

Sustainable Water Challenge Project 2004

Council: North Sydney Council

Project Title: North Sydney Council's Water Management Plan

Project Category: Planning and Policy

Project Summary:

A Water Management Plan has been developed by North Sydney Council using the International Councils for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Water Campaign framework. The purpose of the plan is to provide strategic direction for improved water sustainability. The plan identifies actions that will improve catchment water quality, reduce water consumption at corporate and community levels and reduce impacts of urban runoff.

Project Objectives:

The Water Management Plan was developed using the ICLEI Water Campaign framework, which provides for the systematic identification, evaluation and management of water resources facing local government at the corporate, community and catchment levels. The Campaign is milestone based with the milestones being as follows:

Milestone 1: Complete an inventory on water consumption and water quality issues for corporate and community sectors

Milestone 2: Establish targets for water consumption and improvement in water quality for corporate and community sectors

Milestone 3: develop a local water action plan

Milestone 4: implementation of measures outlined in the water action plan

Milestone 5: re-inventory of water consumption and water quality issues and reporting of measures implemented

In accordance with this framework, the Water Management Plan set out to achieve Milestone 1 -3. The objectives were:

- Undertake an assessment of water consumption for Council buildings, facilities and services and the community operating/residing within Council boundaries.
- Undertake an assessment of the quantity of urban runoff within the local government area
- Undertake an assessment of water quality in drainage systems within the local government area
- Establish a goal to reduce water consumption for both Council and community sectors
- Establish a goal to complete ICLEI specified actions that will improve water quality in drainage systems for both Council and community sectors

- Outline objectives as developed for the Stormwater Management Plans for Middle Harbour and Port Jackson Catchments.
- Develop an Action Plan that provides strategic direction for reducing water consumption, improving water quality and controlling urban runoff.
- Build a coordinated and integrated approach to water management across departments, neighbouring Councils and catchments.

Project Outcomes: please refer directly to the Plan for more details

Environmental:

The plan was developed during 2003 and adopted by Council in May 2004, and therefore most of the initiatives identified in the Plan are yet to be implemented.

The plan does however set out to achieve the following:

- A reduction in corporate gross water consumption by 25% below 2001/2002 levels by 2011.
- A reduction in gross water consumption by 18% below 2001/2002 levels by 2011.
- Implementation of water quality improvement actions by 2010 that equate to 65 points on the 'Water Campaign Action Cards'.
- Implementation of water quality improvement actions by 2010 that equate to 50 points on the 'Water Campaign Actions Cards'.
- Alignment with stormwater runoff objectives developed by Middle Harbour and Port Jackson Stormwater Managements Plans.

Technical:

An action plan was developed which identifies actions that will improve catchment water quality, reduce water consumption and reduce impacts of urban runoff. The identification of actions in the plan was directed by:

- Water consumption inventory for the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 financial years indicating key corporate water use
- Completion of 'ICLEI Water Campaign Checklist' to identify priority water quality management tasks
- Development of 'Water Issues and Impacts' Matrix by Council staff

Each action identified in the plan is briefly described and details of estimated costs, dates to be implemented, responsible officer, measurable result and performance measures are provided.

Some of the actions proposed in the plan include:

- Investigation of water re-use opportunities, for example stormwater re-use at Cammeray Golf Course
- Harvesting of rainwater to service Council operations including street sweeping and footpath cleaning
- Reduced use of pesticides and herbicides which have the potential to pollute waterways and impact on aquatic ecosystems
- Application of WSUD principles on Council redevelopment sites

An annual review of the plan will be undertaken by those Council staff that are responsible for implementing actions. An annual review will ensure:

- the plan remains relevant
- progress of each action is monitored and outcomes measures
- the plan continues to reflect Council's intention and so that actions be re-prioritised and reviewed to accommodate best practice and /or new technologies.

Transferable:

The use of the Water Campaign Framework to develop and implement a Water Management Plan is transferable to any Council.

As a process in the development of this Plan, a Council working group was developed representing all divisions of Councils. Close consultation with Council officers, middle and senior management aided the development of the plan. Those staff responsible for implementation with directly responsible for identification of actions and development of the plan.

Difficulties Encountered:

The main difficulty associated with the development of this plan and completion of Milestone 1 of the Water Campaign was acquiring accurate water consumption data. This was overcome through discussions with Sydney Water and relevant Council staff to identify all of Council meters.

Another difficulty encountered was the lack of integration between the ICLEI Water Campaign and the Sydney Water Every Drop Counts program. Greater integration between these campaigns would achieve more positive outcome for local Council.

Please find attached a copy of the Water Management Plan

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