

Appendix A

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy



Central Coast Council
Tuggerah Lakes Estuary
Coastal Management Program
Community and stakeholder engagement strategy



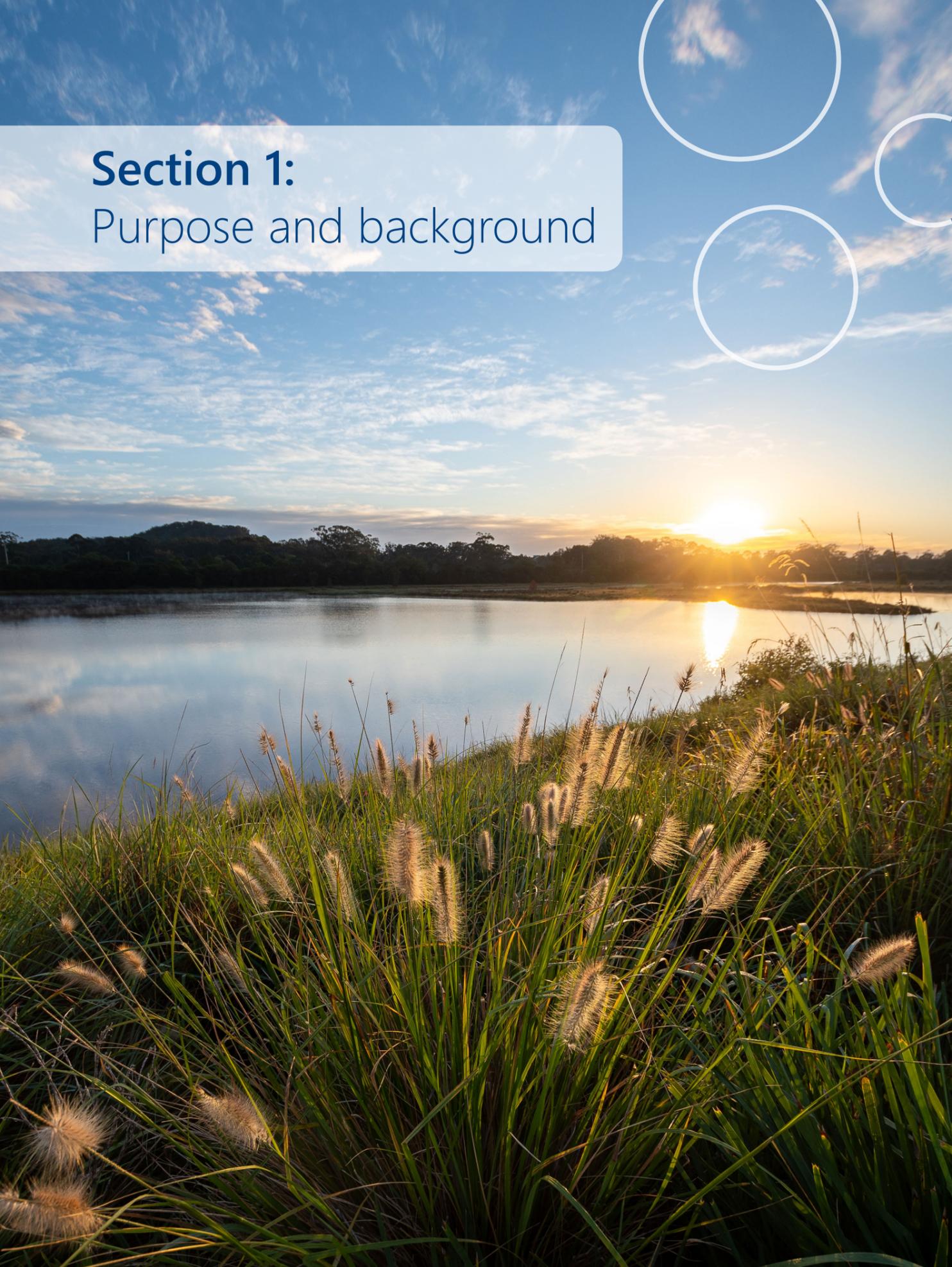


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Section 1: Purpose and background



Central Coast Council (Council) is preparing three Coastal Management Program (CMP) Scoping Studies across the region, for the following geographical areas:

1. The Open Coast and Coastal Lagoons;
2. Tuggerah Lakes; and,
3. The Hawkesbury-Nepean River encompassing Brisbane Water and Broken Bay.

