

Comments on the *BASIX Target Review*

21 February 2014

Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

Via online submission on 14 February 2014 to: <http://planspolicies.planning.nsw.gov.au>

Re: BASIX Target Review

Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC) is an association of sixteen Councils formed for mutual benefit through collaboration and cooperation. Collectively, the group extends across an area covering more than 600 square kilometres, with a population in excess of 1.6 million people. Our region comprises approximately one quarter of the population of greater metropolitan Sydney and is highly developed, with a complex and relatively dense mix of industrial, commercial and residential land usage.

SSROC welcomes the BASIX Target Review and proposed increases to water, energy and thermal comfort targets. Our comments relate mainly to the review of the SEPP (BASIX) 2004 which we understand is underway concurrently alongside the Target review.

We note the Target review enables BASIX to provide flexibility to developers and homeowners in deciding which measures they apply to meet the targets. Councils would also appreciate some flexibility in relation to the preparation of Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) and Development Control Plans (DCPs).

We understand that provisions in LEPs and DCPs that contain sustainability provisions have no effect to the extent that they are the same, or substantially the same, as a provision of an environmental planning instrument applying to the same land or are inconsistent or incompatible with a provision of the SEPP (State Environment Planning Policy (BASIX) 2004 Clause 8 and 9).

While we appreciate that BASIX needs to be applicable for most development, Councils have the advantage of being able to improve localised outcomes through the planning process, including sustainable environmental outcomes.

For example, large urban renewal areas that are subject to significant increases in density provide specific opportunities to achieve sustainability outcomes. In many circumstances, it is both possible and appropriate for these outcomes to exceed BASIX requirements.

It is desirable for the SEPP to permit the ability to impose local variations where there is sufficient justification to do so. This may be addressed in a similar way as local variations to State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes).

By enabling Councils the discretion to exceed standard BASIX requirements where they and their communities consider it reasonable and beneficial to do so, the SEPP (BASIX) would be more effectively supporting communities to plan for sustainable development and reduce energy and water consumption.