

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **COUNCILS CALL ON COASTAL RETHINK**

---

South Australia's thirty four coastal councils today joined forces to highlight the rapidly escalating risks and costs they are facing in managing the state's vast coastline.

Local councils are responsible for infrastructure and management of a significant portion of the state's 5,000km coastline, extending from the Eyre Peninsula and Spencer Gulf, to metropolitan Adelaide and the Limestone Coast.

Chair of the newly formed 'South Australian Coastal Councils Alliance', Alexandrina Mayor Keith Parkes emphasised all coastal councils are facing significant challenges.

"Regardless of size and location, or whether they are metropolitan or rural, Coastal Councils are facing the same issues and resourcing pressures along the coast", explained Mayor Parkes.

"We have cliff and dune erosion; inundation; managing coastal access; maintenance and replacement cost pressures of recreational infrastructure like jetties and boat ramps; planning and development anomalies in coastal areas; sand and beach management; illegal dumping on the coast; dredging; managing coastal biodiversity; and construction and maintenance of protection infrastructure like levees, seawalls and groynes. "

Councils are concerned that over the last ten years expenditure by local government on coast protection, management and infrastructure has nearly doubled, whilst the level of funding from other levels of government to support this has remained largely unchanged.

Mayor Parkes warned the funding gap is getting larger by the year.

"Over the next ten years, the cost of managing the coast is expected to grow exponentially, with councils in this state conservatively identifying capital works and operating expenses of well over \$200 million."

"Many coastal assets are starting to reach the end of their life or have deteriorated to a point where major work is now required that is just beyond the financial means of many councils", explained Mayor Parkes.

"The increasing frequency and intensity of coastal storm events are also really starting to bite - posing an escalating risk and cost for councils and communities right around the state."

"We have a very real problem and for many of our coastal councils, it is already pushing their resources past their limits."

President of the South Australian Local Government Association and Mayor of Tumby Bay Council, Sam Telfer agrees, saying that a coordinated approach to coastal management is necessary.

“There is a lack of coordination when it comes to coastal management around South Australia, and all indications are that this issue will continue to grow.

“We need a consistent approach to legislative, policy and funding mechanism, and to recognise that all levels of government have a role to play. Local government doesn't have the resources to manage this issue alone.”

\*\*\*\* END \*\*\*\*

Contact: Mayor Keith Parkes – chair of SA Coastal Councils Alliance (0408 818 663)

Release Date: Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019

Photo: Representatives of the state's 34 Coastal Councils at the official launch of the SA Coastal Councils Alliance.

