



27 May 2022

The Hon. Murray Watt
Minister for the Environment and Water
Australian Government
Senator.watt@aph.gov.au

Re: Federal Government action on the Australian Coast

On behalf of the Australian Coastal Society Ltd (ACS), congratulations on your recent appointment as the Federal Minister for the Environment.

The ACS is a national 'not for profit' organisation dedicated to healthy coastal ecosystems, vibrant coastal communities and sustainable use of coastal resources. The ACS runs successful biennial national coastal conferences which connect leading-edge research with coastal managers, and which have previously been attended by federal Environment Ministers.

The ACS applauds your previous action as Minister for Emergency Management to build national capacity to combat coastal erosion, including through allocating some \$50 million. We acknowledge that the federal government has limited responsibility for on-ground coastal management compared to state governments but recognise that federal approaches are needed to coordinate action to manage large cross-jurisdictional risks such as from climate change, including through development of national standards, and to deliver the research and information that Australians need for effective adaptation. Federal agencies are already making very useful contributions such as through the Australian Adaptation Database, the BOM sea-level database, GA's Digital Earth Australia, NCRIS support for *CoastRI*, and NEMA support to update *CoastAdapt*.

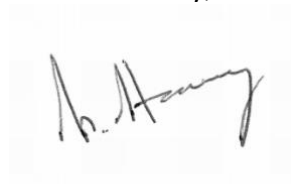
One matter that concerns the ACS is the ability of decision-makers to design and make modifications to public infrastructure in coastal cities and coastal towns in response to sea-level rise. It appears to ACS that this is an area where national guidance could readily be developed by federal agencies involved in climate change and infrastructure, and which could assist in a national plan for managing such growing threats. Such an approach could be informed by the work underway to support integration of information on changing rainfall under climate change in Australia's building and engineering codes, and by the robust science and risk assessment concerned with sea level rise and storm surge.

Request

The ACS requests federal consideration of the opportunity for national standards and/or guidance on how public infrastructure, including critical infrastructure, in coastal cities requires modification to better prepare for the threats of future sea-level rise.

The ACS would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and discuss further the national significance of coastal risks, and options for effective coordinated action. We look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Harvey', is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Professor Nick Harvey & Professor Bruce Thom

CHAIR* & DEPUTY CHAIR, AUSTRALIAN COASTAL SOCIETY Ltd

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