

Scoping Paper: Promoting Coastal Management in Queensland

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**This document does not necessarily reflect the views of
the South East Queensland Catchments or the 2009
Queensland Coastal Conference Steering Group
Committee.**

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List of Acronyms

ABM	Association of Bayside Municipalities (Vic)
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACA	Australian Coastal Alliance
ACS	Australian Coastal Society
ALGA	Australian Local Government Association
BPA	Beach Protection Authority (Qld)
CMD	Coastal Management District (Qld)
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CPAC	Coastal Protection Advisory Council (Qld)
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre
CZM	Coastal Zone Management
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act (USA)
DERM	Department of Environment and Resource Management (Qld)
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency (Qld)
FMA	Floodplain Management Authority
IC(Z)M	Integrated Coastal (Zone) Management
IPA	Integrated Planning Act (Qld)
LGA	Local Government Authority
LGAQ	Local Government Association of Queensland
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
NAPSWQ	National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality
NCIS	National Coastal Information System
NHT	Natural Heritage Trust
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NSW	New South Wales
QCCG	Queensland Coastal Councils Group
RCB	Regional Coastal Board (Vic)
RCMP	Regional Coastal Management Plan (Qld)
ROC	Regional Organisation of Councils (NSW)
SCCG	Sydney Coastal Councils Group
SCMP	State Coastal Management Plan (Qld)
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEMP	Shoreline Erosion Management Plan (Qld)
SEQ	South East Queensland
SoE	State of the Environment
SPP	State Planning Policy (Qld, NSW)
VCC	Victorian Coastal Council
VCS	Victorian Coastal Strategy

Purpose and use of the scoping paper

Why this scoping paper has been prepared?

This scoping paper has been prepared at the request of the organising committee for the 2009 Queensland Coastal Conference. The scoping paper is a response to a resolution from the 2007 Queensland Coastal Conference to further investigate options for either existing or alternative steps or processes to promote coastal management initiatives and to assist local government in the progression of coastal planning and management within Queensland.

The conference organising committee invited a tender for the preparation of this document, a workshop at the conference and a report summarising the outcomes of the workshop. Neil Lazarow, Geoff Wescott, Geoff Withycombe and Michelle Walker have undertaken the project.

Summary of contents

The body of this scoping paper is organised into the following main sections:

- Section Two is a brief description of current institutional arrangements for coastal planning and management in Queensland (Appendix II provides a more detailed description);
- Section Three presents a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of certain steps to better integrate, advocate, develop capacity, manage, monitor and evaluate ICM programs and the recommendation of three possible options for Queensland;
- Section Four presents a case studies section describing different models from other regions; and
- Section Five describes the major challenges for progressing integrated coastal management in Queensland.

What should the reader focus on?

The reader should focus on Section Three of this report, which discusses the possible role or roles of a new ICM entity or entities in Queensland and options for how an organisation/s may be structured. This is followed by a discussion of potential steps or processes, based on an overview of and comparison against existing organisations in Australia and overseas. Three steps are proposed:

1. The establishment of a State-based Coastal Council with a permanent Secretariat;
2. The establishment of a Queensland Chapter of the Australian Coastal Society or a similar organisation; and
3. The formal establishment of a Queensland Coastal Councils Group.

Each of these options carries different advantages and could complement the other. These steps or processes could be progressed simultaneously or one at a time and it may be the case that more than one organisation is ultimately created.

Supporting information

The paper is complemented by a series of appendices that present a more detailed description of integrated coastal management; Queensland's coastal management program; and current reforms to the State's coastal management program.

**Queensland Coastal Conference
Workshop - Promoting Coastal Management in Queensland**

Draft Workshop Agenda

Session 1 – prior to lunch

1. Welcome and introduction by Greg Stuart (5 mins).
2. Overview of scoping paper and establishment of common ground by Neil Lazarow (10-15 mins).
 - a. **Key Point One:** “Participants at this workshop agree that an improvement in the practice, funding and delivery of ICM in Queensland is necessary and will be welcomed.”
 - b. **Key Point Two:** “Participants at this workshop agree that the bridges to action can and should come from within and outside of government.”
3. Presentation by Geoff Wescott on the Victorian experience (15 mins)

Session 2 – after lunch

4. Presentation by Geoff Withycombe on the Sydney Coastal Councils Group (10 mins).
5. Presentation by Shannon Hunt on the Queensland Coastal Forum and the Queensland Coastal Councils Group concept (10 mins).
6. Presentation by Bruce Thom on the Australian Coastal Society (5-10 mins).
7. Presentation by Alan Stokes on the Australian Coastal Alliance proposal (5-10 mins).
8. Questions to presenters.
9. Discussion on recent changes to ICM in Queensland.
10. Discussion of the merits of three steps or processes for progressing ICM in Queensland. If there is consensus, participants may decide to progress with a number of recommendations (30 mins).
 - a. **Example recommendations** (wording to be finalised):
 - i. E.g. Participants at the 2009 Queensland Coastal Conference write to the Minister to formally request that the State Government establish a permanent Coastal Council, including the funding of a Secretariat (committee to oversee draft of letter needed).
 - ii. E.g. Participants at the 2009 Queensland Coastal Conference agree to establish a Queensland Chapter of the Australian Coastal Society (at the minimum, this would require the establishment of an interim steering committee).
 - iii. E.g. Participants at the 2009 Queensland Coastal Conference agree to progress with the establishment of a Queensland Coastal Councils Group (at the minimum, this would require the establishment of an interim steering committee).
 - b. Other options as required e.g. no recommendations voted on and an independent committee is established to progress these discussions.
11. Workshop concludes.

Rules of engagement for participants

1. One facilitator only.
2. Respect each person’s right to have their say (even if you disagree with them).
3. One person speaks at a time.
4. We encourage you to share your thoughts with us, but please try and line them up before contributing to the group discussion.

1 Introduction

The background to this project arises from discussion by delegates to the 2007 Queensland Coastal Conference about the value of exploring the options for either existing or alternative steps or processes to promote coastal management initiatives and to assist local government in the progression of coastal planning and management in the State. Table 1 below describes the motion passed by delegates at the 2007 conference to initiate this piece of work.

A focus of the paper will be to discuss the range of options from a utility perspective for the various organisations and groups that have roles and responsibilities for coastal planning and management in Queensland i.e. a description of the advantages and disadvantages of different models against the perceived needs of various stakeholders.

Table 1: Conference motion supporting this scoping study

<p><i>That the delegates to this conference authorise the Queensland Coastal Conference Steering Group Committee to develop a scoping document by April 2008 for the formation of a representative Queensland Coastal Management Authority to research, develop and implement a Coastal Management Strategy for the entire Queensland coastal region for presentation to the Queensland Government to support the formation of such an authority.</i></p>

The past decade has witnessed the loss of the Beach Protection Authority and more recently the Cooperative Research Centre for Coastal Zone, Estuary and Waterway Management. This has resulted in a significant reduction in research, networks and knowledge sharing for coastal management practitioners. Unclear relationships between Local Government and the NRM process through the NHT II program and a review and potential revamp of the State Coastal Management Plan and Regional Coastal Management Plans suggest that coastal planning and management in Queensland is in flux. This is compounded by the ever-increasing reliance and responsibilities being placed on local governments and their communities and further exacerbated by significant development pressures along many parts of the Queensland coast. Climate change adds an additional layer of complexity for coastal managers who now also need to deal with uncertainty associated with sea level rise and altered climatic conditions.

Over 90% of our national population are located in the coastal zone and all but one of Australia's capital cities are located on the coast (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004). Rapid and enduring population growth around the Australia coastline is predicted to continue (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). Intertwined social, economic, and cultural interests make the challenges of coastal management, challenges of society. By its very nature, coastal management is the management of people's activities within coastal regions (whole quote extracted from Lazarow et al., 2008, p. 87).

The implementation of best practice coastal management at the local government level is crucial to the successful delivery of coastal management in Queensland. As the pressures on coastal areas continue to escalate through population growth, infrastructure demands and climate induced impacts, the need for cross boundary, regional and state wide approaches to Integrated Coastal (Zone) Management (ICM) has also increased.

The lack of a specific advocate for coastal management in Queensland will ultimately see less and less resources, technical and policy support directed to government, regional bodies and local groups to manage the coast in the face of escalating pressures.

The body of this scoping paper is organised into the following main sections:

- Section Two is a brief description of current institutional arrangements for coastal planning and management in Queensland (Appendix II provides a more detailed description);
- Section Three presents a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of certain steps to better integrate, advocate, develop capacity, manage, monitor and evaluate ICM programs and the recommendation of three possible options for Queensland;
- Section Four presents a case studies section describing different models from other regions; and
- Section Five describes the major challenges for progressing integrated coastal management in Queensland.

There are four appendices included in the document:

- Appendix I - Overview of Integrated Coastal (Zone) Management (ICM);
- Appendix II - A detailed description of current institutional arrangements for coastal planning and management in Queensland, including an overview of the relationship of the Federal Government, Local Government and the Regional NRM bodies to the SCMP;
- Appendix III - Overview of current reforms to the ICM process in Queensland; and
- Appendix IV - A list of further reading on ICM challenges.

2 Current institutional arrangements in Queensland

Queensland's coastal management program is underpinned by the *Coastal Management and Protection Act (1995 revised 2003)* and the State Coastal Plan (SCMP) (Government of Queensland, 2001). The Plan has statutory effect (the effect of a State Planning Policy) under Section 50 of the Act and applies to the coastal zone in Queensland. The determination of the coastal zone depends on the existence of a link with the coast or coastal resources.

The Coastal Act incorporates the functions of previous acts including the *Harbours Act 1955*, the *Canals Act 1958* and the *Beach Protection Act 1968* and was amended in 2003 to repeal these three pieces of legislation.

Section 4 of the Act identifies the need for the development of a State Coastal Management Plan (SCMP) and that coastal management should be progressed in an integrated manner. The dimensions of integrated coastal management (ICM) are described in Appendix I. Central to the concept of ICM is the need for strategic partnerships and capacity building across all levels of government, industry and the community and across political cycles.

The Act also identifies the need for the development of Regional Coastal Management Plans (RCMP's). RCMP's are required to be consistent with and/or set more detailed requirements compared with the SCMP. RCMP's implement the SCMP at the regional level and also identify key coastal sites at the regional level that require specific management interventions.

The SCMP identifies the Department of Environment and Resource Management (previously the EPA) as the lead agency for progressing ICM in Queensland. As well as this, the Act establishes the Coastal Protection Advisory Council, whose primary function is to advise the Minister about coastal management issues in Queensland. *It should be noted that in March 2009 an independent review of Queensland Governments Boards, Committees and Statutory Authorities recommended the abolition of CPAC (Webbe & Weller, 2009). The Government has accepted this recommendation (Queensland Department for Premier and Cabinet, 2009) and it is likely that CPAC will be disbanded by October 2009.*

The SCMP and RCMP's have the effect of State Planning Policies (SPP's) under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* (IPA) (Government of Queensland, 1997) and are required to be considered during the making or amending of local government IPA planning schemes or in the assessment of development applications (Government of Queensland, 2008c). The requirement only for the SCMP to be considered during the planning process has been a significant stumbling block for the progression of ICM in Queensland. For those interested in preventing inappropriate development, the policy is somewhat of a toothless tiger and for those interested in developing planning schemes or progressing development, the lack of clarity in the policy has not provided a definitive set of policy statements on which to base local planning schemes.

To assist in part with this process, in 2007 the Department of Environment and Resource Management published two Interim Guidelines. The first, *'State and Regional Coastal Management Plans Queensland's Coastal Policy: Implementation Guideline for Planning Schemes'* (Government of Queensland, 2007b) is aimed at assisting local government to implement the policy outcomes of the SCMP's and RCMP's through local government planning schemes. The second guideline *'State and Regional Coastal Management Plans Queensland's Coastal Policy: Implementation Guideline for Development Assessment'* (Government of Queensland, 2007a) is aimed at assisting local government to implement the policy outcomes of the SCMP's and RCMP's for development assessment. The timing of the publication of these documents almost seven-years after the release of the SCMP and approximately at the same time as the commencement of the review of the SCMP must be considered as unusual.

Refer to Appendix II for a more detailed description of how coastal planning and management in Queensland is structured.