This document relates to the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Coastal Management Program.

Council has an **Engagement Framework** in place which defines and guides our approach to engagement across the broad range of programs and projects that Council manages. The framework sets the direction to effectively engage and communicate with our community and customers and provides guidance on when and how to undertake engagement activities and what steps and processes should be considered. The Engagement Strategy is guided by key elements of, and in accordance with the International Association of Public Participation, IAP2 Standard and AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard.

This Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (CSES) was developed alongside the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Coastal Management Plan: Scoping Study to provide a guide for ongoing community and stakeholder collaboration throughout the development (Stages 1-4) and implementation (Stage 5) of the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Coastal Management Program (CMP).

Importantly, this document acknowledges the need to work with our community and stakeholders in a meaningful way to plan for the future of this iconic waterway.

Focus group input

A number of small scale, targeted focus groups were held during the development of the Scoping Study.

Participants were asked to provide input into engagement methods, reach and gaps/ barriers.

These conversations informed the key messages, stakeholders and engagement methods and began the process of building transparency, understanding, trust and respect.

It will be beneficial to continue these small format focus groups through the latter stage and additional participants will be recruited to a pool via the Our Coast, Our Waterways Survey which will be open during Stage 1.

This engagement strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Coastal Management Act 2016 and related guidelines for Community and Stakeholder Engagement in Coastal Management.

Statutory provisions and mandatory requirements

The Coastal Management Act 2016 (CM Act) requires councils to consult with the community and stakeholders before adopting a coastal management program. The CM Act includes the following statutory provisions which relate to consultation:

- Before adopting a coastal management program, a local council must consult on the draft program with:
 - the community, and
 - if the local council's local government area contains:
 - land within the coastal vulnerability area, any local council whose local government area contains land within the same coastal sediment compartment (as specified in Schedule 1), and
 - an estuary that is within 2 or more local government areas (as specified in Schedule 1), the other local councils, and
 - other public authorities if the coastal management program:
 - proposes actions or activities to be carried out by that public authority, or
 - proposes specific emergency actions or activities to be carried out by a public authority under the coastal zone emergency action subplan, or
 - relates to, affects or impacts on any land or assets owned or managed by that public authority.
- Consultation under this section is to be undertaken in accordance with the relevant provisions of the coastal management manual.
- A failure to comply with this section does not invalidate a coastal management program.
- The regulations may amend Schedule 1.

The following mandatory requirements are enacted via Part A of the CM manual:

A draft CMP must be exhibited for public inspection at the main offices of the councils of all local government areas within the area to which the CMP applies, during the ordinary hours of those offices, for a period of not less than 28 calendar days before it is adopted. This mandatory requirement does not prevent community consultation, or other consultation, in other ways.

Relationship to the Community Strategic Plan

One - Central Coast Community Strategic Plan (CSP; 2018-28) was developed with the community and was adopted as the ten-year plan for the Central Coast. It is the first single plan that defines the priorities of our community and represents a considered and evidence-based roadmap for the future of our region. It defines the environmental and social qualities that our community have told us they love about the Central Coast and provides a clear path of action towards their preferred future.

The Tuggerah Lakes CMP will cover a broad geographical area, integrating both the coastal zone but also the catchment area and as a result will relate directly and indirectly to many of the themes and focus areas identified in the CSP.

It is important to ensure these focus areas remain front of mind as the CMP comes to fruition.



BELONGING – Our community spirit is our strength – A1: Work within our communities to connect people, build capacity and create local solutions and initiatives



BELONGING – Creativity, connection and local identity – B4: Activate spaces and places to complement activity around town centres, foreshores, lakes and green spaces for families, community and visitors



LIVEABLE – Out and about in fresh air – K1: Create a regional network of interconnected shared pathways and cycle ways to maximise access to key destinations and facilities



LIVEABLE – Out and about in fresh air – K4: Repair and maintain wharves, jetties, boat ramps and ocean baths to increase ease of access to and enjoyment of natural waterways and foreshores



GREEN - Environmental resources for the future – E1: Educate the community on the value and importance of natural areas and biodiversity and encourage community involvement in caring for our natural environment



GREEN - Environmental resources for the future - E2: Improve water quality for beaches, lakes and waterways including minimising pollutants and preventing litter entering our waterways.



