



Rob Stokes MP

Minister for the Environment
Minister for Heritage
Minister for the Central Coast
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MEDIA RELEASE

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A NEW VISION FOR OUR COAST

Environment Minister Rob Stokes has announced the NSW Government's far-reaching reforms to coastal management in NSW.

Mr Stokes said the Government will introduce simple new legislation, improved technical support for councils and clear funding arrangements.

Mr Stokes said there are three major aspects to the reform package:

- Replacing current laws with a new coastal management Act - which will be less complex, and a better fit with land use planning and local government legislation;
- New arrangements to better support council decision making, including a new coastal management manual and improved technical advice; and
- Developing a clear system for funding and financing coastal management actions.

"Our coastline contains some of the most beautiful and unique environments in NSW, but it is facing unprecedented pressures," Mr Stokes said.

"The 35-year-old Coastal Protection Act no longer achieves the integrated and balanced management we need.

"The new Act will require councils to undertake coastal zone management planning within the local government framework and put coastal management needs at the core of councils' planning responsibilities.

"Councils under ministerial direction to prepare coastal zone management plans should continue to do so, and the Government expects they will be submitted as soon as possible.

"The reforms will also focus on improving support for councils to ensure they have the best available information and technical advice to make well-informed decisions for their communities.

"We will establish a new independent advisory body to inform councils on solutions for their communities, while also improving the delivery of technical guidance and support we currently provide.

"Finally, these reforms will address the key issue of funding for coastal management strategies, which can be expensive and go beyond councils capacity to pay.

“We will have a new approach with agreed cost sharing principles, options for financing and a new ‘tool kit’ to assist councils with these options.

“The Government has promised to deliver a modern, coherent coastal management framework that can respond to our current needs and meet our future challenges.

“The reforms I am announcing today deliver on that promise, allowing us to manage the coast’s unique environmental, social and economic values in a planned and strategic way for future generations.”

The public will be invited to have their say when an exposure draft Bill is released in the middle of next year, before the legislation comes before Parliament by the end of 2015.

For more information visit

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/coastreforms.htm>