

## News

### Call for combined action on sea levels

Almost 180 scientists, town planners, engineers, flood specialists and insurers attended a sea level rise seminar on May 29, hosted by Pittwater Council. The day concluded with a strongly-worded call to the state government to assist the Sydney Coastal Councils Group to develop a standard for sea level rise to be extended to all coastal areas as a guide for future planning decisions.

Speakers highlighted the pace of climate change and its likely local effects such as regular flooding of low-lying areas, loss of habitat and accelerated beach erosion, with the potential for an increase in property damage or loss.

Pittwater Mayor David James said the seminar had brought together leading experts in the field, but the focus now needed to turn to local political action.

“We had great support from the Mayors of Manly and Mosman, as well as Warringah Council and I also want to acknowledge the role played by the Minister for the Environment Verity Firth, whose department provided three speakers at the



*Expect local effects such as regular flooding of low-lying areas and accelerated beach erosion*

conference,” Mayor James said.

Mayor James said he was hopeful that the state government could be persuaded to issue definitive guidelines for local government to follow when making planning decisions for coastal and flood-prone areas.

“As to what those criteria should be, my own view is that we should err on the side of caution and adopt a measure that is in line with the latest scientific evidence available on climate change.” The full presentations are available for viewing at [www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au](http://www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au).