GREEN – Cherished and protected natural beauty - F1: Protect our rich environmental heritage by conserving beaches, waterways, bushland, wildlife corridors and inland areas and the diversity of local native species.



GREEN – Cherished and protected natural beauty - F4: Address climate change and its impacts through collaborative strategic planning and responsible land management and consider targets and actions.



RESPONSIBLE – Good governance and great partnerships – G1: Build strong relationships and ensure our partners and community share the responsibility and benefits of putting plans into practice



RESPONSIBLE – Good governance and great partnerships – G2: Communicate openly and honestly with the community to build a relationship based on transparency, understanding, trust and respect



RESPONSIBLE – Good governance and great partnerships – G3: Engage with the community in meaningful dialogue and demonstrate how community participation is being used to inform decisions



RESPONSIBLE – Balanced and sustainable development - I3: Ensure land use planning and development is sustainable and environmentally sound and considers the importance of local habitat, green corridors, energy efficiency and stormwater management.



SMART – A growing and competitive region – C4: Promote and grow tourism that celebrates the natural and cultural assets of the Central Coast in a way that is accessible, sustainable and eco-friendly

Relationship to the Tuggerah Lakes Expert Panel Review (2020/21)

The Tuggerah Lakes Expert Panel was appointed by the NSW Minister for the Environment in February 2020 to undertake an independent assessment of water quality in Tuggerah Lakes.

This included representative consultation with community and stakeholders, which anecdotally was well received by the local community. Whilst the scope of the CMP is broader than water quality alone, the Panel's report is expected to provide useful input and insights into the current situation and Council will seek out opportunities to work with Expert Panel members to integrate their recommendations into the CMP.

Section 2: Community and stakeholder engagement strategy



Communication and engagement objectives

The development and implementation of a CMP follows a five-stage process as set out in the [NSW Government's Coastal Management Manual](#). The overarching objective of the Tuggerah Lakes Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy is to:

“build ownership of and trust in management actions through co-creation, e.g. joint fact finding and learning together to better understand system dynamics”

The following infographic highlights the communication and engagement objectives and overarching engagement method that will be applied to each stage of the CMP.



Right:
Figure 1: Stage overview of engagement objectives and IAP2 method



Key messages

From the initial consultation and feedback from other engagement programs, the following key messages have been developed. These may need to change or be re-prioritised as the program progresses.

- **Our local waterways and coastal zone are important to our community and to Council.** The long-term health of these complex ecosystems is integral to the vitality and prosperity of our region, and they are a priority.
- **The vision for our CMP's including Tuggerah Lakes is:** *Achieve a healthy and sustainable coastal zone for the whole of the Central Coast both now and into the future, encompassing natural assets, community well-being and resilience.* Specific objectives will be developed and refined throughout the course of CMP development and will build upon those identified in the Scoping Study.
- **Tuggerah Lakes is a complex system, that has been heavily impacted by urban development. There is unlikely to be a simple or singular solution to the water quality concerns of the local community.** Current research demonstrates this complexity and the interrelationship of different aspects is not widely understood by the general public. The findings of the Tuggerah Lakes Expert Panel are still pending and may shed further light on this.
- **Water quality in the lakes has improved over recent decades. Since 2011, water quality has improved at 56% of sites, remained stable at 13% of sites and declined at 31% of sites.** Water quality is measured through a robust and state government endorsed monitoring program run by Council. The replacement of septic systems with sewage systems and the implementation of the Tuggerah Lakes' Estuary Management Plan has reduced water pollution and improved the overall health of the lakes. This is not to say that it is perfect, or at an acceptable level for the community. It will be important to continue to monitor and evaluate water quality at broad scales and undertake audits where poor results are identified. This can occur as an action of the CMP following a similar process to the [Terrigal and Coastal Lagoons Audit](#).
- **86% of the actions identified in the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan have been implemented or are ongoing. Most of the objectives of the EMP have been met.** The EMP is the current certified Coastal Zone Management Plan for Tuggerah Lakes and has been comprehensively **implemented over the past 15 years** using federal grant funds. Outstanding actions which could not be funded through grants should be revisited and addressed by the CMP.
- **The CMP offers an opportunity to set new objectives, shift our priorities and build upon the work done to date** to support a better future for Tuggerah Lakes. We will be working with our community to plan this future. **This will include wrack and entrance management.**
- **Whilst we work with you to make a new plan, there is still plenty happening on the ground.** The current **\$4.7 million federally funded Environment Restoration Fund** project is being rolled out in priority areas to build upon work completed under previous grant programs.
- **Coastal Councils are legally obligated to prepare Coastal Management Programs.** The Coastal Management Act requires all coastal Councils in NSW to prepare Coastal Management Programs for the mapped coastal zone. These replace existing Coastal Zone Management Plans (CZMPs) and Estuary Management Plans (EMPs). At the completion, the CMP must be certified by the Minister for Local Government.
- **The findings of the Tuggerah Lakes Expert Panel will inform the Coastal Management Programs.** Whilst the scope of the CMP is broader than water quality alone, key recommendations will inform Stage 2-5 of the CMP where feasible. We will seek to engage with the Panel members where possible to ensure their findings and recommendations are adequately considered. Note: this has already started for the Scoping Study.
- **A certified Coastal Management Program will provide access to funding.** Priorities identified in a certified CMP will be eligible for state government funding (possibly 2:1) through the Coast and Estuaries Grants program.

