



**SYDNEY COASTAL  
COUNCILS GROUP**



# 2021-22 Annual Report

Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc.  
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**Published 2022**

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# FROM THE CHAIR

As my first year as Chair of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG), I am pleased to see consistent strong and positive feedback from Member Councils on SCCG advocacy for issues facing our coasts and waterways. I would also like to draw attention to some of the SCCGs key achievements this year.

Throughout 2021-22 the SCCG has continued to work towards a collaborative, effective and consistent approach to coastal and estuarine management between Local Government, State Agencies and other stakeholders through the project management of Stage 2 of the Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program (CMP). A highlight was the shortlisting of the Greater Sydney Harbour CMP education video as a finalist at the International Global Sustainability Film Awards.

Another exciting achievement was the launch of the Greater Sydney Harbour Litter Prevention Strategy – For a Litter Free Greater Sydney in partnership with the Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG). SCCG secured an additional \$100,000 of funding from NSW EPA's Own It and Act: Round 7 Community Litter Grant Funding Stream to employ a Regional Litter Prevention Coordinator to implement the Strategy. The strategy will aim to reduce the amount of litter entering Sydney Harbour's catchments and waterways, by implementing a regional approach across councils and community and a variety of litter prevention actions covering education, rewards, infrastructure, enforcement and measurement.



I also look forward to seeing the delivery of the “Smarter Cleaner Sydney Harbour” project approved under the Smart Acceleration Program. SCCG will be partnering with PRCG, CSIRO and the Sydney Olympic Park Authority to accelerate smart technologies to assist in the management of stormwater including marine litter and I am excited to see how this project will contribute to improving the waterway health of our beloved Sydney Harbour.

I would like to thank all those who have been involved in our various committees and supported the SCCG to ensure that continued successful outcomes were delivered this year. Thank you also to our Executive Officer, Sarah Joyce, in providing great leadership, for her dedication and for the hard work of her team in working towards resilient and healthy coastal and estuarine environments.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Boyd', written in a cursive style.

Cr Jack Boyd  
**SCCG Chairperson**



Image: Courtesy of Woollahra Council

# 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 three core Committees, namely the Executive 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, Project Coordinator and Office Manager.

The General Managers Forum provides strategic direction and advice on the development and implementation of the SCCG 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 2020 AGM for 2020-22 representation are below:

**Chairperson:** Cr Jack Boyd, Sutherland Shire Council

**Vice Chair:** Cr Miranda Korzy, Northern Beaches Council

**Treasurer:** Mayor Paula Masselos, Waverley Council

**Members:** Deputy Mayor Scott Morrissey, Bayside Council

Cr Dylan Griffiths, Inner West Council

Cr William Bourke, North Sydney Council

Cr Kathy Neilson, Randwick Council

Cr John Moratelli, Willoughby Council

Cr Lucinda Regan, Woollahra Council

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# SCCG VISION

Resilient and healthy coastal and estuarine environments that are protected, conserved and managed in a manner consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

## MISSION

Engaging with our members and their communities to lead sustainable management of our region's coastal and estuarine environment through collaboration, capacity building, advocacy and research.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

P1—Restore, protect and enhance the coastal environment, its associated ecosystems, ecological and physical processes and biodiversity.

P2—Facilitate the sustainable use of coastal resources, now and in the future.

P3—Promote adaptive, integrated and participatory management of the coast.

Image: Sugarloaf Bay, Courtesy of Willoughby Council





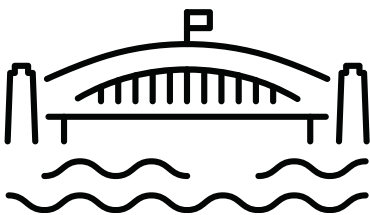
# SCCG IN A SNAPSHOT

## OUR WORK IN 2021-22

<b>Coordination of:</b>	<b>24</b>	SCCG & Guest Presentations	
<b>Involvement in:</b>	<b>56</b>	External committees, meetings, workshops & events	
<b>Facilitation of:</b>	<b>24</b>	Internal committee meetings	<b>10</b> Capacity building workshops, forums & events
<b>Advocacy via:</b>	<b>13</b>	Comprehensive submissions	<b>2</b> Meetings with Ministers/MPs