3 A new framework for progressing ICM in Queensland

This section of the paper outlines the possible roles and functions of a new entity or entities for progressing ICM in Queensland. The reader is advised to review Sections Four and Five of the paper also, which describe a range of case studies and many of the key challenges for ICM in Queensland. It is with reference to these sections of the paper that this discussion has been formulated. A new entity or entities would need to aim to progress a number of key issues (identified in Section Five of the report and Table 2). They can be broadly summarised as: the need to better resource ICM; the need to improve strategic planning including monitoring and evaluation; and the need to improve advocacy for ICM.

This discussion comes at an interesting time: the SCMP and the delivery of ICM in Queensland generally is under review; and a number of new 'coastal' organisations have recently formed or have been proposed, however, it is not yet apparent what the role and influence of these groups will be. This investigation suggests that there is scope for the development of more than one organisation.

3.1 Possible role and functions of a new entity or entities in Queensland

The State Coastal Act identifies the objectives for ICM in Queensland, however, it is the SCMP that identifies the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) as the lead agency and the agency responsible for the development and implementation of the SCMP.

By contrast the *Victorian Coastal Management Act 1995* establishes the Victorian Coastal Council (VCC) as the peak body responsible for the management of coastal matters in Victoria, as a separate entity, but supported by a number of agencies and in particular the Department for Sustainability and Environment, which is the lead agency. The VCC and Regional Coastal Boards are directly responsible to the Minister for the Environment. In other words, ICM in Victoria is coordinated through an umbrella body, the VCC, which has a permanent Secretariat.

The role of the VCC is greater than that of the Queensland Coastal Protection Advisory Council (CPAC), however, an expansion of CPAC's role under the auspices of a new State Coastal Council and the appointment of a permanent Secretariat similar to that of the VCC may provide an avenue for the development of a statutory-based entity responsible for coordinating the delivery of ICM in Queensland. A Secretariat would be able to draw on the significant experience within the DERM directorates as well as other government agencies. The Council would be empowered to fulfil its current legislative ambit (see Table 5: Role of the Coastal Protection Advisory Council in Appendix II) and with a relatively small legislative adjustment and funding support, the Council could pick up a selection of the important functions that the NSW Coastal Council and the VCC have been able to provide including, but not limited to: responsibility for annual reports to Parliament; the development of capacity building programs; and the provision of independent advice to government.

The high value that is placed on the coast and the competitive and often conflicting views about how this area is used is a clear indication that coastal management is an intensely political issue. The expectation that rationality will prevail in all circumstances or that science will be considered on its merits alone is somewhat naïve. Coastal champions and an effective advocacy plan, both within and external to government must be seen as part and parcel of the ICM landscape today. For example, Clarke (2003) demonstrated the importance of advocates and champions for promoting the Coastcare program. Advocacy, however, remains an immature and somewhat neglected aspect of many ICM discussions. Organisations such as the Sydney Coastal Councils Group and the Association of Bayside Municipalities perform valuable roles as coastal advocates. The Australian Coastal Society, formed in 2008 (see section 4.1.2 for more information on the ACS), recognises the need for a strong national coastal champion external to government and in time this organisation may fill this role not only at the federal level but also through the formation of state chapters.

Local government is arguably the primary agent responsible for implementing ICM in Queensland and a key area of focus for a new entity must be based around capacity building, coordination and advocacy for and on behalf of LGA's. The 2007 proposal for the formation of a Queensland Coastal Councils Group was borne out of the *“gradual decrease in support, guidance and funding from the State and Australian Governments to Local Governments, to enable them to effectively carry out coastal management and*

planning and the recognition that coastal management extends beyond a single local government boundary and therefore a more coordinated approach to coastal management is necessary (Agenda Report, QCCG 2006).” Two years on, these issues remain. In broad terms, the types of services a LGA should expect to receive from a new peak body include:

- Advocacy on behalf of local governments to all levels of government, industry and the public sector on coastal issues;
- The provision of advice and information regarding all aspects of coastal management;
- Strategies and programs to increase community awareness of coastal management issues and the role of Queensland local governments in this process; and
- Strategies and programs to increase the capacity of member councils to manage their coastal environment.

This brief review of a range of statutory and non-statutory organisations suggests that there are positive aspects to be drawn from a number of the groups as well as lessons on what can be avoided. Given the vast size and variation in Queensland’s coastline and coastal population concentration, a one-size-fits all approach needs to be carefully examined because without sufficient resourcing certain regions may be neglected. For example, Victoria, with a very short coastline by comparison to Queensland, still effectively uses (and needs) three regional boards to ensure local input and perspectives on coastal matters whilst maintaining a state-wide strategic perspective through the VCC and Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS).

3.2 Structure of a new entity / entities

This sub-section discusses the possible structure of a new entity or entities for progressing ICM in Queensland. It should be read in conjunction with Section Four of the paper, which profiles a range of Australian and international organisations at the national, state, regional and local level. There are a number of good examples and as the following discussion will describe, there is much that can be learned from the experience of others. The organisations that are discussed often overlap the following sub-headings, however, the structure of the discussion from national through to local and then independent groups will give the reader a useful insight into the mandate of a particular entity.

3.2.1 National Authorities and organisations

At the national level, the concept of an independent National Coastal Council has strong merits and was an important recommendation from the Resource Assessment Commission Inquiry into coastal management (Resource Assessment Commission, 1993), however, the establishment of a Council requires a champion from within government and it may take some time before it became directly relevant and useful to Queensland. A National Coastal Council based on the Emergency Management Australia model with strong links to an quasi-independent state-based chapters is definitely worth exploring further, however, the issue of independence and funding remains.

The mission and objectives of the recently established Australian Coastal Society (ACS) (see Section 4.1.2) align closely with the needs for local government and the ACS presents a relatively good fit in this respect. The establishment of an ACS chapter in Queensland must be seen as a positive step forward for progressing ICM. Some thought,

however, should be given to the fact that the broad ambit of the ACS may diminish the key service and delivery goals for local government. Overall, the emergence of advocacy groups such as the ACS may go some way to reinforcing the importance of ICM as an important issue for government by providing coastal issues with greater political exposure. Presently, there are no state based chapters for the ACS and an early move in Queensland would set the agenda for the manner in which the organisation develops nationally.

The prospect of establishing an Australian Coastal Alliance (ACA) (see Section 4.1.3) and in time a Queensland Chapter may be a closer fit with the direct aspirations of local government's coastal management needs. Crucially, however, the ACA is at an early stage of development and it is yet to be decided whether or not the organisation is to have an advocacy role.

3.2.2 State based Coastal Councils and Commissions

The benefits of establishing a statutory organisation based on the experience and success of organisations such as the NSW Coastal Council, the Victorian Coastal Council and the California Coastal Commission suggest that this type of model has many merits. There are, however, a number of significant drawbacks. For example, the NSW Coastal Council, the 'watchdog' for ICM in NSW, was constantly under-funded. The Coastal Council was subsequently disbanded by the NSW Government for political reasons. Personality clashes and issues in relation to representation on policy and organisational management can be a major issue for the development of any organisation and its relationship to government and the broader ICM sector. This has been evident at both the VCC and the NSW Coastal Council. When government or politicians feel threatened or intimidated by an individual or organisation that relies on government for funding then there is a chance that people may be asked not to speak out on certain issues. On the other hand, the development of strong partnerships can achieve successful outcomes at a number of levels. The California Coastal Commission has been similarly hamstrung by recurrent under-funding in relation to its legislated mandate, the loss of technical staff and a general reduction in organisational capacity. The Victorian Coastal Council, while presenting a useful working model, is also subject to the whims of State government policy. Nevertheless, all three organisations have in their time made significant positive contributions to coastal planning and management in their respective domains. Given the significant regional differences across coastal Queensland, the Victorian model, with regional Coastal Boards may be appropriate for Queensland.

There are significant benefits to be had in better resourcing the Department of Environment and Resource Management in a number of areas, especially with the current focus on regional planning and regional NRM planning across the State. An expansion of the Coastal Protection Advisory Council to include a permanent Secretariat based along a similar charge of the NSW Coastal Council is certainly worth considering. The Secretariat could take on a 'watchdog' role; provide government with independent advice; advise local government; and also be responsible for preparing an annual report to Government on the state of ICM in Queensland (effectiveness SCMP, Regional Plans, Regional NRM Plans etc). The recent decision and odd rationale given for the abolition of CPAC (see Appendix II, Section 9.3), however, suggests that coastal management priorities are likely to be very low on the current State Government's agenda.

3.2.3 NRM a Federal / State mix

The Regional NRM bodies, coordinated through the Queensland Regional NRM Groups Collective, provide a good opportunity to progress ICM issues as part of the NRM agenda. Caution, however, should be given to the independence and longevity of these bodies considering their current reliance and subscription to Federal Government programs.

3.2.4 Local Government Groups and Forums

At the State and regional level there are a number of good lessons and also opportunities. The existing SCMP was written with a distinct bias towards the protection and management of natural areas – traditionally the DERM's core strength. For example, the policy states that:

the State Coastal Plan is likely to be most relevant where the coastal resources are significant, or where potential impacts on coastal values may be on a scale that threatens those values. Therefore, many of the policies will have greater application to those undeveloped areas along the coast which are predominantly in their natural state and where future development may be proposed. Urban areas often represent a highly modified natural environment where past decisions and approvals constrain the ability of agencies involved in coastal management to fully achieve the principles put forward in the State Coastal Plan (Government of Queensland, 2001, p. 3).

Given the charter of the lead agency, the Department of Environment and Resource Management, this focus is not at all surprising. For some LGA's, the loss of the Beach Protection Authority and the shift of the Department of Environment and Resource Management away from providing specialist coastal process advice, means that the pressure on local governments to manage the coast has increased. In an attempt to better address some of the key ICM issues, LGA officers organised and ran the first Queensland Coastal Councils Forum in 2004 and in 2006 discussions on the viability of a Queensland Coastal Councils Group commenced. These initiatives came primarily from officers in local governments attempting to improve capacity building and share knowledge and expertise. This experience is a clear indication that many coastal managers are currently under-resourced to effectively tackle ICM. The attempt by LGA officers to develop such an initiative is a strong indication that the State's coastal program was not providing adequate guidance for coastal managers at the LGA level. The establishment of the Association of Bayside Municipalities in Victoria (see Section 4.3.1) and the Sydney Coastal Councils Group (see Section 4.3.2) are good examples of LGA funded and supported organisations that focus on progressing ICM issues for their constituents.

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) is uniquely placed and has a strong record of progressing the interests of local government on a wide range of issues. While work by LGAQ has focused on biodiversity, invasive species, land use and regional aquatic life, water quality, vegetation management, there is an opportunity to build on the capacity already developed to include a strong focus on ICM. The relationship between the ABM and the MAV in Victoria is a useful one and serves a good model for the improvement and integration of ICM into the process of government.

3.2.5 Independent groups

The NSW Floodplain Management Authority, Association of Bayside Municipalities (ABM)

and the Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) all present good examples of well-established independent organisations that were founded to progress a particular set of goals for their constituents. Each of these groups has a volunteer-based membership, consisting entirely (or mainly) of LGA's and is therefore self-funded. The size and scope of operations for these organisations is somewhat different, with the SCCG being the biggest and most active. Both the ABM and SCCG have established technical committees that enable officers from various municipalities to discuss issues that are common across jurisdictions. The SCCG has a permanent Secretariat consisting of 4 staff members. Member Councils share hosting responsibility for the Secretariat. The ABM has one part-time Executive Officer, funded by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). The substantial difference between the ABM, the SCCG and a possible Queensland entity is that the two former organisations operate across a significantly smaller geographic area. This makes issues such as coordination easier and it also means that many of the technical and environmental issues are common across boundaries. Economies of scale, therefore, may be easier to achieve than in Queensland. The experience of the Victorian Coastal Council and the establishment of three Regional Coastal Boards is one model that may be used to overcome this problem. The structure of the SCCG and the proposed structure for a NSW Coastal Councils Group (see Withycombe, 2007) provides an illustration of how this might be achieved for Queensland - an executive officer, one officer per region and 1-3 project staff. Regional staff may be housed by an LGA in each region on a temporary or permanent basis.

A united voice on coastal issues at the community level and across local government may assist in pressing the importance and value of coastal management to the State and Federal governments. This may also assist in promoting the need for a State Coastal Council. The experience of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group over the past decade as an independently funded research and advocacy organisation is a good example of a group that has managed to continuously raise the profile of coastal issues as well as develop valuable partnerships and projects with the Commonwealth and a host of research agencies.

