



NSW Coastal Council

NSW Coastal Council Meeting – summary minutes

8 April 2024

Meeting was held online.

Coastal Council members in attendance:

- Dr Philip Haines, Chair
- Grahame Byron
- Mark Conlon
- Dr Elizabeth McEntyre

Representatives from Minister Sharpe’s office and Department Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) Biodiversity Conservation and Science attended by video.

Following an Acknowledgement of Country by the Chair, Coastal Council (the Council) members and guests were welcomed to the first meeting of the newly appointed Council.

The main agenda items included: introduction of new Council members; Council’s draft Terms of Reference and 2024 Work Plan; and role of joint membership of the Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel (MEEKP) and Council committees.

An introduction to the new Coastal Council.

The Council is established under section 24 of the Coastal Management Act 2016 (the Act) and is to consist of not less than 3, and not more than 7, members appointed by the Minister for the Environment. Members of the Council have expertise in one or more of a range of fields relating to coastal management, as set out in the Act.

Following an extensive recruitment process, 3 new appointments were made to the Coastal Council in 2024. The members of the NSW Coastal Council are:

Dr Philip Haines (chairperson)

Phil is a recognised industry leader and expert in coastal engineering and management with 34 years of experience working across NSW and Queensland. He has led and delivered many large and complex coastal, estuarine, and floodplain projects, combining his engineering background with significant practical experience in coastal land use planning, coastal ecology, social science, and economics.

Dr Elizabeth McEntyre

Elizabeth is a Worimi and Wonnarua Elder belonging to Lands and Waters spanning Port Stephens, the Great Myall Lakes, the Barrington Tops, and the Hunter Valley in the NSW. She is a Doctor of Social Work and Criminology, with a career portfolio involving senior leadership positions with the Aboriginal Community-Led sector, and the Commonwealth and NSW Public Service. She has significant experience in social science and knowledge related to traditional and contemporary Aboriginal use and management of the coastal zone.

Mr Mark Conlon

Mark is an executive management strategist specialising in coastal land use planning and management, traditional and contemporary Aboriginal use and management of the coastal zone, and economics of financing natural disaster responses. He has worked at senior levels in government across a range of programs, including leading programs in coastal and marine park ecology conservation and coastal land use planning for climate change.

Mr Grahame Byron

(nominated by the Minister administering the Marine Estate Management Act 2014 and a member of the Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel).

Grahame has over 45 years of experience as a senior advisor to State and Federal government, non-government and academic sectors in coastal ecology and its application to the planning, management and monitoring of coastal and marine environments.

Coastal Council draft Terms of Reference and 2024 Work Plan.

The Council's (draft) Terms of Reference provide further information to that in the Act (see [Part 4; Schedule 2](#)) in relation to the role, responsibilities, operational and communication protocols for the Council. New members were briefed on the draft and given the opportunity to comment on any matters prior to the draft being finalised. A draft 2024 Work Plan for the incoming Council was discussed with the scope of the final work plan expected to address many of the known issues for coastal management documented in previous Council annual surveys and the subject of DCCEEW guidance materials in the [Coastal Management Toolkit](#).

Role of joint membership of the Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel (MEEKP) and Council committees.

Grahame Byron outlined how his membership on the Council and MEEKP is intended to ensure both bodies are aware of each other work plans and activities in relation to providing expert advice to government on management of the coast-estuary-marine interface. Regular communication between the respective bodies facilitates this, assisted by the involvement of experienced departmental staff with visibility of government priorities for the coast and marine estate. His joint membership on the Council and MEEKP seeks to address the ongoing challenge of providing expert advice to government on coastal and marine matters which is accurate, timely and consistent for the best management of our coastal waters.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of Council is planned for early May 2024.