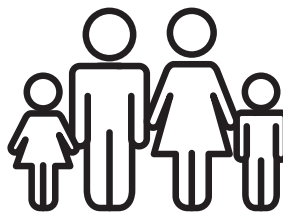
## OUR REGION

### Landscape



801.29km<sup>2</sup>  
total land area  
87 beaches/  
swimming sites

### Population



1.3 million  
Sydneyiders across  
9 LGA's

### Economy



\$113.83 Billion GRP  
19.89% of the NSW GRP



Image: Harbour Bridge, Courtesy of North Sydney Council

# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The SCCG financial position for 2021-22 is provided below.

<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$746,358</b>
<b>Total Assets:</b>	<b>\$898,301</b>
<b>Total Expenditure:</b>	<b>\$653,062</b>
<b>Total Liabilities:</b>	<b>\$443,924</b>
<b>Total Equity:</b>	<b>\$443,924</b>

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# ANNUAL MEMBERS SURVEY SNAPSHOT

- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that membership provides advocacy benefits and 92% agreed or strongly agreed that SCCG is performing well at advocating on behalf of members.
- 100% agreed that the SCCG has built or built to some extent the capacity of their staff regarding coastal management and state legislative reforms.
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that SCCG submissions were of a high standard
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that interactions with SCCG staff and other council members at meetings are positive
- 92% agreed or strongly agreed that meetings were interesting, relevant and well structured.
- 92% agreed or strongly agreed that membership provides access to experts/government stakeholders; access to additional skills, information and knowledge; access to networking and relationship building; and capacity building benefits.

Image: Rockdale, Bayside Council, Courtesy of Dee Kramer





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# GOAL 1 - COLLABORATION

Facilitate cooperation between, and coordination of actions by Member Councils

## SUMMARY

The 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:

- \$274,000 NSW Government Coastal & Estuary Grant secured in September 2021 for the Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program to address the impact of urban stormwater discharge.
- Shortlisting of the Greater Sydney Harbour CMP education video as a finalist at the International tve Global Sustainability Film Awards.
- Launch of the Greater Sydney Harbour Regional Litter Prevention Strategy – For a Litter Free Greater Sydney, in collaboration with the Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG).
- \$100,000 of additional funding secured in NSW EPA in the Own It and Act: Round 7 Community Litter Grant funding stream to employ a Regional Litter Prevention Coordinator to implement the Strategy.
- SMART Places Acceleration Program Grant approved for delivery of the project Smarter Cleaner Sydney Harbour in collaboration with PRCG, Sydney Olympic Park Authority and CSIRO.
- Collaborative partnership formed between the SCCG and the Australian Coastal Society to cross promote the work of each organisation and assist the SCCG in its advocacy work.
- Continued quarterly meetings with Transport for NSW to work collaboratively on key projects which support both organisations' strategic goals.
- Continued quarterly meetings with Sydney Water to review and re-establish commitment to the Memorandum of Understanding between both organisations and to enable member Councils to have a forum to raise issues and concerns.

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- Continued quarterly meetings with the NSW Coastal Council to discuss issues, challenges and opportunities of coastal management programs.
  - Collaborations with research Institutions on grants committee including the Sydney Institute of Marine Science
  - Our quarterly Technical Committee meetings provided a valuable forum for networking, peer to peer learning and information / knowledge sharing between member Councils.

## ACTIVITIES

### Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program

In September 2021, the SCCG was successful in securing a \$274,000 grant through the NSW Government's Coastal and Estuary Grants Program to address the impact of urban stormwater discharge on Greater Sydney Harbour. SCCG is leading the program in partnership with the Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) and is supported by 20 councils in the Greater Sydney Harbour catchment. The group is also working collaboratively with other government agencies including the Department of Planning and Environment, Sydney Water, Transport for NSW, EPA, NSW Coastal Council and Sydney Institute of Marine Science.

