

COASTAL CURRENTS AUTUMN 2012

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP ED 63



FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the April 2012 edition of Coastal Currents. There have been some exciting developments in SCCG's projects and activities as well as changes within the Secretariat. These diverted our attention from issuing the last edition of Coastal Currents, but to ensure you don't miss out on anything, we have incorporated two editions into one with a brand new look. I would first like to offer my congratulations to the appointment of Stephen Summerhayes as Senior Coastal Projects Officer, Rachael Buzio as Coastal Projects Officer and Dr. Ian Armstrong as Project Officer (Climate Change Adaptation).

We look forward to further developing

strategies to manage our coastal and estuarine issues.

The 2012 Summerama Activities Program (www.summerama.com.au) held in January was a huge success with Member Councils holding 74 activities and attracting close to 1900 attendees despite weeks of rain! Well done Member Councils - connecting Sydneysiders with their beautiful coasts and bushland and spreading awareness and educating the public. A big thankyou to Sarah Billens, the SCCG Summerama coordinator, for all her hard work.

I wish you all the best and look forward to working with you all this year.

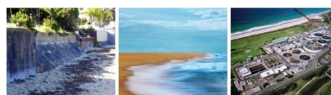
Cr. Wendy McMurdo
SCCG Chairperson

CONTENTS

FROM THE CHAIR	1
SCCG PROJECTS UPDATE	1
NEWS IN BRIEF	2
MATTERS OF INTEREST	2
CAPACITY BUILDING	3
SCCG SUBMISSIONS,	3
ADVOCACY, GRANTS & AWARDS	
NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL COASTAL NEWS	4
CONFERENCES & MEETINGS	4

SCCG PROJECTS UPDATE

CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROJECTS



Since funding from the Department of Climate Change and Energy was awarded to the SCCG 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 three projects:

"Multi-Criteria Approaches to Adaptive Coastal Development Project"

The objectives of this project are to develop a multi-criteria framework to:

- Evaluate alternative coastal management decisions incorporating a range of financial and social data; and
- Incorporate monitoring and evaluation of development decisions over a range of scales to provide information on the effectiveness of decisions and the possible need to adapt to new situations.

The project will develop information on the range of available adaptation strategies and provide guidance for Local Governments and include both NSW and Queensland case studies and asset managers in how to implement feasible options. The central component of this project will involve developing a multi-criteria analysis framework. The MCA is being designed to support consideration of diverse adaptation management alternatives around future protection, development, or redevelopment of coastal lands. The project will also produce a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the impacts of coastal decisions.

"Assessment and Decision Frameworks for Existing Seawalls"

This project aims to assist Local and State governments to evaluate the robustness and condition of existing seawalls in the context of coastal climate change projections, and outline possible options for further actions.

Case studies of both beach and estuarine environments have been chosen to maximize the relevance of the project to all coastal councils. Templates, including a simple tool to model economic valuations, will be prepared to assist councils to develop and implement management and investment strategies for coastal defences.

"Demonstrating Climate Change Adaptation of Interconnected Water Infrastructure"

The aim of this project is to identify the range of existing interconnected water infrastructure managed by Councils and Sydney Water that is vulnerable to direct and indirect impacts of climate change and to explore ways to improve management of these assets. Five case studies have been selected, each of which will focus on a different issue affecting adaptation, will be used to explore adaptation.

The SCCG consists of 15 member councils with sea and harbour frontages in Sydney; Botany, Hornsby, Leichhardt, Manly, Mosman, North Sydney, Pittwater, Randwick, Rockdale, Sutherland, Sydney, Warringah, Waverley, Willoughby and Woollahra. The Group collectively represent over 1.3 million Sydneysiders and are concerned with the promotion, cooperation and coordination of Member Councils to achieve the sustainable management of the urban coastal environment.



SCCG PROJECTS UPDATE (cont.)

OTHER PROJECTS

Mapping and Responding to Coastal Inundation

The Mapping and Responding to Coastal Inundation Project that has been undertaken in partnership with CSIRO is coming to a close. An inundation model was designed that tested the calibration of a 1 in 1 year storm and 1 in 100 year storm under current and future sea level rise (SLR) scenarios. Inundation maps are being developed for each Member Council showing the areas that would be inundated by SLR in relation to each of these parameters, Stage 2 of the project provides guidance to Councils to incorporate inundation and SLR into local and regional planning processes, while Stage 3 involves the provision of Community Risk Disclosure Toolkits.

