



OCEANFRONT ISSUES:
Erosion at Belongil
Beach.

PHOTO: JAY CRONAN

BYRON: Landowners warned

Be ready to quit beaches

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BYRON Bay should consider engineering solutions to last 50 years, but be prepared to abandon properties to coastal erosion in the longer term, says a report published in the Australian National University journal, *Agenda*.

The study by Macquarie University's Risk Frontiers, that calls itself "an independent research centre sponsored by the insurance industry", says concerns about the future impact of climate change have paralysed management of the coastal zone in NSW, and Byron Bay has become a "flashpoint" for a collision between local politics, environmental ideology and property rights.

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“We think that whilst there will probably come a time when abandonment needs to be considered, as certain areas become impractical and too expensive to protect from climate change, that time is not here yet,” the report's lead author, Dr Kevin Roche of Risk Frontiers, said.

“We believe that in the meantime the coast in and around Byron can still be enjoyed by all and those people that are fortunate enough to reside there at the present time should be able to continue.

“But, these residents also need to be aware that there well may come a time when they do have to vacate and they should not lose sight of that.”

Byron Bay is one of several spots classified as beach 'erosion hotspots' by State governments.

Council plea for PM's help

MEGAN KINNINMENT

BYRON Shire Council general manager Ken Grainger has written to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd asking for funds to help with severe beach erosion caused by ex-tropical cyclone Oswald in January.

In his letter, Mr Grainger describes the beach erosion situation in the north of the shire as "critical", with New Brighton and South Golden beaches having shown "minimal recovery" since the Oswald event.

"Council is concerned that New Brighton is bordering on qualifying as an erosion hotspot," Mr Grainger said.

At New Brighton, The Esplanade, he explains, is now only 15m from the erosion escarpment in some places and many residents need the road to access their homes.

The council "may need to consider options such as relocating the road if current conditions persist," he wrote.

The letter, dated July 18, will be tabled at Thursday's council meeting and requests the PM assist the council with technical and financial support to prepare a coastal zone management plan (CZMP) for the area.

At Thursday's meeting councillors will also be updated on other major coastal projects, including the interim rock/hard works at Belongil; beach scraping at New Brighton, and preparing a draft CZMP for the Byron Bay Embayment.

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Authorised by the Electoral Commissioner, West Block, Queen Victoria Terrace, Parkes, ACT.