



Australian Government

Australia's National Programme of  
Action for the Protection of the Marine  
Environment from Land-Based Activities

**October 2006**



case study 5: international council for environmental initiatives

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### introduction

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) was established in 1990. It has the mission of achieving “tangible improvements in global sustainability with special focus on environmental conditions through cumulative local actions”. It has a global membership of more than 470 local governments.

The “Water Campaign” is a major element of the ICLEI program of the Australia New Zealand Region. It is funded by the Australian Government, Government of Western Australia, City West Water, South East Water, Yarra Valley Water and the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board. There are currently 79 local governments participating in the campaign.

The approach of ICLEI is to develop a systematic milestone programme identifying steps in the achievement of particular sustainability objectives and through a process of local research, policy making, action planning, implementation, and evaluation. This process involves consideration of actions that local governments can take to:

- control activities within their own operations;
- influence their communities through education, planning and regulation; and
- work with other councils for long term improvement of management of catchments.

Water Campaign participants receive support from ICLEI-ANZ including:

- Technical and program training workshops and materials;
- Information, publications, case studies and peer networks; and
- Promotion and recognition of achievement.

The ICLEI-ANZ water campaign has 5 milestones:

1. Assess current water consumption patterns and practices affecting water quality;
2. Set goals to improve the current situation in both water consumption and water quality;
3. Develop and adopt an action plan to achieve the specified goals;
4. Implement actions in the action plan and quantify the benefits; and
5. Monitor, review and report on the outcomes of councils water management initiatives in both consumption and quality.

Participating local governments are at different stages in the process. Two have reached Milestone 4.

### pollution issues

The pollution issues faced by local governments and their relative priority differ. For many the reduction of land-based pollution impacts on marine environments may not be a particular objective. Nevertheless management actions to improve efficiency of water use, to conserve water and to improve water quality generally have broader environmental benefits. They typically involve reductions in levels of sediments, nitrogen, phosphorus, hydrocarbons and other chemicals entering or re-entering catchments environmental water flows. Assessments of current and historic practices affecting water quality can identify and establish a basis for addressing issues with environmental significance beyond the boundaries of the participating local government.

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**management context**

Local government is the front line for management of many of the issues directly affecting pollutant loads reaching the marine environment. The issues are inextricably linked with state and local government responsibilities for harvest and supply of potable water, provision of water for industry and public purposes, treatment and disposal of wastes.

The exact management context and responsibilities vary from local government to local government and between states with respect to the allocation of specific responsibilities between local and state governments. For many local governments the broad range of issues is a challenge requiring information and staff skills that are not immediately available. Cooperative capacity development and support arrangements such as the Water Campaign have a significant role in reducing pollution entering the sea from coastal catchments and land areas.