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BirdLife Shoalhaven is a branch of BirdLife Australia Limited ABN 75 149 124 774

**February 11 2020**

**SUBMISSION**

**to**

**Coastal Management Program – Stage 1, Draft Scoping Study Report**

**CONTENT**

- 1.00 INTRODUCTION**
- 2.00 KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS**
- 3.00 ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES**
- 4.00 SPECIES STATUS**

[Photographs : Chris Grounds]

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Dunn".

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Birdlife Shoalhaven acknowledges the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven, their care of country, birds and habitat and pays respects to all Elders.

## 1.00 INTRODUCTION

1.10 This submission refers to Section 4 of the Draft Report.

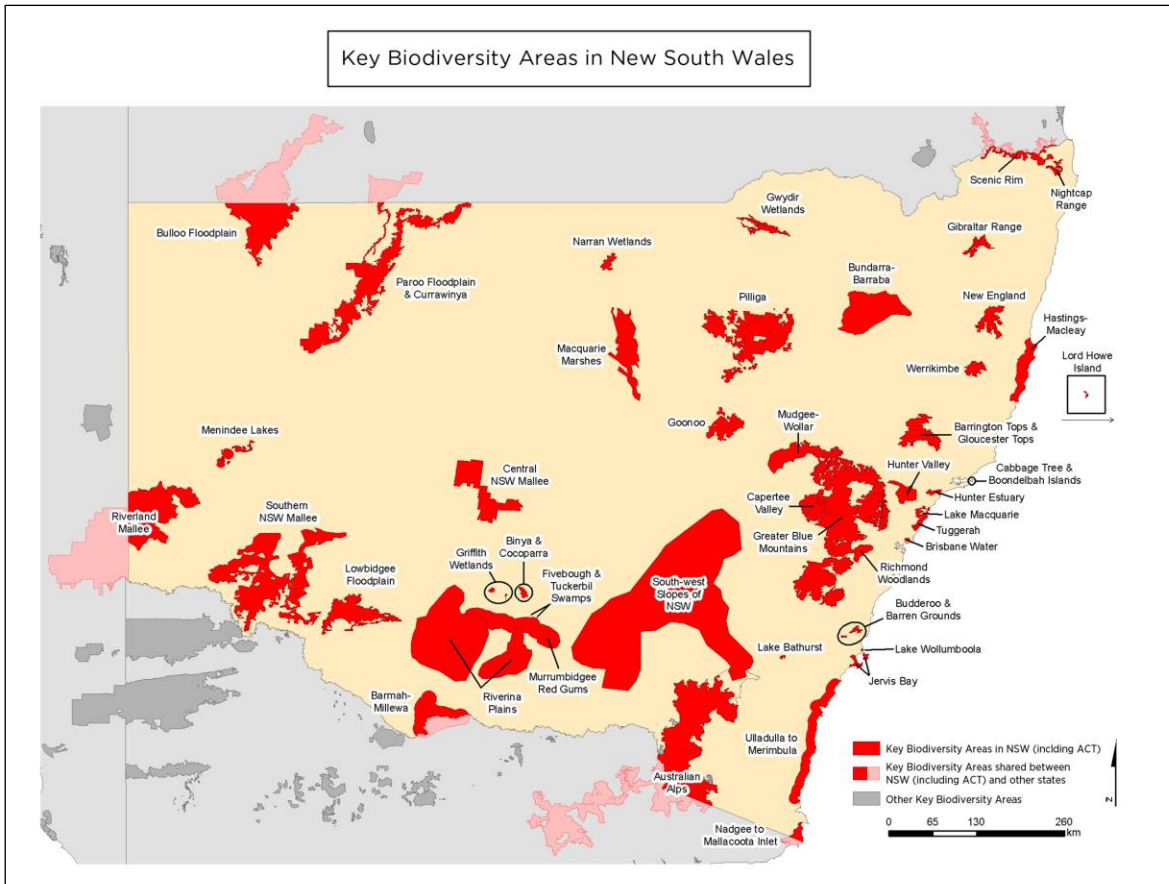
1.20 BirdLife Shoalhaven would contend that the Scoping Report Draft does not adequately recognize the importance of the coastlands under consideration to birds, bird habitat, avian ecology and bird biodiversity and thus underrates the environmental value of this ecology as it involves birds. On this basis the suggestions are made in the following sections.

## 2.00 KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS [KBAs]



2.10 KBAs are an international system of the recognition and acknowledgement of ‘nature’s hotspots’, which “contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity” under the conventions of the International Union for Conservation of Nature [I.U.C.N.] and its global partners, which include BirdLife Australia, the parent organization of BirdLife Shoalhaven.

