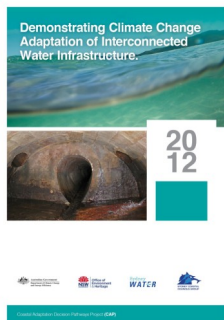


The final project report will also include a literature review, and an economic model to assist in defining the financial and social implications of proposed works. The project highlights the difficulties faced by Local Government in assessing existing protection works in terms of their responsibility for addressing/approving future development.

### **Demonstrating Climate Change Adaptation of Interconnected Water Infrastructure**

This project is based on the development of adaptation pathways for five different case studies covering issues such as: management and retrofitting of existing infrastructure, redevelopment of existing areas, governance, coastal hazards, supporting and protecting natural systems. They included risk assessment and management under climate change scenarios, and economic evaluation of options. The investigations focus on a particular aspect of the adaptation pathway for each of the five case studies, to develop a structured decision support Framework for infrastructure managers progressing adaptive planning for climate change.

A case study Synthesis Report is nearly completed and outcomes have been translated into an interactive decision support tool. The tool will be trialled and used for capacity building in August. The tool is based on a defining and understanding of:



- The focus and scope of the issue/problem
- Risk assessment
- Adaptation options
- Flexible adaptation pathway(s)
- Implementation
- Monitoring and evaluation.

A separate CAP newsletter is also being finalised and will be released soon (keep an eye on the project web page for details). [http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/Project/assessment and decision frameworks for seawall structures project](http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/Project/assessment%20and%20decision%20frameworks%20for%20seawall%20structures%20project)

#### **NEWS IN BRIEF**

##### **Water Recycling Guidelines**

In partnership with Sydney Water, we are developing a 'Recycled Water Handbook' to collate information on all aspects of the design, approval and maintenance of water recycling and stormwater reuse projects with links to available relevant technical documents and applicable case studies. The Advisory Committee is meeting in August with a view to resolving the final form of the Handbook and aims to produce a draft by the end of September.

##### **Walking Coastal Sydney**

We are very happy to announce that the Walking Coastal Sydney website has been updated. Visitors to the site can print current versions of maps and brochures (with the increased functionality of Adobe Reader 10). See [www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au](http://www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au). We have received a Grant from the Metropolitan Greenspace Program to develop an App.

#### **OTHER PROJECTS**

##### **Coastal Vulnerability to Multiple Inundation Sources Project (COVER MAR)**

We have partnered with the University of New South Wales Australia - Pacific Tsunami Research Centre & Natural Hazards Research Laboratory (UNSW APTRC) to undertake a research project addressing coastal vulnerability to multiple inundation sources. The project, due to conclude at the end of 2013, will develop a multi-hazard tool to assess the vulnerability of buildings and critical infrastructure to extreme marine inundations caused by both storm surge and tsunamis. Inundation scenarios will be simulated using state-of-the-art numerical models, under present and predicted future climate conditions, and tested at three NSW study sites.

This project is jointly funded by the Australian and NSW Government under the Natural Disaster Resilience Program. A copy of the Project Factsheet can be found on our website : <http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/node/106>

##### **SCCG "Becoming Social"**

Nominations for the Becoming Social Steering Committee have now closed. For more details on this exciting new social media project (which aims to equip educators, managers and policy makers with the skills and knowledge to utilise social media as a relationship and policy development tool) visit our website. [http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/becoming social](http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/becoming%20social)

##### **Plastics in the Marine Environment**

Parking tickets and infringement notices are finding their way into the environment, particularly waterways, coasts and beaches. Many are manufactured from non-biodegradable materials which have numerous environmental and related implications. Addressing this issue presents an opportunity for Councils to reduce cost, decrease consumption and waste, and improve efficiency and sustainability outcomes.

In accordance with the Full Group's request, we prepared a report on the nature and implication of plastic in the marine environment. See [http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/sites/default/files/summerhayes plastic in the marine environment.pdf](http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/sites/default/files/summerhayes%20plastic%20in%20the%20marine%20environment.pdf)

Building upon this, we have now prepared a Good Practice Guideline for Member Councils identifying parking management solutions which reduce or eliminate *in situ* parking and infringement tickets and providing guidance on environmentally sustainable ticket materials. The Guideline can be found on the SCCG website at <http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/node/108>.

