Sustaining the Catchments

The Regional Plan for the drinking water catchments of Sydney and adjacent regional centres
Sustaining the Catchments

Who is the SCA?

- Formed in 1999 in response to the McClellan Inquiry on the Sydney water quality incident

- A statutory authority under the Sydney Water Catchment Management Act 1998

- Created to manage and protect Sydney’s water catchments and to supply clean, reliable bulk water

- Governed by a Board who are directly responsible to the Minister for Water
Some Facts about the Catchments

- Covers an area of 16,000km²
- Encompasses 27 sub-catchments
- Home to an estimate 110,000 people
- 15 Local Government Areas
- Includes over 485,000 ha of agricultural land
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Vision

Healthy catchments delivering high quality water while sustaining diverse and prosperous communities
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The Regional Plan has three key elements:

1. Legal Instruments
   - Regional Environmental Plan
   - Section 117 Ministerial Direction

2. Overview and Action Plan

3. Supporting Guidelines
## Sustaining the Catchments

### Developing the Regional Plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEPP 58</td>
<td>• Interim development control tool</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Repealed with commencement of REP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Draft Regional Plan</td>
<td>• Exhibited October 2000 – March 2001</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Regional Advisory Committee</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Over 400 submissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revised draft</td>
<td>• Exhibited March – July 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Plan</td>
<td>• Regional and Technical Working Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 43 submission received</td>
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<tr>
<td>REP</td>
<td>• Gazetted 9 June 2006</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Commenced 1 January 2007</td>
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Rectification Action Planning

- Rectify or reduce the risks of adverse impacts on water quality from existing or past developments and activities
- The basis for the SCA to identify priority actions and allocate funding/resources
- Undertaken in consultation with CMAs, councils, agencies and communities
- Decision-making underpinned by a decision support system
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Strategic Land and Water Capability Assessments (SLWCA)

- Assess the physical capability of the natural features of the land and waterways
- Identify appropriate types and intensities of land use that will not adversely impact on water quality
- Inform councils’ review of their LEPs

SLWCA Criteria:
- Slope
- Distance to watercourses
- Soil permeability
- Soil depth
- Erosion
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Development Assessment Requirements

A consent authority must not grant consent to Part 4 development on land in the hydrological catchment unless:

- It has considered whether the development will have a neutral or beneficial effect (NorBE) on water quality, and

- It is satisfied that the carrying out of the proposed development would have a neutral or beneficial effect (NorBE) on water quality.
Neutral or Beneficial Effect on Water Quality Assessment (NorBE)

A neutral or beneficial effect is demonstrated when:

- There are no identifiable impacts on water quality
- The impacts can be effectively managed within the site
- The impacts can be transferred off-site for treatment or approved disposal

Note: NorBE applied differently to developments and activities
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Current Recommended Practices

- CRPs offer solutions to manage water quality impacts related to:
  - Urban and rural subdivisions
  - Agricultural and industrial developments
  - Stormwater and waste water management.

- Appropriate use of CRPs is an important part of the NorBE assessment and approval process.

- SCA has developed a list of endorsed CRPs.
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The SCA has developed supporting tools, models and user guides to assist councils.
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The NorBE Assessment Guidelines and Tool:

- Key instrument for assessing NorBE
- Provides consistency and transparency
- Adopts a risk-based approach
- Modular design
- Considers site, stormwater and wastewater impacts
- Requires desk top and field based analysis
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The Web-based NorBE Assessment Tool:

Standard Stormwater Questions for Site Risks

1. Does the area to be disturbed in relation to the development proposal have a slope greater than 20% (1:4)?
   - Yes, refer to SCA for concurrence.
   - No

2. Is the area to be disturbed in relation to the development proposal located within a 1:100 flood zone or those associated with watercourses and drainage easements?
   - Yes, refer to SCA for concurrence.
   - No

3. Is rainfall erosivity greater or equal to 4,000 mm/ha/yr/year, as defined on the SCA-provided map?
   - Yes, refer to SCA for concurrence.
   - No, NorBE is satisfied

Alternatively, if the applicant has withdrawn or the application is refused for non_NorBE reasons, select the appropriate checkbox below.

- Applicant has withdrawn the application
- Refuse for non-NorBE reasons
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The Development Assessment Module (DAM)
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Other Supporting Tools, Models & Guides

- Model for Urban Stormwater Improvement Conceptualisation (MUSIC)
- Guides for MUSIC Users and Assessors
- Simplified Stormwater Model for small-lot subdivisions
- Rural Residential Subdivision Design Guide
- On-site Systems Guide
- Other CRPs
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Regional Plan Education Program

- The Plan
  - REP
  - Guidelines
  - Tools

Phase 1
- Workshops (NorBE)

In-Council Support

Other Phases
- Other tools
- Software
- CRPs
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Overview of Phase One Workshops

- (1) Primary Contacts
- (2) Consultants
- (12) Development Assessment Staff
- (8) Councillors and Senior Staff
- (2) Council Staff Part 5

REP Workshops

15
55
57
24
129
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Development in the Catchment

- Over 5,600 DAs referred to SCA since 1 July 1999:
  - 4776 under SEPP 58 (1 Jan 1999 to 31 Dec 2006)
  - 830 under REP (1 Jan 2006 to 15 Aug 2008)

- Only nine concurrences withheld by the SCA

- Only one appeal directly relating to SCA withholding concurrence
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What Does the Future Hold for the Regional Plan?
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NSW Government’s Planning Reforms

- Removal of the REP Planning Layer
  - REP to become a SEPP in the first instance
  - such SEPPs to be reviewed

- Changes to the Sydney Water Catchment Management Act:
  - removal of S53 relating to the REP
  - requirement for NorBE to remain (provided for by EP&A Act)

- Streamlined Development Assessment Process
  - reduced assessment timeframes
  - stop the clock provisions
  - exempt and complying development
  - private certification
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Continued Effort & Improvement

- Development of New CRPs
- Council and Agency Training
- Refinement of Existing Tools
- Development of New Tools
- In-house Mentoring
- Review and Update Guidelines
- Strengthening Relationships
- Information and Advice

Sydney Catchment Authority
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