SCCG "Becoming Social"

The SCCG has developed a new project "Becoming Social" that aims to equip State and Local Government policy makers with the skills and knowledge to utilise social media as a relationship and policy development tool to engage, consult and educate coastal communities in relation to local and regional coastal environmental issues. Support for this project is coming from the NSW Environmental Trust.

Plastics in the Marine Environment

In response to concerns raised by the Full Group about the prevalence of plastic on beaches and in waterways (particularly parking tickets and infringement notices), a technical report was produced by the Secretariat to develop an understanding of its risks and implications. The report details, in general terms, the nature and impacts of plastic in the marine environment and the policies and procedures implemented by Member Councils available at:

<http://www.sydneycostalcouncils.com.au/node/108>.

The Secretariat is now investigating alternatives to the use of plastic in ticket machines and also exploring a research collaboration with the Sydney Institute of Marine Science (SIMS) and the Earthwatch Institute Australia to expand knowledge and understanding of marine debris.

Plastic fish soy sauce containers contribute to the marine debris menace.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Adaptation Plan for Sydney

At the December SCCG Meeting, Cr. Wendy McMurdo signed the MOU with OEH to develop Sydney's first adaptation strategy. The Sydney Adaptation Strategy being facilitated by OEH will be developed with the other project partners, Department of Planning and WSROC and be completed by the end of 2013.

Water Recycling Guidelines

After some delay, the SCCG is pursuing the development of Water Recycling Guidelines in partnership with Sydney Water. The guidelines aim to provide Councils with information and tools to assist in the identification, development and delivery of water re-use and recycling projects. The production of these guidelines is a result of the 2010 workshop facilitated by SCCG and Sydney Water. It is anticipated that the draft product of this collaboration will be available to table at the next SCCG meeting in June and then distributed more broadly for consultation.

MATTERS OF INTEREST

Sydney Harbour Catchment Water Quality improvement Plan (SHCWQIP)

The SMCMA is currently developing a Sydney Harbour Catchment Water Quality improvement Plan (SHCWQIP) with the overarching objective to improve the ecological health of the Sydney Harbour and catchments through reducing quantities of stormwater-borne pollutants. The Plan will involve several stages over 4 years and will require partnerships from the 25 local councils, 11 NSW Government agencies and 2 Commonwealth Government agencies that manage land draining into the Harbour. For further information see <http://www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au/sydney-harbour-catchment/sydney-harbour-catchment-water-quality-improvement/>.

The Concourse—Chatswood

The SCCG congratulates Willoughby Council on the official late 2011 opening of their Concourse development. The Full Group and Technical Committee recently had the opportunity to tour this innovative building that has been structurally designed to minimise water and energy consumption. The development also contains the largest stormwater reuse system in Australia that can contain up to 5 Mega Litres of water to avoid flooding and to be utilised as grey water throughout Chatswood CBD. For more information see: <http://www.theconcourse.com.au>

CRC for Low Carbon Living

The SCCG would like to congratulate UNSW and other partners on the securing of funds for a Collaborative Research Centre (CRC) for Low Carbon Living. The SCCG is a partner in the CRC that is being established as a non-profit scientific institution researching mitigation strategies for carbon pollution associated with construction and activities within the built environment. The Centre will administer three research programs:

1. **Integrated Building Systems** – The aim of this project is to develop a) low carbon lifecycle building construction materials and (b) multi-purpose solar products;
2. **Low Carbon Precincts** – aims to develop tools that enable the design of and stimulate the market for low carbon infrastructure at precinct scale;
3. **Engaged Communities** – will focus on understanding and influencing public behaviour and purchasing decisions of low carbon products.

The CRC will operate for 7 years from July 2012. The SCCG looks forward to contributing in various committees and projects determined by the Board.



Summerama 2012: South Maroubra Rockpool Ramble.

