



# Dick Persson AM

Administrator

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A vibrant and sustainable Central Coast

Central  
Coast  
Council

15 December 2020

The Hon Scott Morrison MP  
Prime Minister  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Email: [dlo@pm.gov.au](mailto:dlo@pm.gov.au)

Dear Prime Minister

I have recently been appointed by the NSW Government as Interim Administrator of Central Coast Council. In 2003 I was appointed by the NSW Government as Administrator for Warringah Council, in 2008 I was appointed by the NSW Government as Administrator to Port Macquarie/Hastings Council and in 2016 I was appointed by the NSW Government as the Administrator of the newly merged Northern Beaches Council.

During each of these appointments I found myself dealing with very serious coastal erosion problems. I am sure you are familiar with the 2016 coastal erosion at Collaroy NSW, with its now famous photo of the private swimming pool ending up on the beach. Most recently, the catastrophe facing 70 home owners at Wamberal on the NSW Central Coast continues to receive publicity.

Television footage on Monday 14 December 2020 of Byron Bay showing the beach being washed away has prompted me to write to encourage the Federal Government to provide the necessary leadership on what is clearly becoming a national emergency.

I wrote in 2016 to your predecessor, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP on this matter and unfortunately this only resulted in a polite and dismissive letter from a middle level public servant, advising me this was a matter for State and Local governments.

While I fully understand both the State and local governments have responsibilities particularly in terms of managing the crises as they are happening, I think it is now clear that national leadership is required.

My dealings with these issues since 2003 have provided the opportunity to learn a great deal from our leading coastal erosion experts. While the argument receiving most publicity is over seawalls, whether to have them and who should pay for them, the expert advice is that the only real long term option for preventing the loss of many of our beaches lies in large-scale sand nourishment sourced from off shore deposits.



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While this would be expensive, so would the loss of beaches, houses and infrastructure as the frequency of storm activity and tidal surges occur at an increasing rate.

It is clear that the cost of these works is beyond the capacity of local councils. I am confident coastal economies would benefit if Federal and State Governments work together to either purchase a number of dredges or at least secure long term contracts to provide beach nourishment at the many erosion hot-spots up and down our magnificent coastline.

It is my sincere hope that you have a chance to lift the profile of this pressing issue and can provide the necessary leadership to deliver a long term solution.

If you or your staff would like to discuss this matter with me personally, I can be contacted on 02 4325 8361.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dick Persson', written in a cursive style.

**Dick Persson AM**  
Administrator  
Central Coast Council