

Newsletter No. 1 July 2007

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the first Botany Bay Coastal Catchments Initiative (BBCCI) Newsletter!

My name is John Dahlenburg and some of you may already know me from my previous role, managing the Water Sensitive Urban Design in Sydney Program (see www.wsud.org for more information). I'm still located at the Sydney Metro CMA, but am now managing this new and exciting initiative.

The aim of the newsletter will be to keep you, councils, state agencies and the community informed on progress being made on the BBCCI. It will also be a way for you, your organisation or community group to find out how to become more involved.

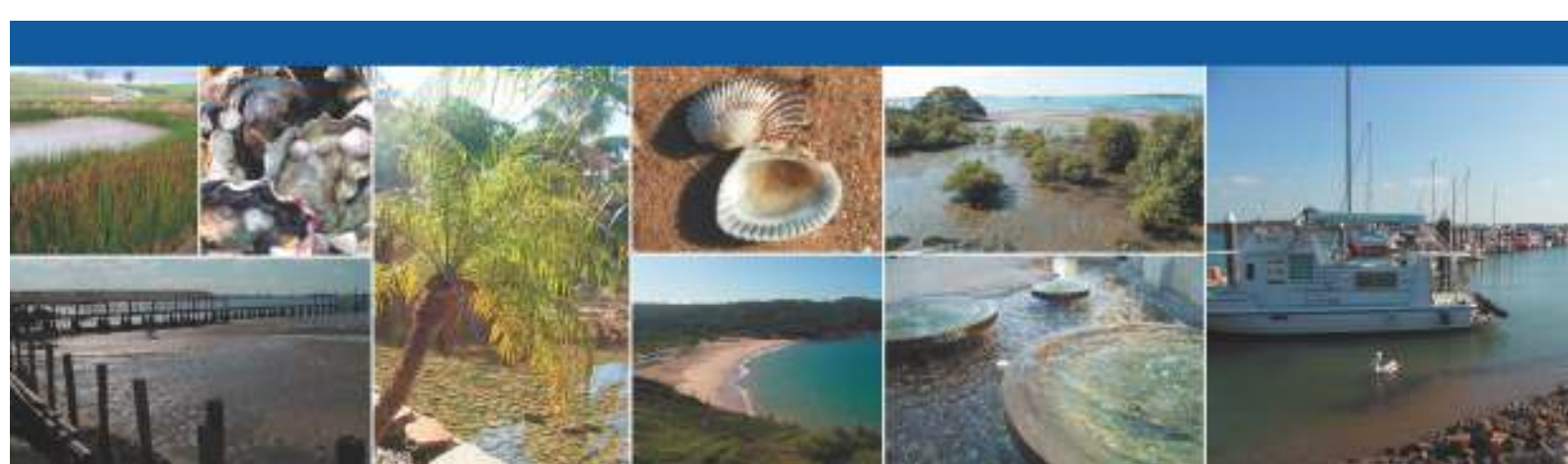
This first newsletter will briefly explain what the BBCCI involves, who is funding it and update you on some of the things that have been completed or are underway.

I have added many of your names to the distribution list for this newsletter based on your jobs, interest and/or your location in relation to the Botany Bay catchment. If you are not interested in receiving future newsletters (every two months) please reply to this email and let me know and I will take you off the list.

What is a Coastal Catchments Initiative and who is funding it?

- This Initiative is seeking to achieve long-term protection of the surface waters of Botany Bay, its estuaries and its catchment.
- To produce a scientifically derived ecological response model of Botany Bay and its estuaries that can be used to model the impacts that changes in the catchment will have on the Bay's ecological communities.
- It will primarily be focused on the pollutants washing off the hard surfaces in the catchment (suspended solids, nitrogen and phosphorus).
- It will also engage with councils, key stakeholders and the community in the Botany Bay Catchment so they can participate in finding and implementing innovative solutions to improve water quality in the Bay and catchment.

The BBCCI is majority funded by the Australian Government and being project managed and part funded by the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority.





Update on Progress

The major activities being undertaken in the BBCCI are listed below in the approximate order they will occur:

Activity	Status
Prepare a Scoping Study,	Completed
Map the Botany Bay Catchment and sub-catchments,	Completed
Prepare a Consultation Strategy,	Completed
Set draft levels of protection for the environmental values of Botany Bay and its catchments waterways,	Underway
Model the current contributions of nutrients and sediments pollution in the catchment,	Underway
Conduct an ecological character assessment of the Towra Point Ramsar listed wetland,	Underway
Develop a hydrodynamic model for Botany Bay and catchment watercourses,	Underway
Establish an ecological response model of Botany Bay and its estuaries, which will be used to determine how much of several key pollutants that Botany Bay and its major tributaries can receive each year before irreversible ecological damage occurs,	Underway
Identify opportunities and barriers to the adoption of water sensitive urban design in the catchment,	Yet to commence
Develop draft water quality objectives and load targets needed to protect the draft environmental objectives,	Yet to commence
Develop management options to meet the water quality objectives and load targets and assess the cost and effectiveness various options and select most appropriate options to achieve targets,	Yet to commence
Develop a water sensitive urban design (WSUD) adoption strategy and support councils and other government agencies including WSUD in their planning processes.	Yet to commence

BBCCI Website

A website has been created and it will have all the latest information on the Initiative and copies of any reports or findings. You will also be able to find copies of this Newsletter as well as pictures from around the Botany Bay Catchment at the website.

www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au/bbcci

Reference Committee

A Reference Committee the BBCCI has been set up and includes members from the: Sydney Metro CMA, Community, Department of Environment and Water Resources, Indigenous Community, Georges River Combined Councils Committee, Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, Department of Environment and Climate Change, Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries,

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Department of Planning, Sydney Water Corporation, Department of Defence and the Cooks River Foreshores Working Group.

Two meetings have been held to date and Terms of Reference for the committee have been agreed to and are available for download at

<http://www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au/bbcci/ReferenceCommittee.html>

How important are Botany Bay and its waterways to you?

I am currently in the process of finalising the material to be used to get input from local council staff, councillors, key stakeholders and the community in the Botany Bay catchment on valuing and protecting its waterways. I will be setting up a series of workshops over the next few months to give a brief overview of the BBCCI and to seek input into "resetting" or agreeing on some interim environmental values and levels of protection for the estuaries and freshwater waterways of the Botany Bay and its catchment.

The workshop will only take about 2 hours and can be brought to you. It will allow you to have your say on how you use/value Botany Bay's waterways (including upstream freshwater catchments), what are the main pressures on them, what management measures you think will help protect the waterways and participate in setting some interim protection levels for Botany Bay's main estuaries and freshwater sub-catchments.

Ecological Response Model

This part of the BBCCI is being undertaken by the Water Science team in the Department of Environment and Climate Change (NSW EPA). They are currently in the process of setting up the model, gathering water quality data to put into it as well as undertaking their own sampling around the Bay/catchment.

DECC are also undertaking an Ecological Character Assessment (ECA) of the Towra Point Wetland. This is an internationally significant wetland and is a Ramsar listed site. The ECA involves assessing the condition of the wetland when it was Ramsar listed (1988) as well as assessing its current condition. I will report on the results of both these things in future newsletters.

5th International WSUD Conference (Sydney 21-23 August 2007)

The 5th International Water Sensitive Urban Design Conference will be held in Sydney next month. It will have some very interesting presentations and discussions on protecting urban waterways, capacity building, rainwater and stormwater harvesting. You can find more information and download a registration form at www.rainwater2007.com

