

12 May 2019

Mr Alan Stokes  
Executive Director  
Australian Coastal Councils Association Inc  
Alan@coastalcouncils.org.au

Dear Mr Stokes,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the views of the Coalition on important issues facing your members. A response to your questions is attached.

This election will have real consequences for Australia's economy and our future.

Despite global headwinds, our economy is strong. This year, for the first time in more than a decade, the Government will deliver a Budget surplus.

A stronger economy means we can deliver on our plans to:

1. Create 1.25 million more jobs over the next five years.
2. Maintain budget surpluses and pay down debt.
3. Deliver tax relief to encourage and reward hard working Australians.
4. Guarantee increased investments for schools, hospitals and roads.
5. Keep Australians safe and our borders secure.

The alternative at this election is Mr Shorten. Labor's risky agenda includes billions of dollars of higher taxes – on retirees, housing, incomes, investments, family businesses, electricity and more.

Thank you for communicating our response to your members.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Hirst  
**Federal Director**

## MORRISON GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO AUSTRALIAN COASTAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION INC

### Resources to Manage the Coast on behalf of all Australians.

The Morrison Government works closely with state, territory and local governments on coastal issues, including for appropriate climate change adaptation responses for assets in the coastal zone, and all state and territory governments have, or are preparing a climate change adaptation plan.

The Australian Government is responsible for providing national climate science information and tools for use by state and local governments (more detail under question 5).

The Coalition funded the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) to develop the CoastAdapt website to provide government, businesses and communities an accessible means of identifying, assessing and responding to climate risks in the coastal zone.

Further, under the Morrison Government's \$100 million *Environment Restoration Fund* we are investing around \$16 million in our important rivers, waterways and coasts to help clean up these habitats and improve water quality.

This will not only help protect our native plants and animals, it will also ensure Australians can continue to enjoy these aquatic environments for leisure and recreation.

### Allocate Financial Assistance Grants to address coastal hazards.

Financial assistance is available under the Morrison Government's marine park plans through a \$35 million *Fisheries Assistance and User Engagement Package*:

- fishing *Business Assistance Grants*—assistance to eligible commercial fishers with a recent history of fishing in Australian Marine Parks as they transition their business to the new operating environment;
- our *Marine Park Grants*—grants to assist marine users and industries engage in marine park management, including a sub-component of up to \$2 million for infrastructure to provide recreational and charter fishers, as well as other tourism operators, with secure moorings;
- coral Sea Licence buy-out—direct assistance to a limited number of commercial fishers through a licence buy-out in the Commonwealth-managed *Coral Sea Fishery*; and
- vessel *Monitoring System Assistance*—support to encourage uptake of vessel monitoring systems.

### Intergovernmental Agreement on the Coastal Zone / National Coastal policy.

The Morrison Government works closely with state, territory and local governments on coastal issues. As part of this, the Coalition's national network of marine reserves complements coastal plans developed by state, territory and local governments.

Australia now has the second largest marine park network in the world after the Coalition protected an additional 2.3 million square kilometres.

These reserves mean that more than a third of Australia's waters are actively managed as marine parks, exceeding the international Aichi Biodiversity Target of 10 per cent by 2020 – and we've done this while minimising impacts on recreational and commercial fishers.

The Australian Government provides the public with national climate science information to help Australians understand the potential impacts from a changing climate. The Government has made significant investments in earth systems science and climate modelling:

- \$23.9 million over six years in the *Earth Systems and Climate Change* Hub of the National Environmental Science Program;
- \$37 million over ten years to create a decadal climate science and monitoring capability within the *CSIRO Climate Science Centre*.
- \$30 million over seven years for the *ARC Centre of Excellence for Climate Extremes*, to carry out research on past and present climate extremes and build capacity to predict them.

The Australian Government has also funded the NCCARF to develop the CoastAdapt website to provide government, businesses and communities an accessible means of identifying, assessing and responding to climate risks in the coastal zone.

### Increase funding for Australian Climate Research Programs

Australian Government agencies are initiating work to integrate disaster and climate resilience in their policies, programs and asset management.

*The Australian Government Disaster and Climate Resilience Reference Group* is a coordinating group of senior officials which considers the risks and opportunities arising from climate change and natural disasters.

The Group's current activities include: mapping disaster and climate risks in policies, programs and assets, and delivering guidance and support materials to enable disaster and climate resilience decision-making.

The Group also supports collaboration on relevant cross agency issues. For example, the Department of Home Affairs' *National Resilience Taskforce* is working across government, and with states and territories to develop a *National Disaster Mitigation Framework*.

The CSIRO and Department of the Environment and Energy developed *Climate Compass - A climate risk management framework for Commonwealth agencies*. This guidance is helping to support agencies understand and manage their climate risks.

The Government has invested \$56 million in the NCCARF. Although funding has now ceased, NCCARF have secured some short term projects including with state government agencies. CoastAdapt will continue to be managed by NCCARF until June 2019, after which the decision on CoastAdapt's future lies with Griffith University.