3.3 Potential steps or processes

1. Given that the Government has recently earmarked the Coastal Protection Advisory Council for abolition, it is unlikely that there will be any current support for an expansion of the role and function of the Council in a manner similar to that of the Victorian Coastal Council, the NSW Coastal Council or the California Coastal Commission. Nevertheless, the important role that these latter organisations have played for ICM in their respective jurisdictions must be noted. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a State based Coastal Council, including the convening of a permanent Secretariat funded by government (this may also include the establishment of regional coastal boards). Key tasks could include but not be limited to:
 - a. Watchdog role;
 - b. Providing State government with independent advice on ICM;
 - c. Coordination of the ICM effort across State Government agencies;
 - d. Capacity building, including advising local government;
 - e. Responsibility for preparing an annual report to Parliament (need to define an appropriate minister) on the state of ICM in Queensland (effectiveness SCMP, Regional Plans, Regional NRM Plans etc); and
 - f. Other
 - i. Direct research;
 - ii. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting; and
 - iii. Development of policy and technical management tools and resources.

This could be formally and statutorily progressed through an amendment to the Coastal Protection and Management Act. The Secretariat would be housed within the Department of Environment and Resource Management and funded by Government. The composition of the Council would need to be carefully considered.

There are advantages in progressing this type of arrangement, however, it requires significant support from both in and outside of government. Without a key champion from within government, this step is not likely to progress.

2. Growth of the Australian Coastal Society and the development of a Queensland Chapter/s to progress ICM in the State. Despite the relative immaturity of the ACS as an organisation, the organisational structure provides significant opportunities for the development of a strong State-based chapter or Chapters. In particular, the ACS can provide: an advocacy role; national networking; and a forum for the open debate of coastal issues. A State chapter of the ACS may provide a neutral space for the regional bodies, including the Regional Groups Collective; LGA's, including the LGAQ; Indigenous organisations; and coastal practitioners from industry, government and the not-for-profit sector to progress a range of ICM issues and promote the importance of ICM. Such an organisation may also take on the responsibility of running the State Coastal Conference.

(Consideration should also be given to the establishment of the Australian Coastal Alliance, which may provide a better fit between LGA's and the regional NRM groups, but this may be at the exclusion of other key groups)

3. Formal establishment of an independent Queensland Coastal Councils Group (QCCG). A permanent Secretariat would be established and located within the LGAQ (LGAQ's current research in the area of NRM and climate change could provide a good platform to progress ICM). Membership would be open to all Queensland LGA's and Aboriginal and Islander communities with coastal or estuarine boundaries. Consideration, however, needs to be given to how the Regional NRM groups would fit into this structure. Models for membership fees could be based on the SCCG and/or ABM structure. Given the significant differences in coastal issues across the State, some consideration may be given to the establishment of a number of regional sub-groups over time – perhaps along the lines of the Regional NRM groups. A QCCG might initially focus on two technical projects and two advocacy goals within a given time period, thereby building its credibility.

Based on the lessons from other places there are good reasons for progressing with all three steps simultaneously.

4 Case studies

4.1 National level

4.1.1 National Coastal Council (proposed)

The challenges of coordination within the coastal zone have long been recognised as an issue of concern at all levels of government. Recently, Wescott (2006a) argued cogently for the establishment of a National Coastal Council based on the “critical economic, social and ecological importance of the coast to the nation as a whole...” The issue, however, has been discussed since at least the first national level review of coastal management in 1980 (Commonwealth of Australia, 1980), by the Coastal CRC and Wescott in 2005-6 and most recently as part of the Federal Government’s inquiry into the environmental impacts of climate change on coastal cities.

According to Wescott, the responsibility of “a National Coastal Council would be to recommend the most appropriate level of government to deal with these major issues and solutions and to propose mechanisms for the federal funding of these solutions. He argues that responsibility and funding should rest with the level of “government (Federal, State or Local) that can most effectively and efficiently deal with that specific issue (Wescott, 2006a).”

The concept of a National Coastal Advisory Council was also promoted by Professor Bruce Thom in his submission to the Federal Government inquiry into climate change and environmental impacts on coastal communities (Thom, 2008). Thom (2008, p.20) argues that a

Council consisting of various stakeholder interests, to review and to offer technical advice on all activities under the Policy and the CZM Act, and the effectiveness of the NCIS and monitoring; to meet at least once a year in consultation with the Coastal Commissioner or equivalent officer; and to report to COAG through a designated Federal Minister.

4.1.2 Australian Coastal Society

Overview

Formally established in 2008, the mission of the Australian Coastal Society (ACS) is to be “a voice for the Australian Coast - dedicated to healthy ecosystems, vibrant communities, and sustainable use of coastal resources.”

The ACS has the following objectives:

- a. To promote knowledge and understanding of the environmental, social and economic value of the Australian coast;
- b. To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and knowledge among people involved in the management, planning and development of the Australian coast;

- c. To contribute to international, national, state and local debates on coastal issues so as to foster rational, open decision-making in order to achieve sustainable use of coastal resources and responsible stewardship of coastal assets;
 - d. To improve public, government and industry understanding of the value of the Australian coast for individual and social well being, the need to maintain and improve coastal ecosystems, and to ensure the use of ecologically sustainable development practices;
 - e. The protection and conservation of sites of environmental and cultural significance on the coast and in coastal waters;
 - f. To facilitate increased knowledge and skills of people working and studying in coastal natural resource management, planning, development and other relevant industries along the Australian coast;
 - g. To serve as a link between various Australian organisations and individuals with interests in the Australian coast;
 - h. To support national, state and local coastal conferences; and
 - i. To do all things necessary for and incidental to the advancement of those objects.
- It is the goal of the ACS to develop a State-based chapter structure over time.

Funding base

The ACS is a membership-based organisation and income to date has been derived through subscriptions. Other opportunities for funding exist, including the development and running of short-courses and workshops, hosting of conferences as well as sponsorships and donations.

Strengths

- Independent organisation not controlled by government.
- Self-funded.
- Potential to expand to State-based chapters.
- Current Board of Directors are drawn from Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales and Southeast Queensland.
- Potential to take on any number of causes in a science-based and rigorous manner.
- Large body of corporate knowledge.
- Beginning to develop communication systems (e.g. website, discussion forums, email bulletins).
- Experience and network of current Board of Directors very valuable for the success of future initiatives.

Weaknesses

- Self-funded.
- Currently reliant on membership for funding.
- Currently volunteer based management by the Board of Directors limits the amount of time and initiatives that can be undertaken.
- No present Western Australian, Tasmanian or Northern Territory representation at Board level.

More information

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Australian Coastal Society

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4.1.3 Australian Coastal Alliance (proposed)

Overview

The Australian Coastal Alliance is an initiative of the National Sea Change Taskforce and is aimed at establishing a national information and communication interface between local government authorities, NRM groups and research organisations. The organisation is at an early stage of development and it is yet to be decided what advocacy role it will play. The interim steering committee, which is responsible for developing the structure and role of the Alliance, includes representatives of the National Sea Change Taskforce, CSIRO, and the Australian Coastal Society, the university sector, LGAQ/ALGA and NRM bodies.

Funding base

N/A

Potential strengths

- Ability to focus on the needs of local government.
- Strong links to the National Sea Change Taskforce and its network.

Potential weaknesses

- N/A

More information

Alan Stokes

National Sea Change Taskforce

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4.1.4 Emergency Management Australia

Overview

Part of the Federal Attorney-General's Department, Emergency Management Australia (EMA) provides national leadership in the development of measures to reduce risk to communities and manage the consequences of disasters. Emergency Management Australia (EMA) engages with a wide range of stakeholders including all levels of government, the Australian community and the private sector. EMA is structured across three branches and nine sections. The branches include: Emergency Management Policy and Liaison; Capability and Operational Coordination Branch; and Community and Sector Development Branch. Each Branch has a number of sections related to the mission of the organisation. For example, the Community and Sector Development Branch houses sections for professional education, community engagement, disaster mitigation and relief. This includes partnerships with State and Territory emergency management organisations, other Federal and State agencies and the international community (information for this paragraph sourced from Emergency Management Australia, 2008).

Funding base

Funding is received primarily from the Federal Government.

Strengths

- Well-established organisation.
- Unique portfolio.
- Strong support from all levels of government.
- Accredited training schemes and capacity building programs.
- Grants and funding program.
- Strong networks.

Weaknesses

- Reliant of federal government funding.
- Broad remit and constantly evolving brief.

More information

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www.ema.gov.au

4.2 State and regional level

4.2.1 Department of Environment and Resource Management & CPAC (Qld)

Overview

See Appendix II for more detailed information. The Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) is the lead government agency responsible for enforcing the State Coastal Management and Protection Act, the SCMP and regional RCMP's.

The Act also formally established the Coastal Protection Advisory Council (CPAC). CPAC is comprised of a group of experts drawn from a range of sectors and geographic locations in coastal Queensland. CPAC's primary function is to advise the Minister about coastal management issues in Queensland (Government of Queensland, 1995). CPAC has also provided some (limited) input into the development of the terms of reference for the review of the SCMP. Table 5 describes CPAC's role, as identified in the Coastal Act. CPAC is chaired by the Director-General of the Department of Environment and Resource Management.

It should be noted that in March 2009 an independent review of Queensland Governments Boards, Committees and Statutory Authorities recommended the abolition of CPAC (Webbe & Weller, 2009). The Government has accepted this recommendation (Queensland Department for Premier and Cabinet, 2009).

Funding base

Funding is derived from the State Government.

Strengths

- Strong historical record of capacity in coastal physical processes (under the Beach Protection Authority).
- Growing capacity in coastal ecosystem management.
- Represents the 'public interest'.

Weaknesses

- Loss of corporate knowledge.
- Inability to retain staff / weakening institutional culture / understaffed.
- Inter-agency communication gaps (e.g. between planning and coastal physical processes).
- Under-funded.
- Weak application of policy in developed areas of the coast.
- Broad remit.
- CPAC has been controlled from within DERM and did not perform to its potential.
- Government has decided to abolish CPAC.

More information

www.epa.qld.gov.au/

4.2.2 Local Government Association of Queensland

Overview

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) is the peak body representing local government in its dealings with other governments, unions, business and the community. LGAQ's objectives are to:

- Promote the interests, rights and entitlements of Members;
- Promote the efficient performance of local government in Queensland;
- Monitor and take action in relation to any legislation affecting Members;
- Advise and counsel Members in matters of doubt or difficulty; and
- Undertake and promote activities endorsed at Annual Conference, which are in the interest of local government in Queensland.

LGAQ has an existing policy on coastal management that encourages local government participation in the implementation of the SCMP and a partnership approach towards the development of RCMP's and CMD's

(Information for this section taken from the LGAQ website).

Funding base

The LGAQ is funded by subscriptions from Member Councils, revenue from business initiatives and government grants. Subscriptions account for one third of the Association's revenue; the remaining funds are derived from user pay services. Membership has always been voluntary. The annual subscription is determined by a formula based upon a flat rate contribution, plus components for revenue and population (Local Government Association of Queensland, 2009).

Strengths

- Well-established organisation.
- High level of LGA subscription.
- Good connections to coastal LGA's.
- Commitment to research based NRM.
- High level of capacity in NRM related initiatives including training programs, delivery and guideline development targeted at local government audiences.
- Established communication networks.
- Clear relationship with regional NRM arrangements in Queensland through membership of Joint Queensland-Australian Government NRM Steering Committee.

Weaknesses

- Broad ambit.
- No previous support for a greater involvement in coastal issues.

More information

www.lgaq.asn.au

4.2.3 Regional NRM Bodies

Overview

Established by the Federal Government to facilitate the delivery of NRM priority issues, the program is undertaken by 56 regional groups Australia wide. Queensland has 14 regions, 10 of which border the coast. For coastal based bodies, each regional plan requires that coastal issues are considered and incorporated into the plans. All NRM groups in Queensland are represented by a peak body, the Queensland Regional NRM Groups Collective.

Regional NRM bodies have played a significant role in the organisation and sponsorship of the inaugural Queensland Coastal Conference in 2007 as well as the 2009 conference.

Establishment of the *NRM Futures Initiative: Local Government and Regional Bodies Partnerships*, a joint project with the Local Government Association of Queensland is aimed at better understanding and building on Local Government's relationship with the NRM bodies.

Funding base

Funding comes from the Federal and Queensland Governments through an investment process based on the development of regional NRM plans and investment strategies for each region. Regional bodies run a range of coastal management focused projects and initiatives including devolved grant schemes that enable groups and organisations to apply directly for project based funding.