2.20 There is a need to acknowledge the existence of **KBAs** in the Shoalhaven as determined through BirdLife Australia and the I.U.C.N. especially as these involve key coastlands all of which are noted or consideration in the Draft Report. They are Lake Wollumboola KBA [part of Jervis Bay National Park], Jervis Bay KBA and the Ulladulla Coast KBA and involve reference areas for the Scoping Draft. [see Map]



**2.30** Re 4.3.1 The Shoalhaven estuary and associated coastal area as it includes Seven Mile Beach National Park, Shoalhaven Heads estuary section and Comerong Island, needs to be recognized collectively as a biodiversity 'hotspot' as in 4.3.2;



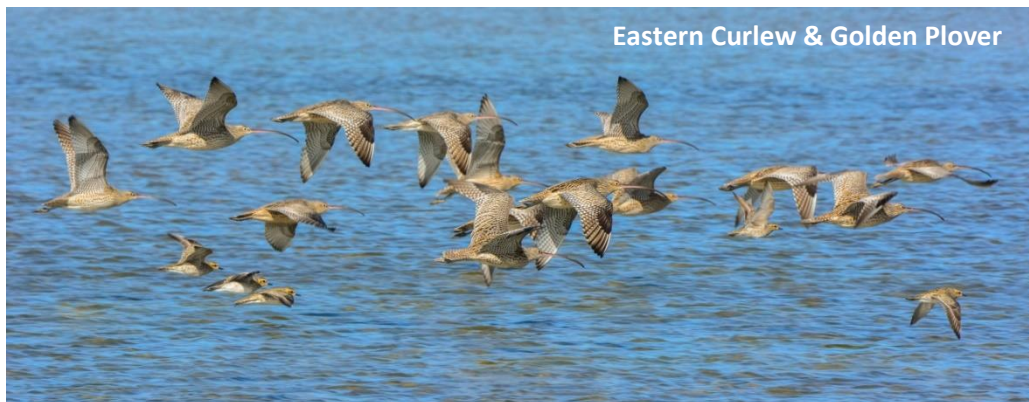
### 3.10 ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

Section 4 limits the mention and thus acknowledgement of Birds in the stated “Environmental Values” of named priority coastal sites despite the importance of these as bird habitat and recognized environmental significance for birds.

### 3.20 Re 4.2.1 Natural and Built Asset Values:

Reference: there are “extensive areas of . . . *roosting, feeding and breeding habitat for migratory shorebirds*” **but major corrections and additions are required.**

**3.21** The migratory shorebirds of the Shoalhaven, e.g. Eastern Curlew and Bar-tailed Godwit, inhabit coastland sites in their non-breeding season, a warm season from equinox to equinox, except for the Little Tern. It is a **resting and feeding season**, fundamental to their health and survival, after and prior to migration in the East Asian - Australian Flyway, from and to far northern latitudes around the Arctic Circle, where they do breed. It is not a breeding season for these bird species.



**3.22** There are **specific species which do breed in the warm season on coastland sites** of the Shoalhaven and four of these are the subject of a NSW state initiative for threatened species in the N.P.W.S. Shorebird Recovery Project. Three of these are domiciled on the coastland where they can be found all year round. These species are the Pied and Sooty Oystercatcher and Hooded Plover. The migratory/semi-migratory Little Tern falls under the same initiative. Their presence in a warm season is significant to coastland management.

**3.23** It is necessary to also note that these are not the only birds found in the environmental context of the coastland as there is a range of waders, raptors, pelagics and various so-called ‘bush birds’ such as honeyeaters. This speaks to the point that the Shoalhaven Coastlands needs a biodiversity theme as it involves various birds. Threatened species status also extends to these other bird species.

#### 4.00 SPECIES STATUS

4.10 The newly established **Threatened Species Index, developed by the Threatened Species HUB**, is initially being established through the Threatened Bird Index. The first data survey for this Index lists **16 species, 9 of which are found in the Shoalhaven and of these 9 species, 6 could be regarded as specifically coastal.**

4.20 Indeed, at least one in every six species of birds in the Shoalhaven is listed threatened species and many of these can be found in the coastlands habitats.



4.30 Of the 17 species listed in both the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2017 and Commonwealth Environment, Protection, Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999 for the Shoalhaven, 15 are coastal and/or pelagic species.

4.40 There are 4 species in the Shoalhaven that are listed as Critically Endangered and 3 of these are coastal birds. viz. Eastern Curlew, Hooded Plover and Beach Stone Curlew.



**4.50 Re 4.5.2 St Georges Basin** – “Terrestrial Habitat composed of wetlands [18 in SGB], national parks and state forests is recognised for national significance for migratory waders and shorebird.” It also needs to be recognized that this very same habitat supports, sometimes on a seasonal basis, a much greater range of bird species, some threatened species, beyond these two groups, which comprise the bird biodiversity of coastlands. The BLS contribution to the Bherwerre Wetland Project Resource with a bird species catalogue, lodged with Council will verify this.