Stakeholder mapping and analysis

The following stakeholders have been identified initially. Additional stakeholders or stakeholder groups may be identified through the Our Coast, Our Waterways Survey commencing in Stage 1.

Table 1: List of identified community and stakeholder groups/ individuals

Community and stakeholders	
Central Coast Council - Councillors	User Groups (boaters, kayakers, fishers, cyclists)
Central Coast Council – Council business units	Youth Groups/ individuals
Council committee/s - Catchments & Coast Committee Tuggerah Lakes	Foreshore landowners (where actions may be required)
State and Federal Members	Catchment landowners (where action may be required e.g. rural areas)
State Government agencies (DPIE, DPI Fisheries, Crown Lands, EPA, MIDO)	Hazard-affected landowners (lake flooding/tidal inundation)
Local Indigenous groups and land managers	Local residents
Marine Rescue Tuggerah Lakes	Beach/lagoons - dependant business owners
Surf Life Saving NSW	Broader community
Special Interest / Community Groups	Visitors
Business/ Tourism Groups	Media outlets (TV, radio, online, social, print)
Businesses	Others identified through survey/ other engagement methods





Proposed engagement methods for the Tuggerah Lakes CMP

Council use a range of engagement methods depending on the nature of the project. In this case the choice of method used will be guided by:

1. The relevant stage of the CMP
2. The type of stakeholder
3. The type of engagement identified for that stakeholder.

This information is detailed in Table 2.

Importantly, engagement will be an iterative process, whereby different options are tested and changed where necessary to ensure engagement is customised and valuable.

Table 2: Proposed engagement methods for the Tuggerah Lakes Coastal Management Program

IAP2 Method	What?	How?	Why?	When?	Who?
INFORM	Provide accessible information on past, current and future projects	Use existing and potentially new platforms to communicate broadly about what has been done, what is being done and what opportunities the CMP provides for future action Update web-based content regularly and share broadly. Use other non-online methods to reach a broader demographic Build a series of Frequently Asked Questions to help reduce one-on-one responses and better direct project team resources Communicate in simple language that is accessible and can be understood, allowing community and stakeholders to take an informed view	Raise awareness Build trust Inform Educate Establish understanding of big picture and legislated processes Ensure information is accessible	All stages	All stakeholders
INFORM/ CONSULT	Digital marketing strategy	Share key messages often, integrate with broader CMP engagement program messages Use popular online platforms to target messaging per user group (you told us XYZ so we've included ABC in the CMP) Be open and honest about what is and isn't within scope Facilitate community liaisons/connectors to help spread the word Undertake a post adoption digital marketing campaign to promote and bring community along. You told us you wanted XYZ, to do this we need you to do ABC and why? (i.e. the biggest pollutant for waterways is xyz)	Raise awareness Build trust Identify community and stakeholders Expand reach Seek interest in focus groups and other activities	Stage 1 Stage 3 - 5	All stakeholders
INFORM	Media (newspaper, radio, social media)	Link with other CMPs in the region Media release, media briefing, interview/s Social media Council newsletter/s, eNews Newspaper ads Posters for remote areas	Raise awareness Provide progress updates Invite participation as required Build program profile and trust in the process Expand reach and engage less accessible communities	All stages	Community groups, organisations and individuals