Strengths

- Links to Federal and State government.
- Capacity to commission and coordinate research effort.
- Potential to coordinate a state-wide approach.
- Rapidly expanding network and capacity to deal with a range of stakeholders.
- Potentially well-funded programs (but limited opportunities for coastal projects in current investment round).

Weaknesses

- Not a lobby group.
- Reliant on Federal Government to a large extent.
- Greater need to compete for funds under Caring for Country program.
- Relationship with Local Government has been uneasy in some cases, but it is improving.
- Coastal issues given different priorities across the regions.

More information

www.regionalnrm.qld.gov.au/my_region/index.html

www.rgc.org.au/

<http://www.regionalnrm.qld.gov.au/index.html>

www.nrm.gov.au

4.2.4 NSW Coastal Council (decommissioned)

Overview

First established in 1979 as the Coastal Council under the *NSW Coastal Protection Act 1979*, disbanded in 1986, re-established as the 'Coastal Committee' by the NSW State Government in 1989 and then reconstituted under a revised *Coastal Protection and Amendment Act* in 1998, the NSW Coastal Council was established to be the independent watchdog for coastal management in NSW (when the NSW Coastal Policy was first released, it excluded the area from Wollongong to Newcastle, which was included in 2002 under State Environmental Planning Policy 71).

Key roles of the Council were to: provide government with independent advice regarding coastal planning and management; and monitor and review the implementation of the NSW Coastal Policy. A major function of the Coastal Council was the preparation of annual reports to the NSW Parliament that assessed the extent to which the strategic actions contained in the Coastal Policy were being implemented. By no means a perfect setup, the Council operated with a limited budget to advise local government, community groups, industry and report on the implementation of the Coastal Policy. It also advised government on the Coastal Lands Protection Scheme. A change in Minister (still the Labor Government) saw the abolition of the Coastal Council in 2004.

Funding base

Funding from the State Government of approximately \$400,000 per year.

Strengths

- Independent Chair with strong knowledge of coastal science and management.
- Knowledge base.
- Operated under a legal remit.
- Reported directly to responsible Minister and through the Minister, to Parliament.
- High level and broad representation from State and Local government, the NGO sector, industry and a member of State Parliament.

Weaknesses

- Under resourced.
- Reliant on a government minister for support.
- Purely advisory in capacity, in contrast to the California Coastal Commission, on which it was modelled.
- Ephemeral existence.

More information

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4.2.5 Victorian Coastal Council

Overview

Established under the Victorian Coastal Management Act as the peak body for the strategic planning and management of the Victorian coast and also to provide advice on coastal issues to the relevant Minister. The Council and its three regional Coastal Boards have an emphasis on community representation as well as containing representatives from local government and state agencies (Wescott, 1998). This allows for a mixture of views to be heard at the strategic State level and at the regional level as well.

Functions of the Victorian Coastal Council include:

- a. State-wide strategic coastal planning.
- b. Prepare and submit to the Minister a draft Victorian Coastal Strategy.
- c. Provide advice to the Minister.
- d. Facilitate the operation of Regional Coastal Boards.
- e. Monitor the development of Coastal Action Plans.
- f. Coordinate the implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy and Coastal Action Plans.
- g. Prepare and publish guidelines for the planning and management of the coast.
- h. Liaise with and encourage the cooperation of Government departments, public authorities, municipal councils, industry, community groups and persons and bodies involved in the planning, management and use of the coast in furthering the objectives of the Act.
- i. Provide opportunities for the public and interested groups to be informed of and involved in the work of the Council.
- j. Encourage the work of volunteers in using and conserving coastal resources.
- k. Give consideration to the needs of Aborigines and other interested groups in relation to the coast.
- l. Prepare an annual report to Government (Adapted from Section 8, Government of Victoria, 1995 and VCC website).

The Victorian Coastal Council (VCC) operates through a board of 11 members and is supported by a Secretariat.

An independent review of governance arrangements for ICM in Victoria is currently underway.

Funding base

Funding comes directly from the State Government administered and supported by the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

- In 2007-8, Victorian Coastal Council Operation (includes all sitting fees and reimbursements, Secretariat expenses, training and items such as annual report, consultants and events) cost approximately \$180,000 (Victorian Coastal Council, 2008, p. 23). It is unlikely that this figure actually includes Secretariat costs, which are likely to be around \$200,000 per year and paid for by the Department of Sustainability and Environment directly.
- Western Coastal Board operating budget in 2007-08 was approximately \$250,000. Approximately \$400,000 more was received in project funding during the financial year (Western Coastal Board, 2008, p. 13).
- Central Coastal Board operating budget in 2007-08 was approximately \$240,000 (Central Coastal Board, 2008, p. 20).

- Gippsland Coastal Board operating budget is approximately \$240,000 - \$250,000 per annum (no publicly reported figure is available).

Combined annual funding from government across the four organisations is approximately \$1.2 million per annum. The Boards also have the ability to leverage funds and apply for grants and assistance from within and outside of government.

Strengths

(In an independent report Wescott (2006b) examined progress in meeting the objectives of the Victorian Act. This summary of strengths is based primarily on that report.)

- The strong community representation, and diversity of representatives, on the statutory bodies is a perceived strength.
- The State strategic policy (Victorian Coastal Strategy) connection to regional implementation through Coastal Action Plans (see Wescott, 2004) provides the opportunity for integrated planning across the whole coast.
- The three VCS's produced to date have been very forward looking and have predicted the main challenges to the Victorian coast well before other agencies or groups had alerted government and community to these issues.
- The strong connection between the VCC and the three Regional Coastal Boards (enhanced by the Chairs of the Board being members of the VCC) is a positive feature of the institutional arrangements.
- As statutory organisations, the VCC and Coastal Boards have a direct line of contact to the Minister.

Weaknesses

(In an independent report Wescott (2006b) examined progress in meeting the objectives of the Victorian Act. This summary of weaknesses is based primarily on that report.)

- The paltry funding provided to the four statutory bodies is the major weakness of the Victorian protocols and this severely limits their capacity to engage in broader ICM debate.
- There is also an issue of the whether the dependence of the VCC and RCB's has on one stakeholder (the Department of Sustainability and Environment) restricts the independence of the four bodies.
- Given the broad mandate of the Act, the relationship between the VCC and the Regional Coastal Boards has not been as effective as it could have been.
- The Act loosely defines the operating relationship between the VCC and the Regional Coastal Boards and this has raised the issue of unmet or unrealised expectations amongst a number of key stakeholders.
- The failure of the VCC to be seriously involved or consulted on the two major State Government coastal projects in Victoria in recent years (the dredging of Port Phillip Bay and the proposed Desalination Plant in Gippsland) raises concerns about the State Government's commitment to the Act and its agencies and also of the ability of the VCC to perform a 'watchdog' role or be a truly independent voice on coastal issues.
- The potential of Coastal Action Plans to be used as strategic plans in regional areas has not been fully realised.
- Does not report directly to Parliament.

More information

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4.2.6 Floodplain Management Authority (NSW)

Overview

Established in the early 1960's, the Floodplain Management Authority (FMA) is accepted by State and Federal Government agencies as representing the interests of floodplain communities in NSW and the authorities responsible for managing the floodplains to reduce future flood losses (generally LGAs). The FMA meets regularly with State and Federal ministers and their departments (information from Floodplain Management Authority, 2006).

Funding base

FMA is a membership-based organisation. As of July 2007, 82 organisations were members. Membership is offered in several grades dependent on the nature of the organisation or individual:

- Full Membership – Local Councils, Catchment Management Authorities, County Councils and other organisations as may be approved from time to time under the constitution;
- Associate Membership – Government departments, interstate authorities, corporations, businesses and other associations;
- Individual Membership – Private persons; and
- Life Membership – Life Membership is awarded to individuals in recognition of outstanding and meritorious service over a period of time.

Strengths

- Well-established organisation.
- Communication through multiple channels.
- Strongly connected to local councils.

Weaknesses

- Dependent on partnership funding.
- No statutory base.

More information

www.floods.org.au

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4.2.7 California Coastal Commission

Overview

Established in 1972 and formally constituted under the California Coastal Act (1976), the mission of the California Coastal Commission (the Commission) is to “Protect, conserve, restore, and enhance environmental and human-based resources of the California coast and ocean for environmentally sustainable and prudent use by current and future generations (California Coastal Commission, 1976).”

In partnership with cities and counties, the Commission is responsible for planning and regulating the use of land and water in the coastal zone.

The Commission makes coastal development permit decisions and reviews local coastal programs prepared by local governments and submitted for Commission approval. It also reviews federal activities that affect the Coastal Zone (California Coastal Commission, 1976).

The Commission is composed of 12 voting members and is considered to be an independent quasi-judicial state agency. Six members are appointed from the public at large and six members are drawn from locally elected officials. The Commission is a statutory authority and has responsibility for administering the Coastal Zone Management Act in all coastal areas of California except for San Francisco Bay, which is managed by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission.

The Commission has its headquarters in San Francisco and six regional offices located in coastal areas of the State.

Funding base

Since 1980, while inflation has increased 160 percent, the California Coastal Commission's total funding has risen only 9 percent--from \$13.5 million to \$16.3 million--and at times been cut nearly in half. The commission's full-time staff has been slashed from 200 in 1980 to 138 in early 2008. Since that time, the Commission lost an additional 8.5 positions in the 2008-09 budget. The administration is eliminating 6 more positions in mid-year cuts (Surfrider Foundation, 2008).

Strengths

- Persistent organisation.
- Statutory based.
- Government funded.
- Does have independent authority to make decisions.

Weaknesses

- Reliant of government funding.
- Lack of funding may tend the organisation towards impotence.

More information

<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/index.html>

4.2.8 Queensland Coastal Councils Group / Forum

The establishment of a Queensland Coastal Councils Group was first mooted during a Queensland Coastal Forum in 2006. The Forums are a mechanism for coastal managers, engineers and planners at a Local Government level, to discuss coastal issues, and to identify and develop solutions to common problems and have been running since 2005. It was envisaged by those involved in the development of the Queensland Coastal Forums that a Queensland Coastal Councils Group would create a significant and influential presence in coastal management matters in Queensland and Australia, such as providing leadership, direction and a coordinated approach to coastal management at the local government level amongst member councils. The proposed mission statement of the Queensland Coastal Councils Group was described as:

to provide leadership, direction and a coordinated approach to coastal management at the local level amongst member councils. The QCCG will suggest improvements in the way external agencies provide support to Councils, and will improve the capacity of those Councils to manage their coastal environment through information sharing, networking and research opportunities.

Membership would be voluntary and open to all coastal LGA's or equivalent organisations such as Aboriginal and Islander communities located on the coast or nearby islands. This early proposal clearly stated that the development of such an organisation would be on a non-statutory basis and that decisions would ultimately rest with individual members.

(The information for this section has been adapted from a scoping paper prepared by Greg Stuart and Shannon Hunt in 2007 for the development of a Queensland Coastal Councils Group)

Funding

N/A, but likely to be drawn from membership fees, grants and project funding.

Potential strengths

- United voice for local government on coastal issues.
- Increased opportunity for partnerships.
- Increased opportunity for economies of scale on projects.
- Increased networking opportunities.
- Increased opportunities for knowledge sharing.
- Ability to perform an advocacy role for LGA's.

Potential weaknesses

- Non-statutory.
- Large geographical area to cover.
- Large scope of issues means that organisation may be spread very thinly or not able to adequately represent all members.

More information

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4.3 Regional and local level

4.3.1 Association of Bayside Municipalities (Victoria)

Overview

The Association of Bayside Municipalities (ABM) has been active for over 30 years, having being founded in 1974. The ABM is comprised of 10 councils with coastal frontage to Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne. The vision for the ABM is to “be recognised as the voice of local government in relation to coastal zone management in Port Phillip Bay.”

Member councils are represented on ABM by both a Councillor and a Technical Officer. Government agencies and other organisations have observer status on the ABM. The Association is supported by a part-time Executive Officer located at the Municipal Association of Victoria.

The Association represents its members in political, community and media forums and represents the views of member councils through submissions to inquiries and policy development. ABM also initiates and manages a range of projects to enhance the capacity of the local government sector to better manage the coastal zone. The Technical Officers who sit on the ABM come from within member councils and meet regularly. They provide advice to the general membership on technical issues, and exchange information and ideas with other members in the region (information for this section has been adapted from Australian Local Government Association, 2005a and the ABM website).

