

Queensland Coastal Conference – September 2007

Proposed Poster

## Measuring the scenic amenity of coastal landscapes

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A community-based study of scenic amenity values in South East Queensland was undertaken in 2003-2004 under the leadership of SEQROC (now COMSEQ) in partnership with the EPA, OUM, other state agencies, NRMSEQ (now SEQ Catchments) and SEQWater. 61 community volunteers and officers from local governments acquired and selected 440 photos to represent a diverse range of visual elements within coastal, urban, rural and bushland settings. 110 of these photos included coastal elements. 964 people from across the region scored these views on a scale from 1 to 10. Statistical models derived from this survey data measure the influence of natural and built elements such tall buildings, residential buildings, roads, natural vegetation, the ocean, sand and natural waterways. These models, a library of photographic images and application guidelines are available as a 'toolkit' for use by officers from state agencies, local governments and NRM bodies. The project also produced a series of interim scenic amenity maps to identify landscape areas of highest benefits to residents, recreation users and tourists, based on an ecosystem services framework. A recent appraisal by planning staff from the Gold Coast City Council suggests that the products provide a powerful set of tools to identify and protect significant viewpoints, view corridors and landscape areas. The method and results have specific applicability to coastal landscapes in Queensland.