

NSW Coastal Council Meeting 5 – summary minutes

26 to 27 November 2018

Professor Bruce Thom chaired the meeting.

Coastal Council members in attendance were:

- Professor Bruce Thom, Chair, NSW Coastal Council
- Kate Brooks, NSW Coastal Council
- Ron Cox, NSW Coastal Council
- William Glamore, NSW Coastal Council
- Angus Gordon, NSW Coastal Council
- Jane Lofthouse, NSW Coastal Council
- Annelise Tuor, NSW Coastal Council

The Council met over two days to discuss matters relevant to its responsibilities under the Coastal Management Act 2016 and work program.

WORKING WITH STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Presentations were given by state agencies receiving funding under the coastal management reforms announced in 2016 and initiatives funded under the Marine Estate Management Strategy.

Office Environment and Heritage (OEH) Water Wetlands & Coastal Science branch representatives updated the Coastal Council on delivery and linkages of their work to local government Coastal Management Programs (CMPs). The branch is focussing on estuary health through statewide risk/vulnerability assessments and monitoring of estuary condition, feeding directly into local governments' CMP scoping and implementation stages. Marine Estate Management Authority funding is supporting the development of practice notes, technical toolkits and professional development which will ultimately assist councils with their CMPs. In addition, methodologies and advice on probabilistic shoreline erosion and tidal inundation modelling are finding application in CMP cost benefit analysis, coastal sediment compartment budget determination and modelling future shoreline change. A recently flown Marine LiDAR project has mapped the seabed in coastal waters up to 40m water depth, the project, once completed, will greatly improve the information necessary for coastal sediment compartment definition and shoreline change assessments.

Coastal Council members acknowledged the importance of the deliverables for local government, particularly CMP scoping, risk assessment and option evaluation. A key challenge is making the information, tools and experience of OEH staff accessible to local government in a way that can be readily integrated into and used at all stages of a CMP. Opportunities for knowledge transfer potentially include an OEH train-the-trainer program, regular council workshops, preparation of general guidance material for a local government officer / non-technical audience and showcasing of case studies demonstrating best practice.

OEH Economics & Strategic Analysis and Coast Estuary & Floods representatives outlined the role of cost benefit analysis (CBA) in CMP preparation and the nature, application and lessons learnt from the historic application of CBA in the coastal zone. Practical application of CBAs in CZMPs and CMPs in support of decision making has proven to be a complex and evolving area involving many technical and non-technical considerations. Coastal Council members stressed the importance of a coastal expert leading the CBA process to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and to help manage stakeholder

expectations, particularly where the complexity of issues being considered is being influenced by systemic changes such as sea level rise, coastal recession and increased salinity in estuaries.

Department Planning & Environment provided an update on the State Environment Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018 and processes in place to manage amendments as they arise and timely publication on the SEPP Online Map Viewer. The importance of ongoing collaboration with OEH, relevant state agencies and local government on implementation of the SEPP was noted.

COASTAL COUNCIL WORK PROGRAM - UPDATE

The five coastal management issues informing the work program were noted with the Minister at the inaugural meeting of the Coastal Council in June 2018. Of these, ensuring local councils have the capacity to address requirements of the coastal reforms (Issue 2), coordination of the activities of councils and state agencies in relation to CMPs (Issue 3) and meeting responsibilities in the management of the state waters with the Marine Estate Management Authority (Issue 4) have been the focus of the Council's activities in late 2018.

The past month saw preparations for an annual review of local government CZMPs and CMPs and stakeholder engagement on CMP implementation. The annual review is to be completed by mid-December and aims to document the status of all local government CZMPs and progress in the preparation of new CMPs by December 2021. The review will also include a survey of local government to identify any issues that may be impeding CMPs and that the Coastal Council may be able to assist with as part of its work program. Results of the review and survey will be reported in early 2019.

Stakeholder engagement undertaken at public forums (2018 NSW Coastal Conference), online survey of state and local government coastal practitioners and workshops with OEH regional staff and councils are an opportunity to outline the role of the Coastal Council and to hear of those matters that continue to frustrate progress on coordinated management of our coast. The feedback is highlighting priority areas for attention in the Council's work program.

Facilitating state agency awareness of responsibilities under the Coastal Management Act 2016 to have regard for local government CMPs where relevant to their activities, and the opportunities CMPs present for long term delivery of many agency initiatives, is an important responsibility of the Coastal Council. A workshop was held with Marine Estate Management Authority (MEMA) representatives in late November to status projects under the nine initiatives of the MEMA Strategy and identify linkages to local government CMPs. Information gathered is assisting Coastal Council communications with local government on the opportunities to contribute to and benefit from MEMA projects. Similarly, new responsibilities for local government under the Crown Lands Act 2018 to prepare Plans of Management is informing Coastal Council's engagement with local government and NSW Department of Industry (Crown Lands) on the implications for CMPs.

Coastal Council members identified immediate priorities to be addressed to assist local government capacity to develop and deliver CMPs. These include advocating for greater flexibility in grant funding guidelines under the OEH Coast & Estuary Grant Program to assist local government CMP scoping (Stage 1), improved access to data and tools produced from the OEH Science Program, facilitating improved communication between local government and MEMA on alignment of activities under their respective CMP preparation and strategic initiatives, and promoting consistent interpretation and application of Coastal Management Act and Manual through guidance material developed specifically for the local government coastal manager.

NEXT MEETING The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for February 2019.