Funding base

The Municipal Association of Victoria provides funding for the part-time employment of an Executive Officer. Member Councils contribute to the financing of the activities of the ABM by paying an annual fee based on 50 per cent of budgeted cost shared evenly between members and 50 per cent distributed on the basis of population (Australian Local Government Association, 2005a). In 2007-08, the income of the ABM was estimated to be approximately \$65,000, inclusive of \$52,000 in member subscriptions and a further \$10,000 (\$1,000 from each member) for the consultancy fund (Association of Bayside Municipalities, 2008, p. 2).

Strengths

- Now well-established and respected organisation.
- Established with the intention of providing a research and advice focus as well as undertaking lobbying.
- Association enables LGA's to work on issues that are common across boundaries.
- Improved levels of integration and representation with State Government.
- Greater opportunities for partnership approaches to management.
- Shared technical knowledge.
- Technical committees present a forum for the exchange of knowledge and ideas.

Weaknesses

- Extra layer of governance.
- Limited funding base may be an issue.
- Covers most of the Victorian population as it includes Melbourne, but only a limited geographical coverage of the State.

More information

www.abmonline.asn.au

E: secretary@abmonline.asn.au

4.3.2 Sydney Coastal Councils Group

Overview

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG / Group) was established in 1989 to promote co-ordination between member councils on environmental and natural resource management issues relating to the sustainable management of the urban coastal environment. The SCCG's mission is to provide leadership and encourage a focused and coordinated approach to sustainable coastal management undertaken by and in partnership with the member councils to protect and conserve terrestrial and marine ecosystems, and to manage social and economic conditions to achieve this. The SCCG aims to facilitate outcomes concerning coastal issues, exceptional to those the member councils could achieve individually.

The SCCG is a Regional Organisation of Councils that provides project facilitation and coordination on environmental and natural resource management issues that relate to the sustainable management of the coastal urban environment. The SCCG provides strong advocacy and support for its 15 member councils on coastal and NRM issues. Being a member council also allows council elected and professional staff the opportunity to exchange ideas at a regional level through SCCG forums, presentations, meetings and conferences. The SCCG is a voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (ROC) established under the provisions of sections 355, 357 and 358 of the Local Government Act, 1993. The functions and powers of the Group are provided in the Constitution and have been ratified by all the member councils. The Group was incorporated in February 1998 under the Associations Incorporation Act, 1984.

The structure of the SCCG consists of the:

- **Full Group** that meets quarterly and consists of one to three **delegates of the member councils**.
- **Executive Committee**, which meets between meetings of the full Group, and consists of up to eight elected representatives. The Chairperson, two Vice-Chairpersons (ocean and estuarine), Secretary (honorary), Treasurer (honorary), and up to three other delegates.
- **Advisory Committees** made up of councillors and staff, which meet as required.
- **Technical Committee**, which meets every two months and consists of one or more professional staff representatives (strategic planners, environmental officers, engineers, catchment liaison and policy officers and environmental health officers) from each member council.
- **Working groups** are established from time to time by the Technical Committee to address key issues and projects.

Membership is voluntary and cooperative in nature. The **SCCG's** constitution sets out the objectives and rules of the Group, which are implemented through SCCG Strategic Plan. The Secretariat of the Group including the Regional Coastal Environment Officer/ Executive Officer, the Senior Coastal Projects Officer and the Capacity Building officer are hosted by a financial member council for a period of three years. The Host Council is nominated and determined at the Annual General Meeting. A **Service Provider Agreement** lists the arrangements between the Group and the hosting council.

Funding base

Operational funding to support the operations of the Secretariat is via its member councils. The financial contribution by each member council towards costs of the Group is apportioned on the following basis:

- a. An annual membership fee based on a flat rate to be determined at the Annual General Meeting.
- b. A further supplementary contribution, calculated on a population basis for each member council, shall be determined annually at the Annual General Meeting (the population used for such calculation is advised by the ABS).

Strengths

- Self funded (“by Councils for Councils”) (i.e. independent of state or Federal government).
- Well-established organisation.
- Full time Secretariat.
- Proven track record achieving significant outcomes for member councils.
- Ability to draw in significant external funding and expertise (state agencies and the research sector) to undertaken regional based (and locally relevant) projects and programs.
- Excellent outcomes reporting process through effective performance monitoring and accountability mechanisms.
- Excellent communication mechanisms and networks with area of operation and also State wide.
- Effective cross section of council representations (Councillor to professional staff).
- Broad mission and objectives (i.e. ensure effective integrated coastal management).
- Established formal partnership with leading research providers and other advisors.

Weaknesses

- Broad mission and objectives.
- Lack of direct control and influence on program and policy implementation by member council.
- One of 5 ROC's in Sydney areas (overlapping boundary issues).
- Resource commitment from member council funding and importantly staff time and resources.
- Small Secretariat and high workload (to little time and resources to cover all coastal and panning issues of all member councils).
- No statutory base.

More information

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Web: www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au

5 Major challenges for progressing ICM

The purpose of this section is to summarise and briefly comment on the challenges identified in a number of the reports and studies conducted prior to this report. This section is not intended to be a detailed discussion of the challenges facing agencies and organisations in the design and delivery of the effective ICM programs in Queensland.

Each of the national level reviews into coastal management in Australia as well as many of the international reports clearly state the need for:

- Improved coordination at all levels of government;
- A clear identification of agency responsibilities across all levels of government; and
- Improved training and understanding for coastal managers (see Lazarow, 2006 for a more detailed analysis).

Table 2 lists many of the key challenges identified in the literature and practice to date. These are briefly discussed here.

5.1 Strategic planning / Strategic environmental assessment (SEA)

One example of a strategic approach to coastal management is the application of SEA as a planning tool for local authorities, especially for the environmental impact assessment of major coastal developments. Harvey (2006, p. 90) argues that SEA is an important step in achieving a more sustainable use of coastal resources and has been used for over 20 years in a number of countries.

The use of SEA provides a more orderly framework for assessing regional impacts of similar types of coastal development and reduces the pressure for local authorities to respond individually to multiple generic ad hoc development proposals (N. Harvey, 2006, p. 90).

Other examples of strategic planning include the use of regional plans. The first report by the National Sea Change Taskforce into challenges for coastal LGA's stated that "Commonwealth, State and local policy and planning instruments addressing the sea change phenomenon focus on biophysical aspects, particularly environmental protection...", however, the failure to address and "integrate social and economic objectives and strategies within coastal policies and the land use plans applying to coastal areas reflects broader difficulties associated with achieving the spectrum of sustainability goals." Regional planning was identified as being an important tool for the management of growth and change (Gurran et al., 2005, pp. 6-7). This issue has been recognised by the State Government and the Draft SEQ Regional Plan and the Draft SEQ Regional NRM Plan, for example, suggest that the government is going some way to address these problems through a regional planning process.

5.2 The need for a systems approach to management

Coastal management must be approached in a way that recognises the direct and indirect consequences of a management action (Smith et al., 2007). Similarly, the direct and indirect causes of a management problem need to also be recognised. In this way coastal

managers can identify critical problems and where to make key interventions in the coastal system – where to get the biggest bang for their buck. A commitment to managing coastal environments through a systems approach is critical to the long-term sustainability of the coast. A systems approach to ICM requires continuity in programs and planning, however, it recognises that policy is also an experiment and like physical science, it can be improved through continuous learning.

5.3 Clearly identified responsibilities

One of the major shortcomings of the many government initiated ICM programs over the past decade has been the inability to develop effective or lasting post-policy partnerships and this means that achieving positive environmental outcomes, which often takes time, has not been as successful as possible. There are many reasons for this, including: inadequate jurisdictions; conflict between stakeholders; the lack of mediation and conflict resolution; lack of funding; lack of resources and time constraints; and no serious commitment across government to establish and resource a partnership approach to ICM.

The present overhaul of ICM programs across the State has left many local authorities and state agency personnel, especially those in the regions, unsure about the future of ICM in Queensland. The limited nature of engagement and communication by the lead agency during this process has been disappointing for many.

The development and roll-out of the RCMP's across the State is considered a below par process by many coastal managers. While the concept of RCMP's is impressive, the State Government's commitment to the process has been limited. The lack of a formal and public reporting process such as annual reports has likely contributed to this issue (given the mandate of the SCMP, the State SoE reporting process is considered to be fairly limited). The current review of the SCMP is likely to witness the abolition of RCMP's in favour of a 'lighter' coastal policy and an increased importance of statutory regional plans. There may well be consistency and implementation issues across the State where there are no statutory regional plans.

5.4 Resourcing coastal management

5.4.1 Investing in human capital

The often rapid overhaul of programs and policies at all levels of government has left a legacy of disenchanted and in some case disempowered staff. Further, many agencies are losing personnel to the private sector (ALGA 2005b).

High levels of corporate knowledge and experience are vital to ensuring the best results are achieved in research and the development of policies and programs. Buying in skills from outside contractors is all well and good but at the local government level in particular, Councils may not have the capacity to evaluate the products they receive and there may be no requirement for peer review.

Even with well-developed State or Regional policies and programs, the delivery of ICM at the local level can be haphazard and inconsistent. A loss in corporate knowledge can lead to continuity problems, which in turn can compromise the ability of organisations to effectively monitor and evaluate programs (the essence of adaptive management). This may then lead to limited or a loss of ownership of programs and accountability, including the loss of policy and program champions, which in turn can result in reduced funding for programs – leading to policy stasis until the wheel is re-invented some years later.

Capacity building, social learning and other social science techniques such as economic evaluation and social assessments are often hard to grasp for managers trained in the physical sciences. Similarly, complex technical skills such as an understanding of climatic variability, geomorphology and ecosystem function may be outside of the knowledge realm of a coastal manager with limited or specialised training. Harvey (2006) reports on the findings from a number of studies into the training needs for Australian coastal managers. Key needs are identified as: coastal planning; coastal ecology; coastal processes; habitat rehabilitation; project management; and community education and involvement.

A 2005 Australian Local Government Association report into the challenges for implementing ICM at the local government level in Australia reported that many “councils are in urgent need of training for staff working in planning and environmental management areas (Australian Local Government Association & Shephard, 2005).” To date, NSW, Tasmania and South Australia have implemented coastal management short courses (professional development), with some courses linked to university-based accreditation schemes (see N. Harvey, 2006; N Harvey et al., 2002 for more detailed information).

As well as the universities, the Coastal CRC performed a valuable role, primarily in Queensland, in the provision of training on a variety of topics for coastal managers. The loss of the Beach Protection Authority (BPA) and the Coastal CRC has created a significant gap in technical support and the provision of information to coastal managers across the State – a gap that is yet to be filled.

At the Federal level, the gaps left by the termination of the Coast and Clean Seas program and changes to Coastcare, both significant capacity building programs, are still deeply felt.
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The option for a State based Coastal Council to expand its role (as identified in the Act) to include some type of extension or capacity building function and the role of NRM bodies in training and capacity building for coastal issues are yet to be fully explored.

The Local Government Association of Queensland, in partnership with the Australian and State Governments is delivering a state-wide training and support program to directly assist Local Government involvement in the development and implementation of regional NRM approaches to land-use and planning. The project supports all councils in Queensland including the Aboriginal and Island Councils and could be ramped up to incorporate ICM needs.

5.4.2 Research and understanding

The National Sea Change Taskforce report into challenges for coastal LGA’s identified that many LGA’s had developed innovative mechanisms to deal with some of the ICM challenges that they faced, however, the authors reported that there “is a need to audit,

build on, and share this work with other sea change communities (Gurran et al., 2005).” The follow up report described a number of best practice models for local and regional planning (Gurran et al., 2006). The ALGA research into coastal councils also provides useful information on the experience and practice of a number of coastal LGA’s (Australian Local Government Association, 2005a).

The legacy of the Coastal CRC, the Healthy Waterways Program in SEQ and a range of other academic research programs at universities across the State suggest that Queensland researchers are leading the way in many areas of research related to ICM. Nationally and internationally recognised programs at Griffith University, University of Queensland, University of the Sunshine Coast, Central Queensland University and James Cook University all investigate marine and coastal issues. There are a number of good examples of research partnerships between academia and government and the Regional NRM Groups. There are many opportunities for relationships to be strengthened and new partnerships to be formed, especially at the local level. Current academic programs include, but are not limited to:

- Physical sciences – coastal processes, coastal engineering, coastal geomorphology;
- Environmental sciences – ecosystem services, marine biology, ecological processes;
- Environmental planning – coastal and marine planning, coastal policy;
- Social sciences – capacity building, resource economics, law, cultural heritage; and
- Management – project management, adaptive management, systems learning, public policy, stakeholder and community engagement.

