

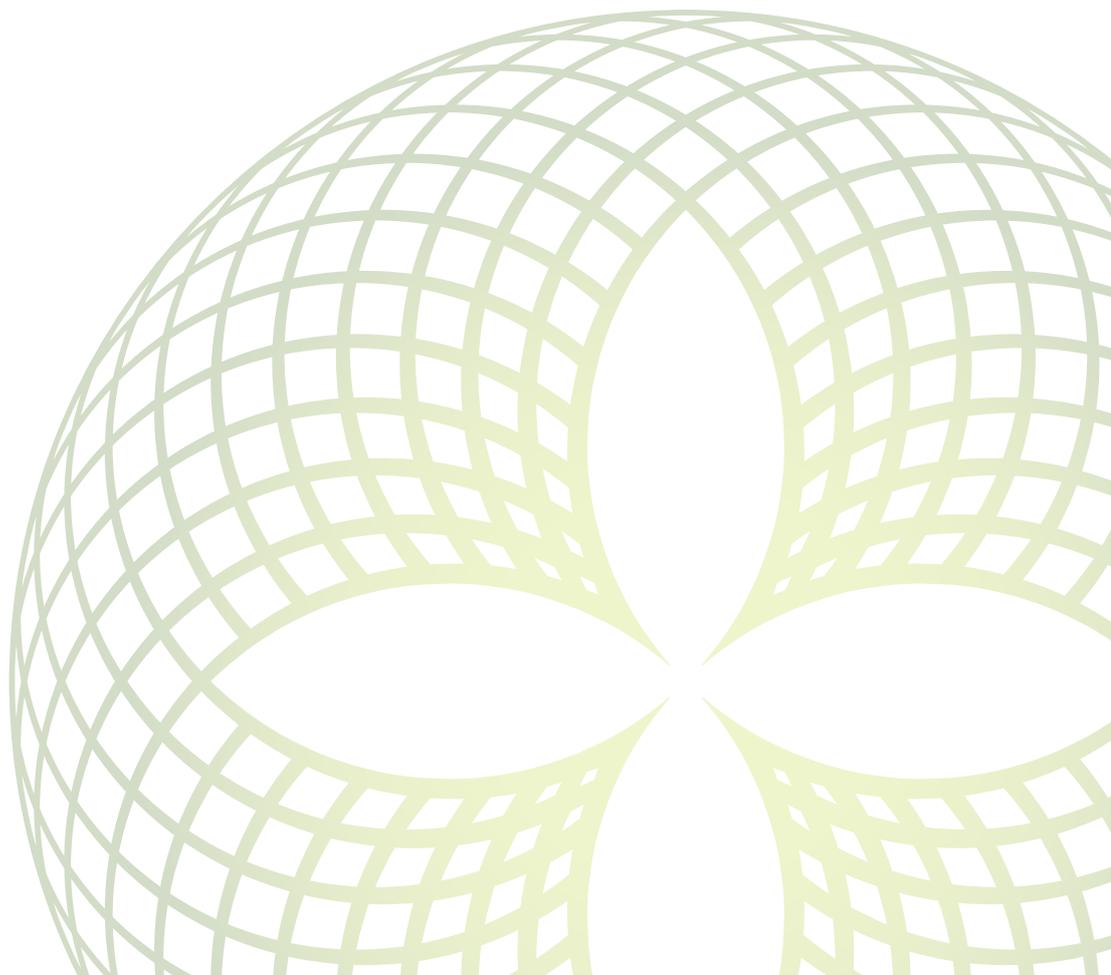
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noosa  
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Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation Limited

(“NBRF”/ “The Foundation”)

# Annual Report Fiscal Year 2016/17



## 1. INTRODUCTION - The Chair (Dick Barnes)

I am pleased to present our Annual Report for Fiscal 2016/17 to the Noosa Shire Council (Council) and hence to the community in general.

The audited accounts and Auditors Report were separately forwarded to Council shortly after the AGM in December. The headlines of these are covered in this report.

In general, the majority of this year was spent in consolidation specifically delivering the projects agreed in the first grant round of 2015 and developing the future strategy.

Towards the end of the year, the Chair, Campbell Corfe, resigned due to pressures from his other commitments. The Directors would like to take this opportunity to thank Campbell for his great contribution to NBRF.

With the support of Council and the NBRF Directors, I was appointed Chair in May/June just at the end of the financial year.

We were able to hold a number of Board workshops taking stock of where we had got to. It was agreed that the time had come for increased activity following the year of largely consolidation.