IAP2 Method	What?	How?	Why?	When?	Who?
CONSULT	Broad community consultation (Our Coast, Our Waterways Survey)	<p>Inform the community and stakeholders of CMPs, their purpose and the steps involved to develop them</p> <p>Seek input into Central Coast Waterway uses, values, threats, views on management, vision and objectives</p> <p>Refine the draft vision statement (prepared by the Catchments & Coast Committees based on community feedback)</p> <p>Invite responders to register for focus groups</p> <p>Use previous engagement feedback where possible, to respect people's time and input and limit engagement fatigue (Community Strategic Plan, Let's Talk Northern Lakes, Active Lifestyles Strategy, Climate Action Planning, Tuggerah Lakes restoration)</p>	<p>Raise awareness</p> <p>Identify community values and uses</p> <p>Seek input into risk, vulnerabilities and opportunities</p> <p>Identify risk and barriers to success</p> <p>Invite participation as required</p> <p>Build program profile and trust in the process</p> <p>Evaluate community behaviours and shared accountability</p> <p>Expand reach and engage less accessible communities</p>	<p>Stage 1-2</p> <p>Repeat as necessary to benchmark and measure change in perception/ satisfaction</p>	Community groups, organisations and individuals
INFORM	Targeted community consultation	<p>Identify stakeholders and community champions. Use community liaison/ connectors in latter stages to help spread the word</p> <p>Assist in building networks, improving reach and building trust</p>	<p>Raise awareness</p> <p>Foster mutual respect and build trust</p> <p>Build program profile and trust in the process</p> <p>Foster greater understanding of science and evidence</p> <p>Expand reach</p>	All stages	Community groups, organisations and individuals
CONSULT	Community pop-ups	<p>Setup pop-up events at strategic locations around our waterways and organically reach interested stakeholders</p> <p>Encourage the community to participate in the online survey</p> <p>Provide opportunities for project team to discuss on-ground issues with the community</p> <p>Use this opportunity to inform the community about the CMPs and their process as well as celebrate the works already underway through the implementation of the existing plans</p> <p>Considering linkages with Tuggerah Lakes Expert Panel</p>	<p>Raise awareness</p> <p>Identify community values and uses</p> <p>Seek input into risk, vulnerabilities and opportunities</p> <p>Identify risk and barriers to success</p> <p>Invite participation as required</p> <p>Foster greater understanding of science and evidence</p> <p>Celebrate wins</p>	All stages	Community groups, organisations and individuals

IAP2 Method	What?	How?	Why?	When?	Who?
COLLABORATE	Education events	<p>Improve two-way knowledge sharing and communication</p> <p>Uses trusted providers and local experts where possible</p> <p>Unpack the complexity of the system, and explore why it has been difficult to manage in the past, build from these learnings</p> <p>Explore successes – consider examples (site visits/ before & after photos etc)</p> <p>Consider working with community to develop a conceptual model of estuary processes and interrelationships</p> <p>Use these events to build capacity, and establish shared ownership – we all play a part in the future of the estuary</p> <p>Share actions that people can take to help</p> <p>Draw on experience of existing volunteer/ community groups as good examples - support them</p>	<p>Raise awareness</p> <p>Educate via joint fact-finding</p> <p>Build trust</p> <p>Foster greater understanding of science and evidence</p> <p>Evaluate community behaviours and shared accountability</p> <p>Explore management challenges through multiple lenses</p> <p>Celebrate wins</p>	All stages	Community groups, organisations and individuals
COLLABORATE	Focus groups	<p>Strategically host focus groups throughout the development of the CMPs to ensure that they are on-track and are being co-designed with a demographically relevant group of community members and relevant stakeholders</p> <p>Work with focus groups to develop and refine the vision and objectives of the CMP</p> <p>Design and agree to a decision-making process to determine potential and prioritised management actions, and to implement them</p> <p>Seek input from the community and stakeholders at various (appropriate) times throughout the development of the CMPs</p> <p>Build trust within the community of Council's process</p> <p>Allow participants to register for the focus group pool (demographic information collected to ensure they are representative)</p>	<p>Undertake joint fact-finding and co-learning</p> <p>Work with the community to grow a shared understanding of the dilemma of estuary management</p> <p>Refine CMP vision and objectives</p> <p>Identify risk, vulnerabilities and barriers to success</p> <p>Look for new directions and opportunities</p> <p>Set realistic targets for the future of the estuary</p> <p>Foster greater understanding of science and evidence</p> <p>Explore management challenges through multiple lenses</p> <p>Make holistic, well considered decisions</p> <p>Define responsibilities</p>	Stage 3-4	<p>Coast to Catchment Committees</p> <p>Registered community participants (from survey)</p> <p>Internal stakeholders</p> <p>Technical stakeholders</p> <p>Others as required/ identified</p>