Stronger links between research institutions and government provide opportunities for applied research as well as the integration of new research findings and tools into management.

The recent amalgamations of coastal LGA’s in Queensland may also provide an opportunity to rethink and establish more formal and effective partnerships and alliances.

5.4.3 Funding

There has been a significant reduction in Australian and State based funding for integrated coastal management in recent years. Funding shortfalls are known to be spread across a range of investment areas including hard and soft infrastructure, research, planning, capacity building and integration.

The regional investment delivery model established by the Australian Government for the second version of the Natural Heritage Trust (NHTII) was problematic (in many locations Local Government was excluded from the process) and in some States this has resulted in a significant net decline in funding available for coastal management activities (estimated to be as much as 75% since NHTI (Withycombe, 2007). Low Choy has previously pointed out the large (and growing) role that LGA’s have for natural resource management is potentially at odds with the structure and delivery of funding through the regional bodies for coastal programs (Low Choy, 2006a, 2006b, 2007). However, the Local Government Association of Queensland as the peak representative body for local governments in Queensland was directly funded to support councils in developing their capacity to be involved in NRM initiatives and recognise where their existing activities and investments were meeting NRM outcomes. A number of publications have been produced to support Councils (see www.lgaq.asn.au/lgaq/general/environment/NRM/NRM_Main.html) for more detail). LGAQ has also developed several publications addressing climate change. With

the responsibility for non-coastal essential infrastructure mainly in the hands of LGA's the importance of joined up planning processes becomes even more important.

The 2005 ALGA survey of coastal councils found that "of the surveyed councils, only 10 per cent reported having sufficient resources to manage their natural assets. By far the biggest constraint identified by councils was a lack of funding (Australian Local Government Association & Shephard, 2005)."

Growing government budgets but reduced or limited funding for coastal programs is a systemic issue, not only in Australia, but in other countries as well. There is no question that the scope of government investment has broadened significantly in recent decades, however, so has the tax base. A comparison of other sectors relative to natural resource management may indicate that the environment is receiving a smaller share of the government pie than it previously did. Within the NRM sector, it is also likely that the importance of coastal issues has diminished relative to other environmental issues.

The loss of continuity in investment in ICM is a double edged sword. A loss in this area of policy investment and development results in a diminished capacity to effectively manage environmental outcomes for the coast. Experience suggests that reduced investment and an underperforming agency will result in a loss of capacity for management and governance. The resultant loss of corporate knowledge means that it then becomes that much harder for an agency to progress with policy development in the longer-term.

See Appendix III for a list of further reading on this topic.

Table 2: Major challenges for ICM in Queensland

Strategic planning	Investing in human capital (e.g. education and professional capacity)	Clearly identified responsibilities	Funding	Research and understanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a collective sustainable-long-term vision. • Identify emerging impacts (e.g. population trends, environmental issues, climate change scenarios). • Encourage the adoption of proactive planning at the local and regional scale (e.g. land-use planning, coastal infrastructure, civil infrastructure in the coastal zone, water quality and supply, access and use). • Incorporate environmental infrastructure considerations into planning (e.g. biodiversity, green space). • Incorporate social infrastructure considerations into planning (e.g. education, governance, engagement, social drivers, settlement patterns). <p>Monitoring and evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a systems approach to management. • Develop indicators to measure the economic value of coastal ecosystems. • Development of systems for monitoring and evaluating policies and programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to capacity building, social learning and adaptive management (e.g. training programs). • Develop and encourage shared power and partnerships. • Development of a range of education and capacity building products for those engaged in ICM and delivered at the local and regional level (e.g. physical processes, social sciences, environmental management & planning). • Develop and promote networks to enable sharing of best practice knowledge. • Retention of staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify levels of responsibility, policy application, gaps and work to these (e.g. consider the principle of subsidiarity in conjunction with Strategic Environmental Assessment considerations). • Clear identification of the role, responsibility and possibility of any duplication with the regional bodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure continuity of coastal program funding and policy interventions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the importance of cultural values and connections to the coast (e.g. heritage). • Develop indicators to measure the economic value of coastal ecosystems. • Better understanding of the coastal economy (e.g. local inputs, tourism, non-market valuation). • Methods of sharing information and knowledge.

Adapted from (Australian Local Government Association, 2005c; Australian Local Government Association & Shephard, 2005; Gurrans et al., 2005, 2006; Lazarow et al., 2008; Lazarow et al., 2006; Low Choy, 2006a).

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Appendix I -

8 Integrated coastal (zone) management

The dimensions of coastal management were outlined in the early 1990s by Kenchington and Crawford (1993) – see Table 3. Central to this is the concept of integration – for understanding problems, treating issues holistically and also for breaking down previously sectoralised management approaches that were characteristic of many government agencies (e.g. see N. Harvey & Caton, 2003; Kay & Alder, 1999). As well as government specific legislation and policies, a number of well-known manuals or guides have been prepared to assist with the development of coastal programs (e.g. Cician-Sain & Knecht, 1998; J. Clarke, 1996; Kay & Alder, 2005). There has been some debate about use of the term integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) rather than integrated coastal management (ICM). Harvey (pers. comm. 2006) argues that:

...on balance it appears that although the use of the term 'zone' was originally intended to be flexible, it can also be interpreted as prescriptive if the identification of boundary conditions mitigate against the need to integrate across them. For this reason, the use of ICM is becoming more acceptable and common in the literature.

Table 3: Dimensions of Integrated Coastal Management

Focus	Connectivity
Inter-governmental integration	All levels of government are required to be involved in planning and management decisions that will impact upon the coastal environment (otherwise known as vertical integration).
Inter-sectoral integration	Prior to ICM efforts coastal management suffered from fragmentation between sectors of government and the 'tyranny of small decisions' (otherwise known as horizontal integration).
Systems approach	The interconnection between the land-water interface and that an understanding of ecological processes is important.
An interdisciplinary and holistic approach to management	Natural and human systems and their component parts and interrelationships are included in management decisions and are inclusive of traditional, cultural and historical perspectives and input from key stakeholders at the community level.

Source: (Kenchington & Crawford, 1993)

Harvey (2004, p. 568) defines Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) as follows:

a continuous and dynamic process incorporating feedback loops which aims to manage human use of coastal resources in a sustainable manner by adopting a holistic and integrative approach between terrestrial and marine environments; levels and sectors of government; government and community; science and management; and sectors of the economy.

Appendix II

9 Queensland's coastal management program

Queensland's coastal management program is underpinned by the *Coastal Management and Protection Act* (1995 revised 2003) and the State Coastal Plan (SCMP) (Government of Queensland, 2001). The Plan has statutory effect (the effect of a State Planning Policy) under Section 50 of the Act and applies to the coastal zone in Queensland. The determination of the coastal zone depends on the existence of a link with the coast or coastal resources.

9.1 Defining the Queensland coast

State governments in Australia have the primary responsibility for establishing legislation to define, manage, use and protect the coast. The coastal zone can be defined in a number of ways:

1. Cadastrally, that is using existing jurisdictional boundary lines;
2. Geographically, that is using existing natural boundaries such as rivers or catchments;
3. Spiritually, that is by understanding what it means to be a coastal person or community;
4. Naturally, that is by using and habitat or species range such as migratory species (e.g. birds) or habitat corridors; or
5. By a combination of these methods.

Signed in 1979, the Offshore Constitutional Settlement defines the seaward boundary for each of the States as being three-nautical miles out to sea (except in some cases where State jurisdiction extends out to sea to include islands e.g. the Recherche Archipelago in Western Australia) and provides the States with management authority for this region. Definitions of the landward boundary of the coastal zone, however, vary from state to state. In general they are either broadly inclusive such as Queensland and Victoria or prescriptive such as New South Wales. This suggests two important points. Firstly, there are large differences in the respective legislative arrangements for coastal planning across the states; and secondly, that the coastal zone is a highly contested space.

In Queensland, the coastal zone is defined by the *Coastal Management and Protection Act* (1995) as including 'coastal waters or all areas to the landward side of coastal waters in which there are physical features, ecological or natural processes or human activities that affect, or potentially affect, the coast or coastal resources.' The coast or the littoral zone, however, is described as all areas within or neighbouring the foreshore.

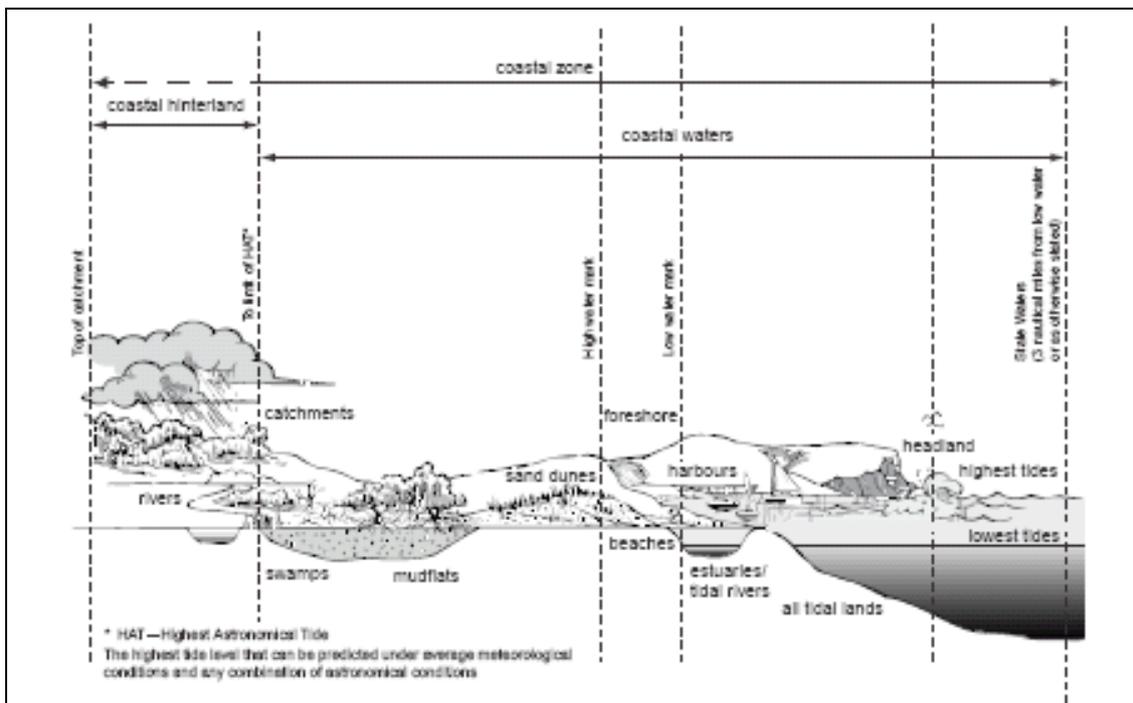


Figure 1: Queensland's coastal zone (Government of Queensland, 2001, p. 2)

9.2 Implementation of integrated coastal management in Queensland

Part Two of the *Coastal Act* describes the objects and how coastal management is to be achieved.

Table 4: Objects and achievement of coastal management in Queensland

Section 3: The main objects of this Act are to—

- a) provide for the protection, conservation, rehabilitation and management of the coast, including its resources and biological diversity; and
- b) have regard to the goal, core objectives and guiding principles of the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development in the use of the coastal zone; and
- c) provide, in conjunction with other legislation, a coordinated and integrated management and administrative framework for the ecologically sustainable development of the coastal zone; and
- d) encourage the enhancement of knowledge of coastal resources and the effect of human activities on the coastal zone.

Section 4: How coastal management is to be achieved

Coastal management is to be achieved by coordinated and integrated planning and decision making, involving, among other things, the following—

1. Coastal management plans

- Preparing coastal management plans that—

- state principles and policies for coastal management
- identify key coastal sites and coastal resources in the coastal zone and planning for their long term protection or management
- are developed in consultation with the public
- have regard to Aboriginal tradition and Island custom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people particularly concerned with land affected by the plans.

b) Coastal management districts

- Declaring coastal management districts in the coastal zone as areas requiring special development controls and management practices.

c) Use of other legislation wherever practicable to achieve the object of this Act.

Source: (Government of Queensland, 1995).