During these workshops, a list of 15 "Back to Basics" activities were identified to achieve this. This was increased by 2 at the first review with Council in August!

The full list of 17 is given for reference in attachment 1.

Given this process occurred late in the fiscal year, the top 4 critical ones were tackled at this time and are discussed below. The remainder are discussed in the half yearly review for 2017/18 reflecting when they were actioned.

As a result of these Board initiatives, I am pleased to say that a lot of good things are now happening for NBRF and hence the community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Council and the NBRF Directors for the great support and encouragement they have given me in fulfilling this role.

I would now like to cover the key financial points and then the specific activities of 2016/17.

Dick Barnes  
Chair

## 2. FINANCIAL HEADLINES

As mentioned, full financial details are included in the Auditors report, which will be circulated with this report. It should be noted that the Auditor consolidates the P&L and Balance sheet for NBRF into one set of accounts.

For the management of NBRF we look at individual project allocations and the detailed budgets of the operational expenses. Therefore, we control expenditure at the detailed activity level. In 2016/17 we started a series of improvements to these systems which are proving very beneficial both for control and for Board involvement.

Using the Auditors figures:-

### **INCOME**

In summary, NBRF had a total income of \$277,032.

\$168,554 was provided by Council from the Environmental Levy in line with the first round of projects.

\$104,091 was provided by Council for operational expenses which represented a saving against the budget of \$140,000.

\$4,387 interest was received from deposits.

### **EXPENDITURE**

The Auditor shows expenses as \$308,638 giving a relatively small reduction in Net Equity of \$31,606. This follows a significant increase of \$112,932 in 2015/16.

Of the total of \$308,638, payments to projects in the first grants round totaled \$202,645. This gives operational costs of \$105,933.

Of this \$86,852 are people and consultancy costs, and \$19,141 are other expenses.

During 2016/17, we started the preparation of the 10 year periodic review, and new strategic initiatives. This involved an additional level of consulting fees compared to 2015/16 as was highlighted in a May 17 report to Council.

It should be noted that during the year we moved away from salaried staff to a full use of consultants/contractors. In this way, we believe we can be more effective using a small part of a specific expert rather than employing one generalist. We see this as an important policy for the future.

Of the other expenses, the principal items are accounting/bookkeeping, audit fees, and insurance. Total expenses has remained level at around \$20,000 per annum.

The full detail of the operational expenses is shown on page 14 of the Auditors Report.

## BALANCE SHEET

NBRF has no significant capital assets.

Our total assets are \$717,639 of which \$704,009 are the Foundation's deposits.

Total liabilities total \$636,283 of which future liabilities for projects are \$634,556.

This figure includes \$250,000 for environmental grants and \$80,000 for economic projects. The remainder of \$304,556 covers on going commitments to major projects approved in the first grant round.

The difference between assets and liabilities is a surplus on operational expenditure of \$81,346 carried forward to 2017/18.

We would be happy to answer any more detailed questions but hope this gives an easily digested picture of Fiscal 2016/17.

## 3. ACTIVITY REVIEW

As previously mentioned, 2016/17 was primarily a year of consolidation. However, towards the end, we set in hand the first part of the "Back to Basics" program discussed earlier.

The four priority areas actioned immediately were:-

1. Work with the Constitution to clarify roles and have common objectives and vision – **CLEAR OBJECTIVES**
2. An involved team with staff in support - **TEAMWORK**
3. Drive home current projects – **EXISTING PROJECTS**
4. Have another round of EOI big ideas projects (not necessarily big money) as soon as practical without the previous hassles so that we get projects community driven – **NEW GRANT ROUND**

These are now discussed in detail:-

### 3.1 Clear Objectives

In general, we are a relatively new Board of Directors and so we spent some time at an early workshop going through the Constitution and procedural policies to ensure we were all on the same page.

### 3.2 Teamwork

At an early stage, we identified that we needed to be much more of a team which was helped by the series of workshops we ran quickly. In order to cover more ground, we agreed to allocate tasks to individual Directors and to form a special sub-committee for grants that involved only Directors that had no conflict of interest. Similarly we reviewed our supporting consultants/contractors and allocated specific tasks to them.

The following shows the new arrangements:-

#### **NBRF BOARD**

Dick Barnes	Chair, Existing Projects, Financials
Clare Cartwright	Deputy Chair, Grants
Dr David Dique	Koalas, Grants
Dr Michael Gloster	Existing Projects
Prof Karen Hussey	Grants
Cllr Frank Wilkie	Council, Grants

#### **“STAFF” (Consultants/Contractors)**

Nick Heath	Strategy
Kerri Watson	Periodic Review
Simon Walker	Project Assurance
Sarah Radge	Admin/Secretariat
Alison Cooper	Communication

It was identified that, given we are dividing up the tasks, we should get up to full strength with 2 more volunteer Directors. We agreed to get further with strategy formulation in order to identify the particular skills we wish to add to the Board. We would hope to make such appointments in mid-2018.