Stay tuned for news on a proposed SCCG research collaboration we are exploring with Earthwatch Institute Australia and Sydney Institute of Marine Science to investigate marine debris in Sydney.

### CRC for Low Carbon Living

The Low Carbon Living CRC commenced on 1 July 2012 and will operate for seven years. We are one of 51 participants in the CRC, which brings together property, planning and policy organisations with Local Government and Australian researchers to develop new social, technological and policy tools for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the built environment. As mentioned in the autumn newsletter, the CRC will administer three research programs to develop low-carbon construction materials and multi-purpose solar products; stimulate the market for low carbon infrastructure on a precinct scale and educate the public on the purchasing of low carbon materials. The CRC is end-user driven and overseen by a member-elected Board, chaired by the Honorary Robert Hill. Programs will encourage multi-disciplinary collaboration and to create, develop and apply knowledge and skills. The SCCG expects to participate in various committees and projects determined by the Board.

### Minister for Environment and Heritage visits the SCCG

The Minister addressed the June SCCG meeting. As part of the presentation, she provided details on the establishment of the Coastal Ministerial Taskforce and Expert Panel that are reviewing issues such as:

- Coastal Management Plans
- Coastal Hazard Plans
- Current and future coastal hazards
- Mapping issues
- How to deal with cross Local Government boundary issues
- Roles of government agencies and councils
- Working with the insurance industry
- Engaging with Councils and communities on ways forward.



The Minister presenting to the SCCG Full Group.

The Minister also informed delegates of the NSW Waste Levy Review, including an appraisal of future options such as container deposit legislation. The review paper is due before the end of 2012.

### CAPACITY BUILDING

#### SCCG Boundaries and Barriers: Managing the Intertidal Zone forum

Management in the intertidal zone is an ongoing issue and concern for Member Councils. We are holding a forum on 14 August that will clarify the roles and responsibilities of Local Government in areas below the high water mark and address the issues they face in the management and access of the foreshore.

Presenters will include Crown Lands, Fisheries, the Division of Local Government and National Parks.

For more information, check out our Events Web Page. [http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/Boundaries and Barriers Forum](http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/Boundaries%20and%20Barriers%20Forum)

### Summerama 2013

A workshop was held with Summerama Champions from our Member Councils to develop our annual summer activities program.



Needs were identified and outcomes included:

- SCCG continuing to coordinate and promote the program
- the establishment of "Summerama branded activities"
- promotional material moving away from "print" and leaning on the website and social media.

### Valuation of Sydney's Beaches

Dr Dave Anning is finalising a series of materials to provide Member Councils with valuation techniques, methodologies and general research outcomes, produced from his PhD, to value Sydney beaches. These will be released with a project launch workshop in mid-October.

### Educating for Landslide Risk Management

Our collaboration with the Australian Geomechanics Society (AGS) has now produced the Landslide Risk Management E-learning tool. This new and interactive website provides a broad range of information concerning landslide risks and management methodologies, consisting of a range of interactive quizzes directed at three key audiences: practitioners, regulators and the general public. The user has access to a valuable range of additional information such as videos, pictures and diagrams produced from the National road show and Australian Geomechanics Guidelines. Check out this fantastic tool and take the test! See: <http://lrm.australiangeomechanics.org/>

The SCCG & AGS educational website.

## Independent Scientific Audit Report on Marine Parks in NSW

The NSW Marine Estate is a valuable resource. We produced a submission in response to the Independent Scientific Audit on Marine Parks in NSW. We look forward to the State Government's response.  
[http://www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au/sites/default/files/submission\\_marine\\_audit.pdf](http://www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au/sites/default/files/submission_marine_audit.pdf)

### Recent Conference

Our Senior Coastal Projects Officer and Climate Adaptation Projects Officer attended the Climate Adaptation in Action Conference on 26-28 June in Melbourne. This conference showcased projects that have contributed adaptation methodologies and science to planning and policy making across Australia.

