



ACS

Australian Coastal Society Ltd

PO Box 1984, Bondi Junction NSW 1355

24 December 2014

The Queensland Premier
Campbell Newman MP
PO Box 15185
City East
Queensland 4002

The Australian Coastal Society is the peak body representing coastal managers in Australia. We are writing to you today in strong support of the media announcement by Engineers Australia questioning the basis of a recent decision by the Queensland Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Jeff Seeney MP, to order Moreton Bay Council to remove all references to climate change induced sea level rise in its regional plan.

We strongly support the views expressed by Engineers Australia's National Committee on Coastal and Ocean Engineering in its statement (overleaf). We reiterate that all governments have a basic responsibility and obligation to plan for, and consider climate change scenarios that, while certainly unpalatable, are well within the realms of possibility.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geoffrey C. Wescott". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Associate Professor Geoffrey Wescott
President, Australian Coastal Society Ltd

Encl.

Coastal engineers concerned at instructions to Moreton Bay Council on sea level rise

An expert group within peak engineering body Engineers Australia has today questioned the basis for a recent decision by the Queensland Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Jeff Seeney, to order Moreton Bay Council to remove all references to climate change induced sea level rise in its regional plan.

“The most fundamental principles of engineering and risk management – and plain common sense – dictate that professional engineers and Councils have a duty of care to the community and professional responsibility to take a long-term view and plan for probable future scenarios,” said Noel Carroll, Deputy Chair of Engineers Australia’s National Committee on Coastal and Ocean Engineering.

“The decision to remove references to climate change induced sea level rise is at odds with decades of scientific research, professional engineering practice and rationality.

“We’ve been providing professional leadership on the necessity to consider climate change in guideline documents since the early 1990s. Our guidelines clearly identify sea level rise as one of six climate change key environmental parameters that must be considered in any risk assessment approach to design and coastal management decision making.

“Australia’s coastal regions are particularly vulnerable to climate change effects. These include increased loss and damage to natural and built environments in coastal and riparian areas from sea-level rise, storm surge, wave action, inundation, ground water change, and saline intrusion.

“These are major and real concerns. All governments have a basic responsibility and obligation to plan for and consider scenarios that, while certainly unpalatable, are well within the realms of possibility.

“The engineering profession is well placed to understand and assess the viability of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies needed for effective coastal management and planning”, said Mr Carroll.

-ENDS-