The grant funding has contributed towards a detailed assessment of stormwater runoff across the region through the delivery of three studies which aim to:

- Compile information to facilitate the Greater Sydney Harbour catchment wide application of the risk-based framework to improve the management of stormwater discharges **(Study 1)**
- Identify council needs and actions to help improve stormwater discharge and waterway health in the whole catchment **(Study 2)**
- Review options for establishing a governance and sustainable funding structure that would ensure the sustainable health of Greater Sydney Harbour waterways **(Study 3)**

Additionally, the Greater Sydney Harbour CMP education video was shortlisted as a finalist at the International tve Global Sustainability Film Awards. These awards recognise outstanding films that inspire audiences with real world solutions for a more sustainable future.



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## Regional Litter Prevention Strategy

The SCCG in collaboration with the PRCG launched the Greater Sydney Harbour Regional Litter Prevention Strategy – For a Litter Free Greater Sydney. Development of the strategy was supported with grant funding from the EPA in 2021-2022 and is the product of broad council and community engagement. The strategy provides direction for collaborations across the Greater Sydney Harbour region that contributes to the NSW Government's target of 60% litter reduction by 2030 and 30% plastics item reduction by 2025.

The SCCG was also able to secure additional Grant funding of \$100,000 from the NSW EPA in the Own It and Act: Round 7 Community Litter Grant funding stream, which has enabled the employment of a Regional Litter Coordinator to implement the strategy.

## Smart Places Acceleration Program

The SCCG in collaboration with the PRCG were successful in their grant application to the SMART Places Acceleration Program for the project Smarter Cleaner Sydney Harbour. SCCG will partner with the Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA) and the CSIRO to deliver the project. This project will focus on accelerating smart technologies to assist in the management of stormwater including marine litter. The project aims to develop artificial intelligence (AI) supported technology which involves installing up to 60-80 sensors in stormwater assets across Sydney Olympic Park and partner Council Gross Pollutant Traps within the Greater Sydney Harbour catchment area. Coupled with camera traps to record floating litter along waterways, the two technologies together will allow the catchment to shift from a reactive to a proactive catchment management.

## Get the Site Right

During 2021-22 SCCG partnered with the PRCG, Cooks River Alliance, Georges River Keeper, WaterNSW, NSW EPA and NSW Department of Planning and Environment to implement the Get the Site Right Campaign. We conducted an inspection blitz week on the 15-19 November 2021 and a month-long education and compliance campaign during May 2022 as well as a follow-up one-day inspection blitz of building sites. 22 councils from across Sydney and NSW participated in the May 2022 campaign and inspected 785 sites.

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.



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## Australian Coastal Society

The SCCG has formed a collaborative partnership with the Australian Coastal Society (ACS). The partnership aims to cross promote the work of each organisation and assist the SCCG in its advocacy work by prioritising issues of importance.

Funding from the ACS has covered the employment of a Media Coordinator, to provide media and communications support to the ACS to achieve Objective 1 of their Strategic Plan :

*to promote and share knowledge and understanding of the environmental, social and economic values of the Australian coast*

The media coordinator has worked to develop a fortnightly newsletter of coastal news items, a quarterly ACS National newsletter and to increase community outreach through regular social media posts.

Image: Diamond Bay, Courtesy of Waverley Council



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# GOAL 2 - CAPACITY BUILDING

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

## SUMMARY

The SCCG continued to build Member Council and stakeholder capacity through a range of forums.

Regular updates on coastal related news and policy were provided to members in the Coastal Currents quarterly newsletter as well as via direct email and webinars and workshops organised with key stakeholders including state and federal agencies.

