



*Focussing on our
Changing Coast, for All*
4 – 6 November 2026
Shellharbour, NSW

2026 NSW Coastal Management Awards

The NSW Coastal Management Awards are presented to publicly recognise and acknowledge the contributions of individuals, groups, organisations and agencies toward the ecologically sustainable management of the NSW coastal zone.

Who is eligible?

A nomination for an award must be for an activity directly related to the NSW coast. The nomination should demonstrate commitment to the environmental, social or economic principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development.

What are the Award categories?

1. Ruth Readford Award for Lifetime Achievement

Honours an individual who has dedicated significant energies, time and commitment to improving planning and/or management of the NSW coast.

Selection Criteria: Positive impact of actions of individual either through employment or volunteer effort; length of time involved in coastal issues; and recognition by the broader community of individual's contribution to coastal management.

2. Innovation

Awarded to an individual, group, organisation or agency for initiation or development of innovative methods and techniques to address a coastal management issue

Selection Criteria: Initiation and development of innovative approaches, techniques and programs in coastal management involving policy, research, planning, analysis, public awareness and education.

3. Community Involvement

Recognises an individual, group or organisation for excellence in community involvement in coastal management

Selection Criteria: Effectiveness in promoting ESD; effectiveness in increasing public awareness and participation in coastal issues; use of innovative methods and ability of activities to assist other community groups.

4. Local Government

Awarded to a coastal local council which has demonstrated excellence in the implementation of ESD in the coastal zone

Selection Criteria: Effectiveness in implementation of ESD and integrated coastal zone management; effectiveness in increasing public awareness of coastal issues; use of innovative techniques, approaches and/or programs; ability to assist other local councils implement ESD.

5. The Emeritus Professor Bruce Thom AM Student Research

Awarded to an enrolled student whose academic study promises to positively contribute to coastal management

Selection Criteria: Overall benefit of study to advancing the ecologically sustainable use of the coastal zone; degree of innovation; applicability of the study to coastal management practices.

Please Note: *This award category requires the nomination to be approved by a supervisor, head of school or a peer reviewer.*

6. Public Good Award

Awarded to a private sector organisation or a NSW State Government entity (department, division, section or authority) whose actions have demonstrated over the past two to three years profound public benefits within the NSW coastal zone.

Selection Criteria: Effectiveness in implementation of public good outcomes in the relation to the principles of ESD, or integrated coastal zone management, or policy, strategy, research, planning, analysis, public access, conservation or community consultation and participation that have benefited the public good.

7. Local Hero Award

Honours an individual who has made a significant contribution to the management of a local coastal site.

Selection Criteria: Undertaken actions over a long period as a volunteer to the maintenance and improvement of a local coastal site.

Please Note:

The award submission must be accompanied by evidence of the works such as a photograph and also a referee that the judges can contact.

Who will judge the nominations?

The Awards will be judged by a panel chaired by Professor Bruce Thom and comprising members actively involved in coastal management in NSW.

When will the winners be notified?

Successful applicants will be notified by late October, and the Awards will be presented at the 33rd NSW Coastal Conference Dinner, on Thursday 5 November 2027. Award finalists are encouraged to attend the Conference Dinner.

How to apply

Simply fill out the attached nomination template and please note it is a **maximum of 3 pages** required and upload on the conference website:

- The award for which you are nominating
- The contact details of the nominee
- Affiliation of the nominee
- Contact details of nominator
- Photographic or supporting documentation
- A statement addressing how the nominee meets the criteria (max 1 page)
- Key benefits and features of the nomination (max 1 page)

Please note that the award submission is only available online

Entries close Friday 9 October 2026

Further Information: Conference Manager - Amy McIntosh

Phone: 02 6650 9800 or **Email:** amy@eastcoastconferences.com.au