



Coastal squeeze: Sea-changing

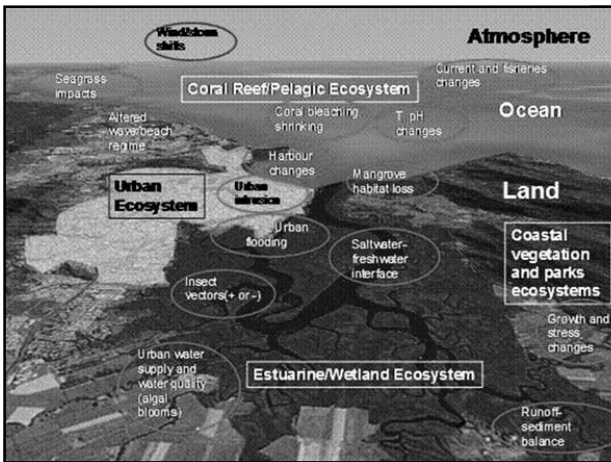
- Habitat loss and fragmentation due to urban development and tourism
- Loss and degradation of coastal wetlands
- Changes in hydrological and geomorphological systems and marine habitats
- Introduction of pests and exotic species
- Coastal erosion
- Inappropriate scale/location of infrastructure

Coastal squeeze: Changing sea

Sea could rise up to 1.5 m by 2100 along the east coast of Australia, and up to 1.4 m for the remaining areas of coastline by 2100

711,000 Australian addresses within three kilometres of the coast and less than 6 m above sea level

Insurance Australia Group estimates that somewhere between \$50 billion and \$150 billion of property and public infrastructure is at risk from inundation



Coastal law: general

Focus mitigation and binding emissions targets
 Few laws address coastal climate change impacts
 Australian courts have been proactive eg Sandon Point and Yorke Peninsula
 Need clear and strong laws to ensure climate change impacts in coastal zone addressed



Coastal law: general

Not all states have a key coastal protection Act
 Planning and resource legislation regulate most significant impacts on the coast
 Plenty of policies, manuals and guideline
 Poor implementation of policies: difficult to enforce and easily passed over
 Lack of appropriate data
 National framework had no implementation plan or resourcing



Summary of State arrangements

State	Coastal Act	Broad Policy	Planning policy	State Strategy	Regional strategies	Coord. body
VIC	✓			✓	✓	✓
NSW	✓	✓	✓		✓	lost
SA	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
QLD	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
WA		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
TAS		✓			✓	lost



EDO NSW (for Sydney Coastal Councils Group)

Searched federal, state (NSW) and local laws for 'climate change', 'sea level rise' and 'greenhouse'
 Of 137, only 16 had terms. 3 Cth and 4 NSW Acts, 1 NSW Regulation and 8 LEPs
 No direct obligations on decision-makers in relation to coastal adaptation. Few protections against overdevelopment
 LEP objects and provisions only urge consideration not prohibition of development



Worrying signs

Plans to "streamline" consents in *Coastal Protection Act 1979* by removing Minister for Environment's powers and giving them to Minister for Planning
 Minister for Planning also governs *State Environmental Planning Policy 71- Coastal protection Part 3A Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* means Minister doesn't have to consider SEPP 71
 NSW Coastal Council sacked. No targets or timelines in Coastal Policy
 SEPP Major Projects (2005)



Suggested legal mechanisms

Planned retreat in especially vulnerable areas
 Buffer zones in local planning policies
 Restrictive zoning and setbacks
 Resilience building measures eg dune restoration
 Early warning and emergency response systems
 Greater role for Environment Minister
 Make NSW Coastal Policy 1997 mandatory





What's needed?

Australia's coast is a national asset, but in three-tiered system of government the responsibility for looking after it is fragmented between government agencies responsible for conservation, urban development and resource management

Pressing need for integrated policies, plans and actions, and clear targets, timetables, resources, legislative support and new institutional arrangements



Agreeing to agree

The Australian government should demonstrate national leadership by entering into an Intergovernmental Agreement on Coasts and Oceans with the state, Northern Territory and local governments. This would commit them to set long-term goals to deliver integrated and regional ecosystem-based ocean, coast and catchment planning, protection and management



Supporting local government

Local government at forefront of coastal planning and management and bearing brunt of impacts of 'sea change' and climate change on coast's social and environmental assets

The intergovernmental agreement should be used to drive a partnership between the Australian government and local government



National coastal policy

The Australian government has committed to develop a national coastal policy

The new government should articulate its own vision for the oceans and integrate this with the development of its national coastal policy



Coastal Zone Planning and Management Act

National Coastal Policy will require statutory support to deliver nationally consistent, strengthened and integrated legislative, planning and management provisions across state, territory and Commonwealth jurisdictions

Would include provisions on ESD principles and integrated coastal zone management under which Act would operate, on funding and collaborative approaches, and on a national coastal agency



National Coastal Strategy

This would form the basis for uniform standards and uniform delivery of coastal planning approaches

Embodies ESD and should be developed with strong community engagement to ensure that coastal communities have a sense of ownership and a desire to be involved in the stewardship of their coasts



National Coastal Agency

This new independent agency would provide leadership, stewardship and performance monitoring, build capacity to integrate science, information and policy decision making in planning and management, and support the development of regional strategic plans and state of the coastal environment reporting.



National Coastal Information System (NCIS)

Support planning and management decisions and policy development

Monitor key indicators of coastal environments, develop new science on coastal physical, economic and social systems, establish estimates of projected sea level rise and inundation

Information in public domain for use by all levels of government, research institutions and community



National Coastal Advisory Council

The Council would report to the Prime Minister on major coastal issues. Membership would be drawn from across the community and have well-recognised experience in coastal affairs



Federal-Local partnership

Recognise local government's key role and deliver local responses to the impacts of population growth and climate change, invest in public assets and infrastructure and address the planning for sea-change population and development shifts

Facilitate regional management integration, cooperation and collaboration across local government boundaries, between local and state government jurisdictions and across state government portfolios



Creating sustainable coastal communities

Cutting greenhouse pollution by at least 30% by 2020 and 80-90% by 2050

Protecting biodiversity by setting national protected area target for coast

Minimising waste by recovering 95% of domestic, commercial, industrial waste by 2030

Limiting downstream consequences of infrastructure development to preserve important ecosystem services



Building community capacity to care for coasts

All governments should allocate sufficient resources to build community capacity, knowledge and skills to engage in coastal planning

Recognition of role of Indigenous Australians who manage extensive areas of coastline

A key role and the capacity to engage in coastal and sea country planning and management



Minimising the risks

Address the risks and impacts from rising sea levels and increased storm activity on coastal settlements, supported and informed by a national settlement policy

Recognise limits of adaptation planning

Recognise need for critical decisions about what public and private assets can be protected in their current coastal locations and what needs to be moved from harms way



Minimising the risks

Prevent development in coastal areas at risk of inundation and vulnerable to other factors, esp. estuaries, sand dunes and lagoons

Strengthen environmental assessment and approvals processes through improved and uniform State and Territory accreditation to a national best-practice standard

Consider value of ecosystem services and assess cumulative impacts when making development decisions



*'Our duty is to use
the land and seas
wisely, or
sometimes not use
them at all.'*