## MEETINGS

- Meeting with Transport for NSW - To discuss legacy issues of the of Botany Bay Port works, threatened species education, seagrass mapping data upgrade, Sydney Harbour strategy, marine safety plan and issues raised by member councils.
- Meeting with Beachwatch - To update the Beachwatch team on the Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program and to discuss issues and opportunities raised at a ministerial level on swimability.
- Little Penguin Recovery Team - To discuss management options for the little penguin population.
- DPIE Briefing on Infrastructure Contributions Reforms - To provide opportunity for member councils to raise issues with DPIE directly in relation to infrastructure contributions.
- Sydney Water Incident Status Dashboard - To facilitate councils' access to Sydney Water Incident Status Dashboard for updates on pollution incidents and their rectification.



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## WORKSHOPS

- Marine Estate Management Strategy (MEMS) Stage 3 Workshop – to discuss stage 3 and potential initiatives.
- Risk assessment workshop on the environmental impacts of recreational fishing in NSW (saltwater) – to advocate for member councils on issues with illegal fishing and benefits of marine reserves which restrict fishing.
- NSW EPA Litter Prevention Unit Stakeholder Workshop - to advocate for the Greater Sydney Harbour Litter Prevention Project.
- EPA Roadshow - To raise issues on the threats of emerging contaminants, litter prevention, organic waste, compostable packaging and water pollution.
- Places to Swim Advisory Panel Guideline - To hear stakeholder feedback on the draft guideline.

Image: Port Hacking River, Courtesy of Sutherland Shire Council



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## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### Technical Committee

The 'themed' technical committee meetings continue to receive positive feedback as an important capacity building tool for the SCCG and its members. The SCCG has facilitated four of these meetings in the period 2021/22:

- **Water Quality** – included presentations on the Marine Debris Threat and Risk Assessment, Willoughby Council's Pollution Strategy and Gross Pollutant Trap Sediment Management in Sutherland Shire Council
- **Coastal and Estuarine Hazards** – included presentations on coastal hazards case law by Lindsay Taylor Lawyers, coastal hazards work of DPIE-EES and the Marine Parade Coastal Hazards Warning System implemented by Northern Beaches Council.
- **Smart and Sustainable Cities** – provided an update on the Smart Places Acceleration Program and the Future Direction Statement including smart city initiatives by DPE as well as sharing of Smart City Initiatives in Waverly Council.
- **Marine Biodiversity** – showcased restoration activities including the Reef Builder Program, Operation Crayweed, Operation Posidonia and work being done with Indigenous communities to resort cultural connections to shellfish reefs.

### Sand Management Working Group

The SMWG continues to meet quarterly to identify and workshop key issues relating to beach management. In 2021/22 the group heard several presentations on the following:

- Smart camera systems for coastal management, shoreline change monitoring, beach usage and beach safety
- Sand management and beach nourishment priorities identified in the Future Directions Statement
- Effectiveness and impacts of large-scale nearshore beach nourishment in the Gold Coast
- Towra Point beach erosion management
- Beach erosion management at Rose Bay, Woollahra Municipal Council
- Update on Jimmys Beach Sand Transfer System, MidCoast Council
- Lady Robinsons Beach Investigation and Design Study on Beach Erosion, Bayside Council
- Construction of the Shell Cove Harbour Entrance, Beach Response and Draft Breakwater Management Plan
- New SeaBed NSW Mapping web viewer and insights this provides for coastal management, DPE
- These presentations have guided representatives on coastal processes, information availability and potential management strategies to manage the ongoing threats posed by sea level rise and beach erosion.

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# GOAL 3 - ADVOCACY

Provide a regional and cohesive voice representing Member Councils.

## SUMMARY

Advocacy was a major focus for the SCCG in 2021-22, taking three main forms: i) formal submissions to government, ii) participation in relevant external committees and/or advisory bodies and iii) direct communications / correspondence with government agencies, elected representatives, and Ministers.