### 3.3 Existing Projects

We identified that the large projects approved in the first grant round are significant multi-year investments with great potential. These are the three components of “Bring Back the Fish” – placing oyster reefs, encouraging prawns, and reducing erosion in the Kin Kin Catchment. All are taking more time than the original project proposed but their potential for the Noosa River is well supported and exciting.

To help drive this, we formed a Client Group for “BBTF” consisting of a representative of Noosa Parks Association, The Thomas Foundation, and NBRF –the three funders. The principal organisation undertaking the work is the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC). We also realised that, although we do not want to end up as project managers, we need to assure ourselves that projects contain the necessary management resource and are under control. We have therefore hired part time expertise in environmental project assurance to join this group (Simon Walker).

The key delay in the oyster reef part has been obtaining the necessary permits to place them in the river. These reefs will provide structure on the river bed that will encourage oyster spat to settle on them and develop natural reefs thereon on which fish can feed. The legislation identifies that only Council can apply for the permits and we are extremely grateful to Council Staff for their help in this matter. Permits have been obtained and Council indemnified by NBRF with project insurance and a bond.

The second part on prawns has been started now and will develop in earnest in 2018. Working with the University of Queensland. The aim is to identify ways to encourage the prawn population and hence increase the fish stock.

The Noosa Landcare project, “Keeping it in Kin Kin”, aims to find ways to prevent erosion in Kin Kin Creek and its subsidiaries from building sediment in the lakes and river. This will improve water quality and, again, encourage fish. At the same time, we hope to improve agricultural productivity. During the year, a major “Lidar” study and mapping has been undertaken to identify the principal erosion hotspots. This work will now be ground proofed and action plans drawn up. During the year a number of training workshops were held with the Kin Kin community covering potential remedial approaches.

Our project with USC to use sniffer dogs to locate Koala scat is underway and is moving on to DNA analysis which will allow both tracking and health monitoring.

The Noosa Integrated Catchment Association (NICA) completed and distributed their reference book on Sedges.

The Noosa Community Biosphere Association (NCBA) continued with their community engagement sessions using the short video developed by them through a grant from us. This has been effective in educating groups on the role of the Biosphere and will be an ongoing activity now to improve on the low level of community understanding.

### 3.4 New Grant Round

Major progress has been made to launch a new round of grants. \$330,000 is available coming from the environmental levy (\$250,000) and the economic development fund (\$80,000). Although projects will be largely oriented to one or the other, in the spirit of the Biosphere, we are asking all projects to have an element of both “Prosperity and Protection” in them. This will be a major activity in 2017/18.

## 4. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

We recognise that we need to further develop our KPI approach along the lines suggested by Council. For the moment we have used the existing NBRF ones for 2016/17.

The status\* is represented by a traffic light/shading system of red (needs urgent review), Amber (needs monitoring) and Green (meeting expectations).

ACTIVITY	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATUS *
PROGRAMS	Prosper >5 and <8 strategic programs	Green
FUNDING	Noosa Council applications plus DGR Trust Funding	Amber
UNESCO	2017 Renewal	Green
GOVERNANCE	Compliance with required regulations; Maintain transparency of operations	Amber

We believe we have more work to do on funding and governance.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In summary, we hope this annual report shows how the NBRF largely consolidated around delivering the first grant round projects in 2016/17.

However, we hope it also conveys the new level of activity put in place at the end of 2016/17 to set us up for an exciting 2017/18 and also that the NBRF is under tight financial control.

## Attachment 1 - “Back to Basics”

1. Work with the constitution to clarify roles and have common objectives and vision
2. An involved team with staff in support
3. Drive home current projects
4. Have another round of EOI big ideas projects (not necessarily big money) as soon as practical without the previous hassles so that we get projects community driven
5. Develop an overall strategy and encourage projects that also hit strategic areas we believe in
6. Take a view of a symbiotic relationship long term with World Heritage – inform ourselves
7. Write the period report
8. Good links to Council
9. Agreement on ways of working with NCBA quickly
10. Handle governance issues
11. Advocacy policy
12. Fund raising plan
13. Manage the press and communication
14. Healing process with the past contributors
15. Involve members
16. Research relationships
17. Indigenous links