CAPACITY BUILDING

SCCG Annual Survey

In a process of continual improvement, the SCCG Secretariat conducts an annual survey of its members. The aim is to assess performance against the SCCG Strategic Plan, identify those activities which have most benefited Member Councils and identify avenues and actions to further enhance support. The SCCG's 2011 survey captured qualitative and quantitative data which was then analysed. Overall, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive towards the SCCG's performance. Whilst there are no areas which urgently require attention, the resolution of results provided by the Survey enable the Secretariat to allocate resources toward areas which were identified as priorities or which scored less strongly on the satisfaction scale.

Educating for Landslide Risk Management

This project in partnership between the SCCG and Australian Geomechanics Society, entitled "Education Empowerment of Landslide Risk Management to Regulators and Practitioners" is coming to an end. The E-Learning tool being finalised over the coming weeks builds on the Landslide Risk Management Guidelines (AGS, 2007) previously developed with the assistance of NDMP funding as well as materials and learning from the 2011 "Roadshow Seminar Series".

Valuation of Sydney's beaches

The SCCG would like to congratulate Dr. David Anning on being awarded his PhD. This great research partnership with UNSW produced: the methodology for cost assessment; benefits of the coastal area in regards to the level of protection they provide; threats of coastal erosion associated with modern sea levels and climate change risks. These were studied to provide thorough information to Local and State governments on coastal management. Dr. Anning is now developing a series of summary fact sheets and associated implementation tools to provide Member Councils with valuation techniques, methodologies and general research outcomes.

China Seminar: Strategic Planning in Climate Change

The Executive Officer was invited to the China-Australia Capacity Building Project for Strategic Adaptation Planning in Climate Change in Beijing late last year to talk about adaptation activities within the SCCG. During the 8 day trip to northern China, Chinese officials were also very interested to hear about ideas and lessons to improve regional coordination. The trip resulted in the development of new relationships to further pursue access to resources at an international level between the SCCG and other major coastal city areas in China.

SCCG Funding Guide

The 2012 edition of the SCCG Funding Guide has been released to Member Councils and uploaded to the SCCG website (see http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/Funding_Guide). This Guide lists a diverse range of funding opportunities and provides a description of the funding program, distributor, a web-link, and, where possible, monies available and the opening and closing dates for application.

CAPACITY BUILDING (cont.)

Upcoming SCCG Forum: "Managing below the high tide mark forum"

The SCCG Coastal Conflicts Forum is being revisited and reviewed to be run mid-year.



SCCG SUBMISSIONS, ADVOCACY, GRANTS & AWARDS

Sydney Water withdraw their application to increase Nutrient Limit Discharges from Brooklyn STP

The SCCG is very happy to report that after extended lobbying from the community, SCCG and Member Councils (particularly Hornsby), Sydney Water has withdrawn their application to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure to significantly increase the levels of phosphorous, ammonia and nitrogen nutrient discharge from their Brooklyn Wastewater Treatment Plant.

NSW 2011 Coastal Conference

The SCCG Secretariat attended the NSW 2011 Coastal Conference and presented the following papers:

- a) Assessment and Decision Frameworks for Existing Seawalls
- b) Learning from Others: Looking Outside NSW in Response to Climate Change in Coastal Areas
- a) Mapping and Responding to Coastal Inundation in the Sydney Coastal Councils

Copies of these papers are available from the SCCG Secretariat.

NSW Coastal Reforms

In September 2011 the Minister for the Environment, the Hon. Robyn Parker MP, announced "Coastal Management on the Agenda". In the press release, the Minister noted she was seeking feedback on these arrangements and ideas for improvement. The Minister has noted that recent events at Kingscliff are a reminder of how vulnerable some communities in NSW are to coastal erosion. The Minister also noted that the managing of coastal erosion comes with a hefty price tag, so we need to think about new funding sources and be more innovative if we are going to implement these plans. The SCCG has recently written to the Minister confirming its support for the review in light of the controversial and unpopular measures forming elements of the *Coastal Protection and other Legislation Amendment Act 2010* - introduced by the previous Government - and is seeking details of the Task Force make up, terms of reference and details of consultation processes that will be conducted with stakeholders.

