Overcoming barriers to coastal sustainability and facilitating improved delivery of regional management:
A case study of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group

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Outline

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6. Conclusion

The Role of Local Government

Local Government's role in coastal management in NSW includes:

Development of Planning Instruments;
Development of Strategic and Management Plans;
Coastline hazard mitigation and community awareness,
Beach and foreshore management,
Environmental conservation;
Environmental Impact Assessment; and
Assessment of development applications.

NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979,
NSW Coastal Protection Act 1979
NSW Coastal Policy 1997

Barriers

- Complexity of Coastal Zone Management (SCCG 2006)
- Loss of programs (SCCG 2005)
- Loss of an independent advocate (SCCG 2006)
- Lack of integration between and across government (Middle 2004)
- Inadequate public consultation (Middle 2004)
- Lack of resources (Middle 2004)
- Application of resources (SCCG 2006)
- Limited and inconsistent capacity of Councils (eg. planners and coastal specialists) (ALGA 2005)

Opportunities

1. Increased coordination
2. Frameworks for:
   - Action
   - Learning
   - Solutions
3. Partnerships
4. "Champion(s)" for the Coast

About the SCCG

BACKGROUND

- Established in 1989 as 7 'ocean' councils addressing beach sewage pollution (pre ocean outfalls)
- The SCCG is a voluntary **Regional Organisation of Councils (ROC)** established under the provisions of sections 355, 357 and 358 of *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 Feb.1998 under the *Association Incorporations Act, 1984.*
- Expanded to include estuarine councils
- SCCG consists of 15 councils adjacent to Sydney's marine and estuarine environments
- SCCG Secretariat – Executive Officer, Coastal Projects Officer, Capacity Building / Events Officer, Climate Change Adaptation – Project Coordinator (18 month contract)

MEMBERSHIP

- BOTANY
- HORNSBY
- LEICHHARDT
- MANLY
- MOSMAN
- PITTWATER
- RANDWICK
- ROCKDALE

- SUTHERLAND
- SYDNEY
- NORTH SYDNEY
- WARRINGAH
- WAVERLEY
- WILLOUGHBY
- WOOLLAHRA

SCCG represents over 1.3 million Sydney siders (4.3M in Sydney)

Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc.

- The SCCG covers 1346 Km^2

- 86 km of ocean shoreline,

- Over 340 km of estuarine frontage

- 38 ocean beaches separated by high sandstone and shale cliffs,

- 60 estuarine / harbour beaches

- 4 drowned river valley estuaries (Sydney Harbour, Broken Bay (Hawkesbury), Port Hacking (Bate Bay) and Botany Bay.

- 4 coastal lagoons (Manly, Curl Curl, Dee Why, and Narrabeen)

- The region supports a rich diversity of natural and cultural resources,

- Many natural and landscape features considered significant: 7 National Parks with foreshore access, 10 Aquatic Reserves and 8 Intertidal Protected Areas.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

SCCG Secretariat

Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc.
(Policy and Focus Role)

↓

Executive Committee
(Policy and Management Role)

Directional Advisory Committees
(Campaign / Policy Role)

↓

Technical Committee
(Technical and Implementation)

↓

Working Groups
(Strategy Development Role)

SCCG Aim & Outcomes Statements

AIM

To promote cooperation between, and coordination of actions by member councils in consultation with the broader community on issues of regional significance concerning the sustainable management of the urban coastal environment.

SCCG OUTCOME STATEMENTS

- The **exchange of information** on urban coastal management to member councils is coordinated and facilitated,
- **Community awareness** on matters related to the urban coastal management is enhanced,
- The **role and capacity of member councils** to manage the coastal environment is improved,
- Member **Council interests are represented** on issues in relation to regional and national coastal management
- **Sustainable and Integrated Coastal Zone Planning & Management** is facilitated

Activities / Lessons

- <u>Coordination</u>
- <u>Partnerships</u>
- <u>Capacity Building</u>
- Advocacy
- Education

Coordination

SCCG achieves coordination of 15 Councils and external stakeholders through the facilitation of multi-stakeholder committees.

Committees the SCGG facilitates include:

SCCG Executive and Technical Committees,
SCCG Strategic Plan – Directional Committee
SCCG Beach Management Working Group,
SCCG Sea Level Rise Expert Panel
SCCG Great Ocean Walkway Working Group
SCCG Water Conservation Initiatives Working Group
SCCG Groundwater Management Working Group
SCCG Geotechnical Expert Panel (& National Observer Group),
SCCG Education (S.A.P.) Committee,
SCCG Coastal Risk Management Forum Working Group

SCCG Caulerpa taxifolia Task Force,
SCCG GIS Investigations Working Group
SCCG Protecting Wetlands Steering Committee,
SCCG Regional Environmental Monitoring Working Group,
SRCMS Regional Steering Committee,

Coordination Outcomes

1. Information exchange
    Ideas
    Experience
2. Identification of regional
    Issues
    Projects
    Solutions
3. Support for professional staff
4. Increased capacity of Member Councils
5. Increased awareness amongst stakeholders

Coordination – Lessons Learnt

1. Driving communication at a regional scale:
    – Requires cooperation amongst a large number of stakeholders;
    – Often difficult to achieve;
    – Labour intensive; and
    – Requires persistence.
2. Assisted when driven by a single body to drive and coordinate.
3. Essential to all stakeholders remaining informed, motivated and able to make a contribution.