The *Coastal Act* incorporates the functions of previous acts including the *Harbours Act* 1955, the *Canals Act* 1958 and the *Beach Protection Act* 1968 and was amended in 2003 to repeal these three pieces of legislation. Section 30 of the Act states that:

The Minister must prepare a State coastal management plan for the coastal zone...

which must describe how the coastal zone is to be managed; consider public access to the foreshore; and may include a statement of the principles and policies by which the coastal zone and its designated areas are to be managed and a map or series of maps showing coastal resource information (Government of Queensland, 1995). All persons with responsibilities in the coastal zone are bound by the provisions of the State Coastal Management Plan (SCMP) including: State government agencies who have coastal management responsibilities (the lead agency is the Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management, previously the Environmental Protection Agency); local governments through their planning responsibilities; and non-government groups whose roles include 'environment and land management activities, preparing codes of practice, strategic industry programs and integrated catchment management plans and strategies.

9.3 State Coastal Management Plan (Coastal Policy) 2001

The Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM), identified as the lead agency for progressing ICM, has the responsibility for:

- Coordinating the preparation of the SCMP and Regional Coastal Management Plans (RCMP's);
- Administering licencing and enforcement of coastal permits;
- Providing advice to local government, other agencies and persons regarding best practice; and
- Preparing a State of the Coastal Zone report.

The DERM also plays an important role as both a referral and a concurrence agency in the coastal zone. ***As the lead agency, the DERM is responsible for coordinating the review of the SCMP within seven years of commencement.*** At the time of writing this process was underway and is due to be completed sometime in 2009.

The SCMP is centered across ten broad themes, all of which have outcomes, principles and specific policies supporting them. The themes are:

1. Coastal use and development;
2. Physical coastal processes;
3. Public access to the coast;
4. Water quality;
5. Indigenous traditional owner cultural resources;
6. Cultural heritage;
7. Coastal landscapes;
8. Conserving nature;
9. Coordinated management; and
10. Research and information (Government of Queensland, 2001).

The *Coastal Act* (S35) requires that RCMP's be produced for the coastal zone. The SCMP identifies 11 coastal regions in Queensland. At the time of writing, RCMP's have been completed in four regions: Wet Tropical Coast (2003); Cardwell – Hinchinbrook (2003); Curtis Coast (2003); and SEQ (2006). RCMP's are currently under development for the Mackay-Whitsunday, Wide Bay and Dry Tropical Coast regions. RCMP's are required to be consistent with and/or set more detailed requirements compared with the SCMP. RCMP's implement the SCMP at the regional level and also identify key coastal sites at the regional level that require specific management interventions. The principal route for State government management has been through the development of Coastal Management Districts (CMD), which provides the State with regulatory control over development proposals (B. Clarke, 2003).

Work on these plans was halted while the review of the SCMP was undertaken and it is now understood that RCMP's will no longer be prepared (Queensland Department for Premier and Cabinet, 2009; Webbe & Weller, 2009).

The DERM has a regulatory role in development assessment through Coastal Management Districts (CMD's):

These areas have traditionally been identified in regional coastal plans. In areas where a regional coastal management plan has not yet been prepared, the erosion prone areas and coastal management control districts previously designated under the now repealed Beach Protection Act 1968 are taken to be the transitional or interim coastal management district (Government of Queensland, 2008a).

An area may be declared a CMD if the area is covered by a regional plan or the area is not covered by a regional plan and the Minister considers that it requires protection. CMD's over coastal waters, foreshores and land up to 400m inland from the high water mark, along tidal deltas or over an island in coastal waters (Government of Queensland, 1995 S55). When declaring CMD's the following issues must be considered:

1. The area's vulnerability to erosion by the sea or to wind induced effects;
2. Whether the area should be kept in an undeveloped state to maintain or enhance the coast or coastal resources;
3. Public access to a foreshore in the area;
4. Foreseeable human impacts and natural hazards in the area;
5. The existing tenure of, interests in, and rights to, land in the area;
6. Aboriginal tradition and Island custom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people particularly concerned with land in the area; and
7. Planning and development management of the area (Government of Queensland, 1995S 56).

The Act also formally established the Coastal Protection Advisory Council (CPAC). The primary function of CPAC is to advise the Minister about coastal management issues in Queensland (Government of Queensland, 1995). Table 5 describes CPAC's role, as identified in the *Coastal Act*.

Table 5: Role of the Coastal Protection Advisory Council

<p>a) Areas of the coastal zone needing special coastal management;</p> <p>b) Coastal plans and their relationship with other plans, prepared by a State agency or local government, for the coastal zone;</p> <p>c) Appropriate preventive and remedial measures for coastal management;</p> <p>d) Assistance to local governments and other management agencies need in the application of coastal management techniques;</p> <p>e) Developing public and community programs for coastal management;</p> <p>f) Research and other studies relating to the coastal zone and disseminating information about coastal management; and</p> <p>g) Submissions received on coastal management plans.</p> <p>The measures mentioned in subsection (c) may relate to—</p> <p>a) Preventing a thing having an unacceptable effect on the coastal zone; and</p> <p>b) Mitigating damage to property from erosion or tidal inundation.</p> <p>In performing its functions, the advisory council must, as far as practicable—</p> <p>a) Monitor the integration of coastal zone management; and</p> <p>b) Have regard to Aboriginal tradition and Island custom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people particularly concerned with land in the coastal zone; and</p> <p>c) Liaise and consult with Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders particularly concerned with land in the coastal zone; and</p> <p>d) Have regard to the existing tenure of, interests in, and rights to land in the coastal zone (Government of Queensland, 1995S 21).</p>

It should be noted that in March 2009 an independent review of Queensland Governments Boards, Committees and Statutory Authorities recommended the abolition of CPAC (Webbe & Weller, 2009). Webbe and Weller (2009, p. 105) provide the following justification for the abolition of CPAC:

The Minister's request to cease the preparation of Regional Coastal Management Plans, based on the results of a review, means much of the role of the Coastal Protection Advisory Council and the Mackay-Whitsunday Regional Consultative Group is now redundant. The Reviewers believe that any further advice required by the Minister can be obtained by other, less formal mechanisms.

The Government has accepted this recommendation (Queensland Department for Premier and Cabinet, 2009) and is likely to act on this prior to October 2009.

9.4 Regional IPA Plans

In late 2006, the State Government commenced implementing a strategy to accelerate statutory regional planning in regional and rural Queensland. This was supported through a regional planning program following a three point plan:

1. Developing and implementing a consistent and contemporary framework for effective regional planning across Queensland;
2. Accelerating implementation of the existing regional plans; and
3. Delivering regional plans in rural Queensland.

The Integrated Planning Act 1997 (IPA) provides the framework for coordinating and integrating planning at the regional level to seek ecological sustainability.

The Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009 – 2031 was launched in February 2009 and the public submission process for the Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009 – 2031 has recently closed. The SEQ Plan will update the existing regional plan, which is currently under review. In response to the “Blueprint for the Bush” (Queensland Government, 2009), the Department of Infrastructure and Planning states that the Government is committed to delivering four additional regional planning initiatives including to the north-west which covers the southern Gulf of Carpentaria coastal and marine areas. Planning is underway for the north-west Strategy, which will cover the southern Gulf of Carpentaria and shires of Cloncurry, Flinders, McKinlay, Mount Isa and Richmond. A number of other regions have non-statutory regional plans in place.

As an example of the inclusion of coastal issues into regional planning, Section 2.4 of the Draft SEQ Regional Plan contains a number of policies and programs directed towards achieving the following principle:

Maintain, protect and enhance the values of the region's coast, including the foreshore, coastal wetlands, dunes, marine ecosystems and coastal marine waters (Government of Queensland, 2008b, p. 48).

Local Government planning schemes are required to be linked to the Regional Plans through IPA.

(Except where otherwise cited, information for this section has been adapted from the Department of Infrastructure and Planning website – www.dip.qld.gov.au)

9.5 Relationship between the SCMP, RCMP's and IPA

The SCMP and RCMP's have the effect of State Planning Policies (SPP's) under the *Integrated Planning Act* (IPA) (Government of Queensland, 1997) and are required to be considered during the making or amending of local government IPA planning schemes or in the assessment of development applications (Government of Queensland, 2008c). Section 50 of the *Coastal Act* states that:

1. The assessment manager, or a referral agency, for a development application under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* must assess the application as if a relevant coastal plan were a State planning policy under that Act.
2. Also, the following provisions of the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* apply as if a coastal plan were a State planning policy—
 - a. Section 2.1.4;
 - b. Schedule 1, section 18;
 - c. Section 2.6.7.3 (Government of Queensland, 1995).

The requirement only for the SCMP to be considered during the planning process has been a significant stumbling block for the progression of ICM in Queensland. For those interested in preventing inappropriate development, the policy is somewhat of a toothless tiger and for those interested in developing planning schemes or progressing development, the lack of clarity in the policy has not provided a definitive set of policy statements on which to base local planning schemes.

To assist in part with this process, in 2007 the Department of Environment and Resource Management published two Interim Guidelines. The first, '*State and Regional Coastal Management Plans Queensland's Coastal Policy: Implementation Guideline for Planning Schemes*' (Government of Queensland, 2007b) is aimed at assisting local government to implement the policy outcomes of the SCMP's and RCMP's through local government planning schemes. The second guideline '*State and Regional Coastal Management Plans Queensland's Coastal Policy: Implementation Guideline for Development Assessment*' (Government of Queensland, 2007a) is aimed at assisting local government to implement the policy outcomes of the SCMP's and RCMP's for development assessment. The timing of the publication of these documents almost seven-years after the release of the SCMP and approximately at the same time as the commencement of the review of the SCMP must be considered as unusual.

9.6 Relationship between the SCMP, RCMP's and SEMP's

The coastal management outcome for Theme Two of the SCMP 'Physical Coastal Processes' is that 'the coast is managed to allow for natural fluctuations to occur, including any that occur as a result of climate change and sea level rise, and provide protection for life and property' (Government of Queensland, 2001, p. 27). Direction is provided on five policy areas with the 'physical coastal processes' theme of the SCMP. These are:

1. Adaptation to climate change;
2. Erosion prone areas;
3. Shoreline erosion management;
4. Coastal hazards; and
5. Beach protection structures.

A requirement under Section 2.2.3 of the State Coastal Management Plan is that Regional Coastal Management Plans identify any priority areas for erosion management. For example, Section 2.2.3 of the South East Queensland RCMP states that:

Relevant local governments in conjunction with State agencies should prepare shoreline erosion management plans for all priority shoreline erosion management areas, which set out an agreed process to manage the foreshores and lands neighbouring the foreshores. In areas requiring shoreline erosion management, preference should be given to those options that maintain natural coastal processes and visual and recreational amenity. Where erosion control structures such as seawalls and groynes are considered necessary as part of a shoreline erosion management plan, beach nourishment, revegetation or similar actions are to be investigated to mitigate any adverse impacts of the erosion control structures on adjacent coast.

Shoreline erosion management plans should consider and address the policies of the State and SEQ Coastal Plans.

The relevant local government and the EPA [now Department of Environment and Resource Management] may use such plans as a basis for agreeing on how erosion on a particular section of coast is to be managed in the future. It can be considered as a pre-lodgement action in the development assessment process under the IPA, and, where future works are consistent with the plan, should simplify the development assessment process, given that the plan will have demonstrated consistency with the relevant principles of the State and SEQ Coastal Plans.

State funding and resources for coastal management should be preferentially directed to the preparation of such plans and to assist those projects consisting of or including options that maintain natural coastal processes, rehabilitate degraded coastal areas and preserve or enhance visual and recreational amenity (Government of Queensland, 2006b, p. 36).

Shoreline Erosion Management Plans (SEMP's) are the Department of Environment and Resource Management's preferred method for local governments to address shoreline erosion issues at the local government level. The DERM states that SEMP's can:

- Identify significant coastal erosion issues;
- Develop an understanding of the underlying coastal processes contributing to erosion problems;
- Develop and evaluate options for erosion protection and management;
- Facilitate community input on coastal erosion issues;
- Plan for the delivery of selected erosion protection and management options; and
- Ensure erosion protection and management measures are consistent with State and Regional Coastal Management Plans and other government policies (Government of Queensland, 2008d).

By preparing a shoreline erosion management plan a Local Government Authority (LGA) is eligible for technical support from the Department of Environment and Resource Management as well as a subsidy of up to 50% of the total project costs of preparing the plan through the Environmental Infrastructure Program, which is administered by the Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation. Further funding has also been made available by the State Government to assist LGA's in cyclone-affected areas. The DERM has prepared a guidebook to assist LGA's prepare SEMP's. The guideline states that:

A Shoreline Erosion Management Plan (SEMP) is a non-statutory planning document

that sets out an agreed framework and management strategy for responding to current erosion or potential future erosion problems. SEMP's provide a framework for the sustainable use, development and management of land vulnerable to erosion by considering the environmental, social and economic values of the land and the physical coastal processes acting on the foreshore. SEMP's also outline the appropriate uses of erosion prone land, and long-term management goals as agreed upon by governments and the community.

