



# NSW Coastal Council

## NSW Coastal Council Meeting – summary minutes

27 February 2023

Meeting was held online.

Coastal Council members in attendance:

- Annelise Tuor, Chair
- Grahame Byron
- Pam Dean-Jones
- Martijn Gough
- Hannah Power
- Shay Simpson
- Bruce Thom AM

Council members were welcomed to the first meeting of the Coastal Council (the Council) for 2023. The main agenda items included progress reports on the Council's 2022-2023 Work Plan and presentations by Tweed Shire Council on their recently certified Tweed River Estuary Coastal Management Program, and the Department Planning and Environment (DPE) on priority projects for the DPE Science Program.

### Council's 2022-2023 Work Plan

Council submitted its final reports for work plan tasks due in February 2023.

#### *1. The 2022 Annual Survey of coastal practitioners on the implementation of the Coastal Management Framework (the framework).*

The survey report identified many of the barriers for Coastal Management Programs (CMP) are known, having been raised consistently in previous surveys, and most recently in the 2022 review of the Coastal Management Act 2016 (CM Act). In the 2022 survey, respondents identified the following barriers:

- No whole of catchment focus in the framework;
- Uncoordinated governance at the State level which hinders holistic action on catchment scale threats to the coast;
- Engagement by State agencies to the CMP process;
- Complexity of issues and interests to be addressed in a CMP;
- Limited capacity and resources of local government and some State agencies to develop and implement CMPs; and
- Coastal and Estuary Grants Program processes unnecessarily bureaucratic and rigid, causing delays in the assessment and allocation of new grant applications, with flow on consequences for CMP development and related workplans.

Survey respondents outlined the opportunities to address these barriers, including:

- Guidance and capacity building. Fit for purpose guidance and State-led capacity building programs to support local government and other stakeholders with implementation of the framework;
- Partnering between State and local government. Improved engagement and commitment by State agencies to the CMP process based on shared benefit; and
- Prioritising action to clear regulatory hurdles. Action by State government on matters considered to be best addressed consistently and at a statewide level (e.g. recognition of catchment management as a key component of waterway health; coastal vulnerability area assessment mapping; policy and approvals pathway for the use of offshore sand for beach nourishment).

The Coastal Council's annual surveys inform its advice to Government. The surveys provide an independent commentary on the framework implementation, progress on the Future Directions Statement commitments, and a check on the public reporting of CMP delivery. While 2023 may see new priorities emerge for coastal management in NSW, and consequent changes to the scope of Council's annual survey, the survey will continue to provide insights into implementation of the framework.

## *2. Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program – Report.*

The Greater Sydney Harbour Project Management Committee Chair's Report summarised progress on the Greater Sydney Harbour CMP and the challenges for developing a multi-council CMP for an iconic waterway with many and varied interests. The report to Government lists options to progress the CMP past its current stage (Stage 2 - determine risks, vulnerabilities and opportunities) through improved governance and funding arrangements.

### Guest Presentations

#### Development of a Coastal Management Program – Tweed Shire Council

Senior officers from Tweed Shire Council summarised the scope and timeline for the preparation of the CMP from 2016 through to its certification in 2022. The CMP has identified a number of 'character zones' for the river and estuary with agreed objectives and actions. Full delivery of the CMP is over a ten-year period. The CMP actions are expected to be funded through Tweed Shire Council and NSW Government contributions, grants and voluntary input from land owners, community members and other organisations. Some actions are funded under Councils normal operations or through existing programs or grants. It will not be possible for Council to implement all actions in the CMP without additional sources of funding. As such, ongoing submission of grants is an important part of the CMP implementation program. Acknowledging the learnings for local and State government in the development of a new CMP, the presentation identified the time to be saved through improved communication between State and local government on technical matters to be addressed in a CMP and reviews of a draft CMP.

#### Department Planning and Environment Science Program

A presentation of the DPE Science Program Priorities, Strategy and Approach detailed individual projects underway or planned for the State's estuaries, coast and marine environments. A key objective of the science program is to provide robust, consistent statewide guidance on climate change risk – a priority in the NSW Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2022 – and update the statewide coastal erosion and inundation mapping using the latest climate change science and sea level rise projections. Four principles will inform the roll out of the DPE Science Program: A clear vision where science for legislation, policy and management decisions is developed in collaboration with key internal and external end users; expansion of the program in collaboration with strategic fore-sighting and innovative partnerships; Co-design with partners and the community; and, communicating effectively to deliver fit for purpose outputs developed with end users.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting of Council is scheduled for 4 May 2023 at Taree on the NSW MidCoast.