

Media Release

21 December 2020

Public comment invited on draft coastal hazards adaptation strategy

Gladstone Regional Council today released a draft Coastal Hazards Adaptation Strategy (CHAS) for management of the region's coastline, after an extensive community engagement process.

Gladstone Region Acting Mayor, Kahn Goodluck, said the draft strategy, which is now open for public comment, was developed in consultation with environmental, industry and community stakeholders and has been tailored to include the full coastal landscape and their communities.

"The Gladstone Region has more than 150 kilometres of coastline from Baffle Creek in the south to Raglan Creek in the north," Councillor Goodluck said.

"Coastal hazards have the potential to impact both the natural and built environments, threatening our region's liveability and the economy," he said.

The Queensland Government and Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) initiated the QCoast 2100 program to help coastal councils plan to manage these hazards from now through to 2100.

Council received funding to undertake the Our Coast. Our Future program and develop this strategic plan.

"It will help us proactively manage the impact of coastal hazards, such as erosion and coastal inundation, now and into the future," Cr Goodluck said.

The region's coastline features sandy beaches, tidal embayments and inlets, salt flats, coastal vine thickets and littoral rainforest, and is an important habitat for several threatened plant and animal species.

Coastal processes have shaped this landscape for thousands of years, but they become hazards when they impact on infrastructure, access, services, lifestyle and the economy.

Cr Goodluck said the CHAS development process involved community engagement throughout the year.

"Some aspects had to change because of the Local Government elections and the COVID-19 health emergency, but we held online webinars, pop-up events at Gladstone, Boyne Island and Agnes Water, online community surveys and stakeholder workshops to help build awareness about the strategy," he said.

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Once finalised, the CHAS will be reviewed every five to 10 years as new information becomes available.

Cr Goodluck said everyone in the community had a role to play in implementing the strategy and in protecting coastal assets and values.

“The first community survey revealed people valued the coastline’s natural ecosystems and wildlife, while access to beaches and recreational opportunities were also significant.

“Most respondents were aware of coastal hazards and their potential impacts on the foreshore and low-lying areas,” he said.

The second survey received a strong response from young people under 18 who rated dune protection highly as an adaptation option.

The CHAS will be only one of several different tools to manage coastal hazards and values.

Others such as Shoreline Erosion Management Plans (SEMPS) and the Local Disaster Management Plan will be used to maintain the values of the coastline and nearby settlements.

The draft strategy is available online at www.gladstone.qld.gov.au until 31 January 2021.

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