The purpose of a SEMP is to:

- 1. Enable local government to proactively plan for erosion management in hotspot areas in a way that is consistent with the policies of the State Coastal Management Plan 2001 and the relevant Regional Coastal Management Plan (where applicable).*
- 2. Investigate and address the underlying causes of shoreline erosion and likely future progression at the local scale;*
- 3. Determine cost effective and sustainable erosion management strategies that maintain natural coastal processes and resources and consider community needs in both the short- and long-term (Government of Queensland, 2006a, pp. 1-2).*

Shoreline Management Plans, however, are not necessarily limited to a consideration of coastal physical processes issues and may cover a range of ecological and socio-economic considerations also. The DERM has the responsibility for ensuring that the final management strategy is consistent with all relevant policies and guidelines.

9.7 How the SCMP relates to Federal and Local Government and the NRM bodies

9.7.1 Role of the Federal Government

The Federal Constitution determines how powers are divided between the Commonwealth and State Governments in Australia primarily through Section 51 that lists 39 heads of power held concurrently with the States. The Commonwealth government has legislative power only in relation to those matters specified in the Constitution while the remainder of power rests with the States. Although the Constitution does not specifically refer to environmental matters, the Commonwealth has used its constitutional powers in other areas to regulate matters relating to the environment. For example, Clarke (2003), argues that the Commonwealth has considerable financial powers that give it the capacity to take a leadership role in coastal planning through, for example, the development of national standards. Clarke suggests that this can be best accomplished through Section 96 of the Constitution, through which the Commonwealth can assist the States financially.

Over the past 30 years, Australia has developed a suite of national environmental legislation and during that time also became signatory to a number of international marine and environmental protection agreements that have effect for coastal regions. Fearon *et al.* (2006) argue that the commitment to these international obligations may well be compromised by the cumulative impacts of isolated decisions at all tiers of government.

The Commonwealth has commissioned a number of reports and inquiries into coastal planning and management in Australia, most notably the 1993 Resource Assessment Inquiry, which ultimately resulted in the development of the 1995 National Coastal Policy.

This policy was superseded by the National Framework for ICM in 2006. A change in government in late 2007 has resulted in a renewed commitment from the Federal Government towards the development of a new national coastal policy.

The Federal Government is currently progressing with an inquiry into climate change and the environmental impacts on coastal communities. The terms of reference for the inquiry are focused on:

- Existing policies and programs related to coastal zone management, taking in the catchment-coast-ocean continuum;
- The environmental impacts of coastal population growth and mechanisms to promote sustainable use of coastal resources;
- The impact of climate change on coastal areas and strategies to deal with climate change adaptation, particularly in response to projected sea level rise;
- Mechanisms to promote sustainable coastal communities; and
- Governance and institutional arrangements for the coastal zone (Parliament of Australia, 2008).

The inquiry is due for completion in September 2009.

A detailed description of the Federal Government's role in coastal management, including a description of the roles and functions of the various committees and funding arrangements can be found in Lazarow (2009), which is currently being finalised.

9.7.2 Role of the regional NRM groups

Regional natural resource management groups have been established throughout Australia to plan for NRM activities within their region and administer funds of various Australian and State Government programs including previously, the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAPSWQ) and the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) program and currently, the Caring for Our Country program. Australia-wide, there are 56 regional NRM groups with institutional arrangements differing between jurisdictions. Their primary focus is to assist the Commonwealth deliver targeted regional-level initiatives to improve NRM outcomes across Australia. In Queensland, there are 14 regional bodies which are not-for profit, community-based organisations. Of these, ten have responsibility for incorporating aspects of marine and coastal planning issues in their planning and prioritisation processes, namely Southern Gulf Catchments, Northern Gulf Resource Management Group, Cape York Sustainable Futures, Torres Strait, Terrain NRM, Burdekin Dry Tropics, Mackay-Whitsunday NRM, Fitzroy Basin Association, Mary-Burnett Regional Group and South-east Queensland Catchments.

Regional bodies are required to prepare natural resource management plans that are accredited by the relevant State or Territory government and the Federal government. These plans represent a whole of region view of natural resource management issues and initiatives and aim to reflect the combination of national, Queensland and local priorities. In addition, regional bodies have developed Regional Investment Strategies which clearly identified the initiatives for which funding was sought and the milestones and timeframes for delivery.

Wimbush (2006, p. 63) writes that 'the relationship between new NRM bodies (usually with independent boards) and state agencies already undertaking natural resource management has been problematic at times as the boundaries between areas of

responsibility are negotiated.” In particular, negotiations around provision of baseline information and routine monitoring of resource conditions have been problematic and should arguably be a State agency function. However, inadequate resources over extended periods have resulted in poor quality or a complete absence of data useful in reporting on performance against resource condition targets. In some cases, regional bodies have invested research to establish baseline data for key assets in their region.

Regional bodies are linked to State and Local Government in Queensland through a series of formal and informal partnerships. Local government in Queensland, however, was not a formal party to the NHTII agreement and the lack of formal recognition and engagement of local government in coastal management issues has been cited as a significant criticism and also a shortcoming of NRM (Low Choy, 2006b; Stuart et al., 2006; Wimbush, 2006). However, local government representation, through the LGAQ has occurred at the Joint Queensland-Australian Government NRM Steering Committee – the body that oversaw regional investments and made recommendations regarding accreditation of the original NRM plans. The integration of coastal issues into the development of regional NRM plans was cautiously supported by the Queensland DERM through the production of a discussion paper in 2004 (Government of Queensland, 2005) and regional NRM plans are required to be consistent with the SCMP and RCMP’s. As statutory plans, these link the regional NRM plans to the broader planning process. Other important planning processes include marine parks, Reef Water Quality and a number of non-statutory plans. There is a view, however, that a stronger position by the DERM towards the value of regional NRM plans might have improved the integration of ICM issues into the planning process at an earlier stage.

As an example of integration into government policy, the Draft Southeast Queensland NRM Plan 2009 – 2031 has been referenced in the policies and programs incorporated into the Draft SEQ Regional Plan 2009 – 2031. A number of Desired Regional Outcomes are described in the Coasts and Marine section of the Draft SEQ NRM Plan and this is supported by more specific regional targets. Institutional arrangements to progress coordination are also discussed in the Draft SEQ NRM Plan (South East Queensland Regional Coordination Group, 2008). This plan sets out NRM outcomes across the region. It does not deal with planning issues around vulnerability, sea level rise or climate change, which is dealt with in more detail in the Draft Regional Plan.

9.7.3 Role of local government

Local government arguably carries the lion’s share of responsibilities for day-to-day management of the Australian coastline including authority for planning, development, certain infrastructure, water (in some cases), pollution, environmental protection and recreation management. There are a number of excellent reports and papers that describe the role and challenges of local government in ICM in Australia (N. Harvey & Caton, 2003; Low Choy, 2006a; Withycombe & Morrison, 2008). In particular, the work of the Australian Local Government Association (Australian Local Government Association, 2005b; Australian Local Government Association & Shephard, 2005), the peak body for local councils in Australia and the National Sea Change Taskforce (Gurran et al., 2007; Gurran et al., 2005, 2006) in recent years has exposed and explored many of these issues in great detail and the reader is referred to these publications.

Low Choy (2006a) states that while there is general agreement that local government

services have tended to be associated with property management, there is an acknowledgement that these functions are now broadening. The major roles and responsibilities of local government in coastal planning and management are outlined as follows:

- Land-use planning and development control for infrastructure developed by others;
- Planning, construction and management of specific coastal management infrastructure;
- Planning, construction and management of other civil infrastructure in the coastal zone;
- Planning, construction and management of water quality management infrastructure;
- Management of public access to and use of the foreshore;
- Community awareness, development and engagement; and
- Environmental protection, enhancement and management (see Withycombe & Morrison, 2008).

Local government then has within its powers the ability to use State Government legislative directions to create specific local laws that regulate how the coast is used (from settlements, to reserves, to density, to type of use). This continues to change over time and in most cases, has an increasing impact on the natural environment. Local governments are often faced with the challenges of interpreting state legislation as it applies to specific areas (knowing that their decisions may be overridden by State Government). Harvey and Caton (2003) write that local councils make the majority of planning and development decisions at the coast and this is done in two ways:

- Through strategic and local plans; and
- Through individual decisions in response to development applications.

As well as the requirement for local councils to manage issues such as population growth, migration, infrastructure management and development and environmental and community services, there is an increasing expectation that strategic planning, an underlying principle of ICM, should be incorporated into local government planning processes. Harvey and Caton (2003 p.228) write that

Most councils face difficult and chronic problems in managing coastal resources, and most non-metropolitan councils lack the expertise and financial base to properly address the problems.

While strategic planning has been a subject of discussion at the local government level for many years, the application of this concept to environmental and community issues has raised the stakes once again for Local Government.

Appendix III - Current reforms to coastal management and planning in Queensland

As of the time of writing, IPA, the SCMP and the SEQ Regional Plan are all concurrently under review. Realistically, the review of and amendments to the Integrated Planning Act in 2008-09 as well as the development of statutory regional plans across the state will be of the utmost significance to coastal planning and management in Queensland. The review of the SCMP must and is proceeding alongside these other legislative and planning changes. It is likely that a revamped IPA and the development of regional plans throughout Queensland will see the end of the RCMP's as planning tools and a much stronger focus on environmental issues rather than Ecologically Sustainable Development. It is also likely that Regional Plans will be strengthened in the areas of climate change impacts on the coast. (Queensland Department for Premier and Cabinet, 2009)

A number of public and organisational submissions through the formal review process for the SCMP were highly critical of the statutory framework within which the current plan operates. For example, a discussion paper by the Queensland Conservation Council stated that

The State Coastal Management Plan contains no regulatory provisions and is only implemented legally [in the planning context] by being deemed to be a State Planning Policy (SPP) under the Integrated Planning Act (IPA). While delivery through IPA is supported, there are numerous problems caused by the State Coastal Management Plan being treated as an SPP.

(i) State Coastal Management Plan is only a non-mandatory consideration in development assessment. The detailed provisions of the State Coastal Management Plan (and of other SPP's) are routinely ignored by local government assessment managers as IPA only requires them to "have regard" to SPP's in making a decision on a development application, as one consideration amongst many. There is no obligation to actually implement the detail of the State Coastal Management Plan, which vastly undermines the effectiveness of the Plan.

(ii) State Coastal Management Plan is poorly reflected in local planning schemes. SPP's are also required under IPA to be reflected in local government planning schemes. To date only six planning schemes have been certified as appropriate reflecting the State Coastal Management Plan (Hutcheon, 2008).

It is not known whether these issues have been addressed in the review of the SCMP.

Appendix IV – Further reading on the topic of major challenges for ICM

Publications

- Australian Local Government Association. (2008). The Roles and Responsibilities of Local Government in Coastal Planning and Management. <http://www.alga.asn.au/policy/environment/coasts/roles/roles.php>.
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- McDonald, G., Bellamy, J., Robinson, C. J., Smith, T., Hoverman, S., McAlpine, C., Peterson, A., & Dawson, S. (2004). *Benchmarking Regional Planning Arrangements for Natural Resource Management 2004–05: Progress, constraints and future directions for regions Milestone Report 3 for Healthy Savanna Planning Systems Project*. Brisbane: Tropical

Savannas Management CRC.

- Stuart, G., Withycombe, G., & McGrath, J. (2006). Barriers and Opportunities for Local Government in Coastal Management and Planning. In Lazarow N, Souter R, Fearon R & Dovers S (Eds.), *Coastal Management in Australia: Key Institutional and Governance Issues for Coastal Natural Resource Management and Planning* (pp. 35-46). Brisbane: Cooperative Research Centre for Coastal Zone, Estuary and Waterway Management.
- Taylor, B., McDonald, G., Heyenga, S., Hoverman, S., Smith, T., & Robinson, C. J. (2006). *Evaluation of Regional Planning Arrangements for Natural Resource Management 2005–06: Benchmark Report II for Healthy Savanna Planning Systems Project*. Brisbane: Tropical Savannas Management CRC.

Websites

See the case studies section of this report for useful website links.