

4 CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT VALUES

4.1 BACKGROUND

The values that the community consider are important in a catchment will form the framework in which to formulate the management approach for those elements related to stormwater quality. The values for the Northern Beaches catchment were identified in workshops with the community and stakeholders (*government authorities and environmental groups*), and in the review of existing management plans. Summaries of the findings of the stakeholder and community consultation are included at **Appendices B and C** respectively. Both the Sydney Northern Beaches Catchment Management Strategy (*SNBCMS*) and the Sydney Regional Coastal Management Strategy (*SRCMS*) are important documents in the identification of these values. From these values will flow the issues of concern and the objectives to deal with the issues.

The values have been divided into three categories, viz, ecological, social and economic. The values under these categories which have been listed in the EPA documentation as worthy of retention and enhancement are:-

- ecological
 - aquatic flora/fauna
 - terrestrial (*riparian*) flora/fauna
- social
 - public health and safety
 - recreation
 - visual amenity
- economic
 - water use for various purposes
 - agriculture
 - stormwater reuse
 - property values

4.2 ECOLOGICAL VALUES

The full range of ecological values to be retained or enhanced as identified in this study are listed below:

- biodiversity
- indigenous flora
- ecological/habitat systems

It was considered important to protect ecological systems rather than individual species. The protection of systems ensures that all aspects are considered and it gives recognition to the complex and often poorly understood interactions between all the elements of the environment.

The SNBCMS identified as one of its three goals to achieve:

- naturally clean and healthy waterways for people, plants and animals.

The main aim of the SRCMS is to “protect and conserve terrestrial and marine ecosystems”. It attempts to achieve this by managing the social and economic conditions so that there are sustainable coastal planning and management practices.

4.3 SOCIAL VALUES

The full range of social values to be retained or enhanced are listed below.

- place management
- equity of access
- public health/safety
- recreation
- visual amenity

The SNBCMS identified that a community working together to achieve a healthy environment was an important goal. Also it was seen that natural values and quality of life could be enhanced through improved and integrated planning.

4.4 ECONOMIC VALUES

The full range of economic values to be retained or enhanced are listed below.

- tourism
- fisheries
- infrastructure
- property values
- natural/man made systems
- other water uses – stormwater reuse, aquaculture etc.

4.5 PRIORITY OF VALUES

The priority of the individual values was assessed as high, medium and low (refer **Table 4.1**). These priorities have been established from consultation with the community and stakeholders and review of existing reports and management plans. A priority is generally given to the maintenance and restoration of natural systems and recreational opportunities because local residents say it is these qualities which enticed them to live in the area. These priorities may change with time depending on community attitudes and the degree of improvements achieved at any point in time.

Table 4.1 Priority of Catchment Values

Catchment Value	Priority
1. Ecological Values	
• maintenance and restoration of biodiversity in creeks, streams and waterways;	high
• maintenance and restoration of indigenous flora especially remnant bushland;	high
• maintenance and restoration of ecological and habitat systems;	high
2. Social Values	
• place management	medium
• equity of access	medium
• public health and safety	high
• recreation – ocean (<i>including swimming, sailing etc.</i>)	high
• recreation – waterway (<i>incl. swimming, sailing etc.</i>)	high
• recreation – riparian zone (<i>including bushwalking and other passive recreation</i>)	medium
• visual amenity	high
3. Economic Values	
• tourism	high
• recreational fisheries	low
• infrastructure value	high
• property values	medium
• natural systems (<i>eg. bushland, natural creek lines etc.</i>)	high
• manmade systems (<i>eg. parks, reserves etc.</i>)	low
• water reuse	low

An interpretation of this table is that ecological values are all considered a high priority, public health and safety, ocean and waterway recreation and visual amenity are considered the highest social values, while tourism, infrastructure and natural systems are considered the highest economic values.