

Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026

Submission No: 067

Submission By: Beach Matters Association

Publication: Making the submission and your name public

The Beach Matters Association submits the following:

1. Managing Ecological Risk

To ensure that the management actions of the SCWA are in alignment with the 'sustainable use' part of its main purpose, it must be ensured that actions improve ecological health, or at the very minimum maintain current baselines without degradation, and that cumulative impacts are considered. The Bill must be amended to include.

- **Ecological risk assessment** must be undertaken prior to commencement of management activities.
- **Cumulative impacts** The Bill must be amended to require that the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority consider and assess the cumulative environmental impacts of dredging, infrastructure development, navigation works, and other waterway activities when preparing the waterways management strategy and management program.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning** Section 18 on development of Management Plans must also include; Use of appropriate and robust Indicators of ecological health of coastal waters, waterways and adjacent land must be required along with a robust and transparent monitoring, evaluation, mitigation and reporting framework.

2. Local input into Management Plan

The explanatory notes(p1) for the Bill state that the Bill is '*enabling greater local input into their management*' and will deliver '*a more holistic approach*'. To ensure that there is greater local input, the Bill must be amended to include:

- Sections 15 and 19 must list required consultation with Catchment Management Groups, and Traditional Custodians.
- A requirement to form sub-committees for each Catchment with representatives from Catchment Groups and other key stakeholders
- How does the Bill consider integrated Catchment Management Plans?

3. Clarity on Jurisdiction

- State and Local Overlaps: The Bill appears to cover both local and state waters, which may result in conflicts over decision-making authority and funding responsibilities. It does not define upper limits of each waterway. For example, it is unclear if it extends past weirs and who would determine the need for and fund dredging in canals like those on the Mooloolah River, Pelican Waters and Twin Waters.
- Clarity around formation of Marine Zones

4. Board Composition

Section 25 on Board Composition must be amended to prescribe the inclusion of:

- 4 ex officio appointments; Noosa Council, Sunshine Coast Council, Kabi Kabi People, University of Sunshine Coast.