## SUBMISSIONS

- SCCG Letter – Contributions to EPA Roadshow – June 2022
- SCCG Submission – Review of the Resource Recovery Framework – May 2022
- SCCG Submission – NSW Coastal Management Act Review – April 2022
- SCCG Submission – IPART review of the Waste Management Services charge – April 2022
- SCCG Joint Submission – Design and Place SEPP – February 2022
- SCCG Joint Submission – Draft Marine Parks Network Management Plan – February 2022
- SCCG Submission – Infrastructure Contributions Reform – December 2021
- SCCG Joint Submission – Draft Water Catchment SEPP – November 2021
- SCCG Joint Submission – Draft Greater Sydney Harbour Water Strategy – November 2021
- SCCG Submission – Nairobi Wreck Removal – September 2021
- SCCG Letter – Stormwater Management Services Charge – September 2021
- SCCG Submission – EP&A Regulations – September 2021
- SCCG Submission – Greater Sydney Parklands White Paper – July 2021

SCCG submissions are available at [www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/submissions/](http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/submissions/)





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## **MEETING WITH MINISTERS**

### **Meeting with The Hon. James Griffin MP, Minister for Environment and Heritage – 28 March 2022**

**Purpose:** To provide an update on the Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Plan (GSHCMP) and to advocate for member councils and councils involved in GSH CMP

### **Meeting with The Hon. Wendy Tuckerman MP, Minister for Local Government – 16 May 2022**

**Purpose:** To provide an update on the GSHCMP and to address challenges with the stormwater services management charge

## **WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO SAND MANAGEMENT**

The SCCG has continued to advocate to Transport for NSW (TfNSW) regarding access to sandstone tunnel spoil from current road and rail projects, in line with member councils' intermittent and ongoing needs for beach nourishment. Updated advice on currency of opportunities from the tunnelling projects has been provided through our quarterly meeting forum with TfNSW. Emphasis has been placed on facilitating a whole of government approach in recognition of the support needed by councils and to make the most of these opportunities in the early planning stages of transport projects, together with provision for cost sharing arrangements and the processing and stockpiling of sand.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS STATEMENT FOR THE NSW COASTAL AND ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

The SCCG has been advocating to the Department of Planning and Environment and the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Wendy Tuckerman MP, that periodic progress updates be made available to local councils on the implementation of the Future Directions Statements. The SCCG has suggested that improvements to communications between the Department and Councils is greatly needed to expedite the development of CMPs.



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## MARINE ESTATE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

The SCCG has continued to advocate for stronger collaborations between the Marine Estate Management Authority (MEMA) and SCCG Member Councils. The SCCG met with an independent consultant from MEMA to recommend formalised communication arrangements between MEMA and Councils through development of a communications plan. The SCCG also recommended that any future implementation plans be drafted in consultation with Councils and that a lead contact for MEMA be established. Improved communication is important for councils in developing Coastal Management Programs as they are required to align with the Marine Estate Management Strategy initiatives.

## ADVOCACY

As part of the Annual Survey, the SCCG seeks feedback on how the SCCG is performing against our goal to provide a regional and cohesive voice representing our Member Councils and advocating for their interests:

- Consistent with last year, 92% of all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “Overall, the SCCG is performing well at advocating on behalf of Member Councils”
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that SCCG submissions were of a high standard.

SCCG received the following positive feedback for advocacy:

*“SCCG work on submissions has been outstanding over the last year with the number and quality achieved”*

*“Advocacy is one of the most valuable aspects of SCCG's work, as we do not have the staff resources to be able to prepare comprehensive submissions, nor the ability to access regular meetings with stakeholders such as Sydney Water and Transport for NSW.”*



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# GOAL 4 - RESEARCH

Identify and address current and emerging regional coastal issues.

## SUMMARY

During 2021-22, SCCG continued to engage with our government and academic partners to further our knowledge and promote and distribute research outcomes to our member councils.

## HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- The Sydney Institute of Marine Sciences (SIMS) is leading the project in partnership with SCCG, University of Sydney and other stakeholders.
- SCCG partnership with SIMS to submit a joint expression of interest application to the Global Estuaries Monitoring (GEM) program. If successful, the program will significantly enrich our understanding of the environmental health conditions of Sydney Harbour and future approaches to addressing the risks of emerging contaminants of concern.
- Continued facilitation of member Councils engagement with academic partners through the Grants Committee.

Image: Courtesy of Northern Beaches Council

