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Council funded to develop coastal hazard strategy

Almost half a million dollars has been secured by Bundaberg Regional Council to compile a strategy aimed at reducing the future risk of beach erosion and flooding on coastal settlements.

Environment and Natural Resources spokesman Cr Bill Trevor said the funds, provided by the Queensland Government through a QCoast 2100 grant, will enable Council to pursue an eight phase process in developing a CHAS or Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy.

“Many coastal communities face coastal erosion and inundation risks. We are currently experiencing erosion problems in locations across the Bundaberg Region including Woodgate, Moore Park and Miara. With a changing climate these risks may increase with more intense storms and projected sea level rise.

“The Woodgate Beach community is currently engaged with Council consultants Water Technology to assist in developing the Woodgate SEMP (Shoreline Erosion Management Plan) and these results will feed into the CHAS.

“Scientists are projecting that sea levels may rise by up to 0.8 of a metre by 2100 and tropical cyclones, while becoming less frequent, are expected to be more intense and track further south.

“Obviously a rise in sea levels, coupled with severe weather events can provide the combinations necessary for some shoreline areas to be threatened through erosion and inundation.”

Project Manager Dwayne Honor said Council is developing a CHAS which encompasses the entire Bundaberg Region coastline.

“The CHAS will explore hazards linked to erosion, storm tide inundation and sea level rise and the potential impacts on communities, infrastructure and the environment.

“The strategy will be developed in consultation with the community with a focus of ensuring there is broad understanding of the vulnerabilities and risks associated with a changing climate and the need for climate adaptation.”

Mr Honor said Bundaberg Regional Council was only the seventh of 41 eligible Councils to receive full funding for the eight phase development of its CHAS.

He said the project was not about being alarmist but rather ensuring the Bundaberg Region and its residents are on the front foot of adaptation planning, aware of potential risks and were confident that Council was preparing for any eventuality.

“The work will be undertaken by consultants Water Technology and the community will become involved as soon as project frameworks and timelines are fully developed.”

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