IAP2 Method	What?	How?	Why?	When?	Who?
COLLABORATE	Technical workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with stakeholders to identify threats, risks, information gaps Workshop issues and options Identify studies, management priorities, options Develop/ review Program Logic and explore residual risk associated with management options Develop/ review Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake joint fact-finding and co-learning Refine CMP vision and objectives Identify risk, vulnerabilities and barriers to success Look for new directions and opportunities Set realistic targets for the future of the estuary Foster greater understanding of science and evidence Explore management challenges through multiple lenses Make holistic, well considered decisions Define responsibilities 	Stage 3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coast to Catchment Committees Internal stakeholders Technical stakeholders and agency representatives Others as required/ identified
COLLABORATE	Stage workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an element of education, so all parties can explore the complexities of management together based on evidence Seek input from community and stakeholders on management options and priorities Explore potential willingness to pay component to support priority management actions Maintain/enhance community and agency confidence in Council's ability to effectively manage the regions waterways Seek buy-in on appropriate management options for the Coast's waterways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build trust Work with the community to grow a shared understanding of the dilemma of lakes management Look for new directions and opportunities Set realistic targets for the future of the estuary Foster greater understanding of science and evidence Explore management challenges through multiple lenses Make holistic, well considered decisions Define responsibilities Gain community support for priorities and actions 	Stages 3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coast to Catchment Committees Registered community participants (from survey) Internal stakeholders Technical stakeholders Others as required/ identified

IAP2 Method	What?	How?	Why?	When?	Who?
INFORM/ EMPOWER	Public exhibition	<p>Satisfy mandatory consultation requirements (public exhibition only)</p> <p>Ensure the CMP is supported by the community, Council and key stakeholders so it can be adopted and certified</p> <p>Use the survey results to connect each of the actions (key messaging)</p> <p>Provide feedback to the community as to how their input contributed to decision-making</p>	<p>Maintain trust</p> <p>Test effectiveness of prior engagement</p> <p>Gain broader community support for priorities and actions because the community "own" them</p> <p>Satisfy mandatory requirements</p>	Stage 4	All stakeholders
INFORM/ EMPOWER	Report back to the community on progress, results and changes	<p>Inform the community about the outcomes and priorities of the CMP</p> <p>Involve community and stakeholders in identifying indicators, that build on the existing water quality monitoring programs and relate specifically to the CMP objectives so that change over time can be measured and evaluated</p> <p>Collaborate with the community on the delivery of the actions identified in the CMP</p> <p>Implement the priority actions, including perhaps citizen science to generate ownership and commitment to long-term positive outcomes for Tuggerah Lakes through collective action</p> <p>Keep the community updated on the progress (and challenges) of implementation</p> <p>Share monitoring and evaluation outcomes broadly so that people can see real results in an accessible form (e.g Waterways Report Card program, MER, other?). This will be important to account for lag in system response to management interventions</p> <p>Draw on experience of focus groups to continue to continually co-design processes to implement the actions identified in the adopted Coastal Management Programs</p>	<p>Maintain trust</p> <p>Be accountable</p> <p>Share responsibility</p> <p>Keep community and stakeholders informed of management actions and outcomes</p> <p>Share and celebrate wins</p> <p>Track effectiveness</p> <p>Remain agile and adaptable to new information</p>	Stage 5	All stakeholders

How we will measure our success?

As per Council's Engagement Framework, evaluation surveys will be undertaken at appropriate intervals throughout the CMP development to determine success and improve where necessary.





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