Partnerships

The development of regional partnerships is important for facilitating sustainable and integrated coastal zone planning and management. Examples include:

Working Groups and Steering Committees

- Beach Management Working Group

Research Organisations

- Commonwealth Science & Industry Research Organisation (CSIRO)
- University of New South Wales (Faculty of Science & Institute of Environmental Studies)
- Macquarie University

Regional Bodies

- Catchment Management Authorities
- Regional Organisations of Councils

Community Groups

- Summer Activities Program
- Coastal Walkways Project

Partnerships - Outcomes

Forming partnerships strengthens an organisations capacity to undertake the following actions:

- Coordinate with other stakeholders
- Sharing of information, expertise, resources, networks
- Formal Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs)
- Assisting to bridge the gap between policy and science
- Participate in capacity building programs
- Advocate for desired outcomes
- Implement effective education strategies

Partnerships- Lessons learnt

1. Most partnerships start informally.
2. Allow a long lead time to establish formal partnerships.
3. Partnership evolution occurs through the achievement of outcomes and building momentum.
4. Develop formal agreements, to assist with:
   - Long-term maintenance of partnerships.
   - A framework for developing and delivering outcomes.
   - Delivery of defined outcomes.
5. Ensure all partners continue to benefit through:
   - Maintaining regular interaction
   - Identifying future opportunities for the partnership.
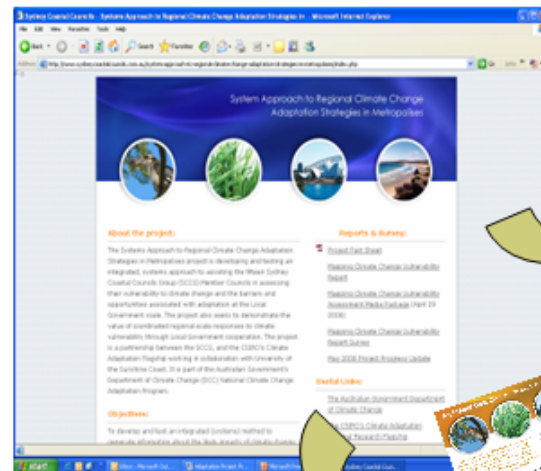   - Monitoring, evaluation and reporting (internal and external)
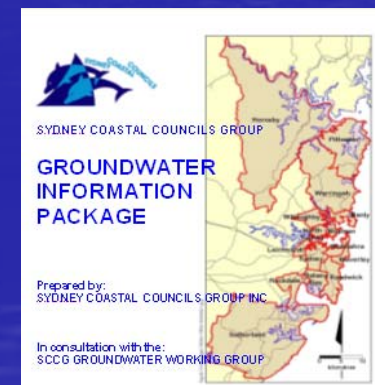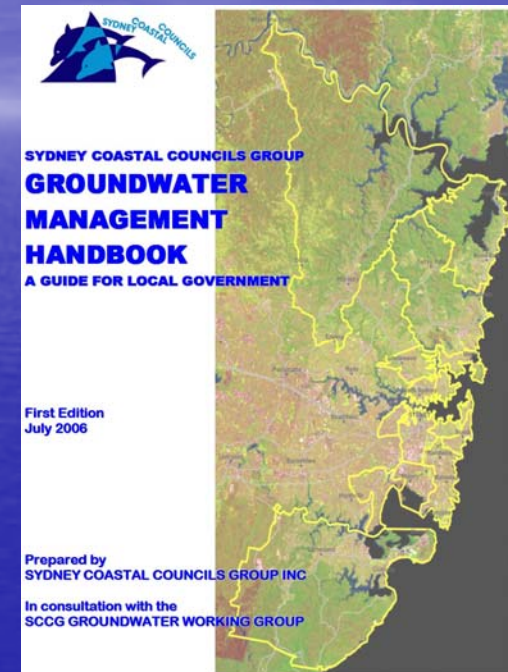
E.g. Capacity Building Projects

**Groundwater Management Manual
A Handbook for Local Government**

- The Handbook is first of its kind
- Provides technical, educational and environmental information on groundwater management.
- Assistance and information necessary for:
  - the protection, sustainable management and where appropriate use of groundwater resources.
  - assessing the impacts of development applications on groundwater flow regimes, planning major infrastructure works, examining the impacts of previous land uses on groundwater quality and communicating to stakeholders on techniques for sustainable groundwater management.

- For Elected members, planners, engineers, development assessors, environmental project officers and education staff.
- Published a series of 5 Fact Sheets / Information package
- Sort funding ($50K) to develop and undertake a series of capacity building programs

SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP
GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK
A GUIDE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

First Edition
July 2006

Prepared by
SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP INC

In consultation with the
SCCG GROUNDWATER WORKING GROUP

SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP
GROUNDWATER INFORMATION PACKAGE

Prepared by:
SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP INC

In consultation with the:
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Capacity Building Outcomes

1. Projects

- Information
- Resources
- Tools
- Participatory Learning opportunities
- Ongoing actions / strategies / M&E

2. Partnerships / Networks

Capacity Building - Lessons Learnt

1. Implementation of capacity building initiatives is achieved through:

   - Involvement of stakeholders in identifying projects solutions; and
   - Stakeholder ownership of projects and outcomes. -> Implementation.

2. The capacity of all councils in the region is increased when:

   - Experience and resources are shared; and
   - Ongoing learning occurs.

Conclusions

Existing barriers are significant but can be overcome.

There are considerable benefits in being proactive in forming partnerships that:

- Coordinate with other stakeholders
- Participate in capacity building programs
- Advocate for desired outcomes
- Implement effective education strategies

Driving these activities at a regional scale provides councils with greater capacity and confidence to successfully manage the coastal environment.

The SCCG is a "Champion" for Local Government in a regional context.

Transferability / Scaling up

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS ?

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