NSW Marine Parks Scientific Audit Report

The SCCG Secretariat is currently reviewing the NSW Marine Parks Scientific Audit Report and is preparing a submission in regards to the Audit Panel's 16 Recommendations. The Report of the Independent Scientific Audit of Marine Parks in NSW can be found here:

www.marineparksaudit.nsw.gov.au/imagesDB/wysiwyg/FINAL_NSWMarineParksAuditReport2012_web1_3.pdf

Public submissions on the report close on the 30th June 2012 at yoursayonmarineparks@dpc.nsw.gov.au

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COASTAL NEWS

Release of the "State of the Climate Report 2012"

The CSIRO and BOM report is an updated summary of Australia's climate trends and the factors that have influenced them over the last 100 years. Records demonstrate that each decade since the 1950s has been increasingly warmer than the last and that the annual average daily mean temperature has increased by 0.9° since 1910. The concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere in 2011 was 390 parts per million (ppm); a significant amount higher than the natural range of 170 to 300 ppm of the past 800,000 years. The two other major greenhouse gases—methane and nitrous oxide—have also increased in concentration from their natural range over the last 1000 years. Levels of nitrogen and oxygen have decreased over the last 100 years and extreme events have ensued in the last 15 years since 1900 such as the highest and lowest rainfalls on record occurring. It's definitely worth a look. See:

<http://www.csiro.au/~media/8E59FBA4F8A94FE4B84F01E271226316.pdf>

Acidification of today's oceans

The ocean is our biggest carbon sink. The ocean and atmosphere are in constant exchange and a percentage of the carbon we emit is absorbed into the ocean's surface, mixed in the upper layer then sinks and spreads to the lower layers to cycle over the planet. Acidification occurs when ocean water is so saturated with CO₂ it forms the by-product of carbonic acid. Acidity can interfere with basic bodily functions for all marine animals, shelled or not (Hardt et al. 2010). New statistics presented by National Geographic and the Scientific American exhibit that by 2100 sea water will be too corrosive for most carbonate-based species, causing cataclysmic shifts in marine biodiversity and removing the second largest source of carbon absorption on Earth from the whole carbon-cycling equation - the ocean. The extra carbon dioxide absorbed by the oceans is estimated to have caused about a 30% increase in the level of ocean acidity since pre-industrial times (CSIRO and BOM, 2012). For more information and to read the report see:

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2011/04/ocean-acidification/kolbert-text/2>

If you want to find out more on how Australia can reduce its emissions and how you as an individual can reduce your footprint, carbon and otherwise, visit:

http://www.wwf.org.au/our_work/people_and_the_environment/global_warming_and_climate_change/solutions/how_will_australia_contribute_to_a_climate_change_solution/

And

<http://www.carbonfootprint.com/minimisecfp.html>

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COASTAL NEWS (cont.)

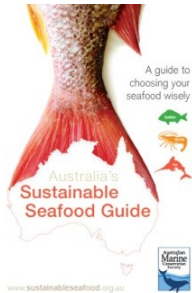
Overfishing of today's oceans

With the human population on the rise, it is no surprise that fishers are increasing their fleets and fishing efforts. However, some fisheries are already depleted by up to 29% and if current trends continue, a study published in Science Issue 1 (2007) has projected that **all** fisheries could fall by 2048. See article here:

http://www.news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2006/11/061102-seafood-threat_2.html

To decrease your effect on already over-fished species; visit Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide Online:

http://www.sustainableseafood.org.au/Sustainable-Seafood-Guide-Australia.asp?active_page_id=695



A guide to choosing your seafood wisely

Check out Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide to help you choose wisely when buying fish.

www.sustainableseafood.org.au

UPCOMING CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

2nd 'Practical Responses to Climate Change' Conference

This second conference in the series is to be held in Canberra at the National Convention Centre from 1-3 May 2012. The theme for 2012 is "Water and Climate: Policy Implementation Challenges".
<http://www.climatechange2012.org/index.asp?IntCatId=14>

NCCARF Climate Adaptation Conference

NCCARF is holding its annual national conference in Melbourne from 26-28 June 2012.
<http://www.nccarf.edu.au/conference2012/>

Coast to Coast

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



Dee Why beach closed. Storms out at sea caused many beaches to be closed during January this year.