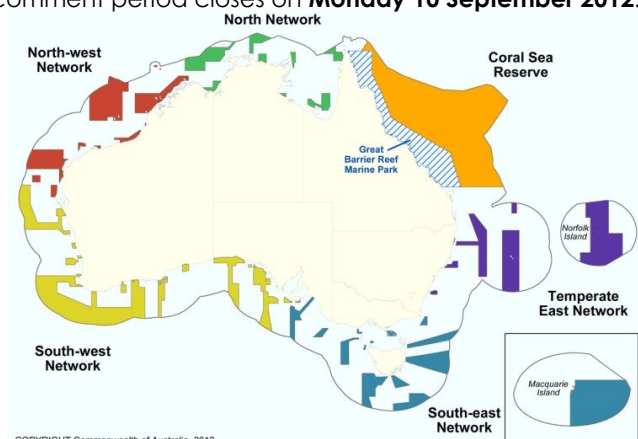
## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COASTAL NEWS

### Federal and State marine and coastal news

Australia is set to lay claim to the largest suite of marine reserves in the world with the Federal Government releasing a plan to increase the 27 marine reserves to 60.

States and Territories manage the coastal waters of Australia whilst the Federal Government manages the Territorial Waters, Contiguous Zone and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Coastal waters are defined by the start of the Lowest Astronomical Tide (LAT) and extend out to three Nautical Miles (NM). Extending from the three NM out to 200 NM around the entire Continent, includes the EEZ, where the Federal Government has certain sovereign rights to the sea bed as well as the water column and its resources, (200 NM marks the end of Australia's maritime boundary).

The Director of National Parks has released a notice inviting public comment on the proposed Proclamations of Commonwealth marine reserves. The 60 day public comment period closes on **Monday 10 September 2012**.



The Commonwealth's proposed Marine Protected Areas.

For more information and maps of each section see: <http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/reserves/index.html>

How the Australian Government will adequately monitor and regulate the 3.1 million km<sup>2</sup> marine reserve network is still uncertain.

We are looking forward to the end result of the Federal and State marine protection and conservation initiatives resulting in a national, integrated approach to effective marine management.

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COASTAL NEWS (cont.)

### King Tides

On 5 June, high tides reached 2.22 metres along Sydney's coastline as the king tide combined with an East Coast Low (ECL), (ECLs are intense, low-pressure systems that occur several times a year along the eastern seaboard of Australia, mainly in June).

Whilst higher than the 2.08 metres expected, mild flooding was experienced in some low-lying areas across the State coast. These high tides are caused by the gravitational pull of the sun and the moon coming into alignment. It provided a possible preview of what we might experience regularly with sea level rise!



Photo of Coogee ocean pool inundated on 5 June at approximately 9pm.

Source: Dr Ian Armstrong

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

### Coast to Coast: *Living on the Edge* Australia's National Coastal Conference

Coast to Coast will be held on 17-21 September 2012 in Brisbane. Coast to Coast is the renowned and only National Coastal Management conference when all with interest on coastal, estuarine and marine matters get together to celebrate Australia's coasts and share knowledge and experience on management, science, policy, governance, activism and many other topics.  
<http://coast2coast.org.au>

### NSW Coastal Management—Coming of Age?

21st NSW Coastal Conference (6-9 November 2012) is being hosted by Kiama Municipal Council.  
 Abstract Submission Deadline: Friday 29th June 2012

### The Government Sustainability Conference

The [Government Sustainability Conference](#) will be held in Melbourne on 18-19 September. The **2012** Conference will provide local, state and federal government and agency professionals with comprehensive analysis and advice about how to in-grain environmentally sustainable policies and practices within their organisations and the communities they serve.

## SCCG Web Sites

[www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au](http://www.sydneycostalouncils.com.au)

[www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au](http://www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au)

[www.monitor2manage.com.au](http://www.monitor2manage.com.au)