



Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation
Strategic Plan 2018-2028
Executive Summary

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Summary

This document is an Executive Summary of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation (NBRF) Strategic Plan 2018-2028. It is an introduction to the overarching direction of the NBRF, its evolving Modus Operandi and the present and forecast major projects.



About the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation

In 2007, Noosa was internationally recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) consenting to the designation of our Shire as the Noosa Biosphere Reserve under its Man and the Biosphere program (MaB).

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation (NBRF) is a not-for-profit organisation entrusted by UNESCO and Noosa Council to protect our global status as a biosphere reserve by setting strategic priorities unique to the Noosa Biosphere Reserve and enabling projects that meet these criteria.

The NBRF was established by Noosa Council in 2014/15 to manage the charitable trust by a skills-based volunteer board of directors. Its role is to support projects and ideas that enhance biodiversity conservation and promote sustainable living in Noosa.

On 1 July 2018, Noosa Council delivered a new three-year agreement. The NBRF will support science-based projects in line with its strategic priority areas.

What is a biosphere reserve

A biosphere reserve is an area declared by UNESCO as being worthy of recognition as having achieved a notable balance between environment and sustainable human development. The Noosa Biosphere Reserve is the geographical area known as the Noosa Shire plus three kilometres offshore. Noosa is one of two biosphere reserves in Queensland with neighbouring Great Sandy Biosphere Reserve.

Biosphere reserves consist of terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems and showcase various approaches to sustainable development that are culturally relevant to local communities. Designation as a biosphere reserve helps Noosa demonstrate to communities around the world how environmental protection lies at the heart of a community's prosperity and success.

Vision for Noosa Biosphere Reserve

Noosa – living proof environmental protection inspires healthy and prosperous communities.



The Noosa Biosphere Reserve will be a place which demonstrates how humanity can be in harmony with nature. Where nature is beautiful and thrives in the local and visitor experience of Noosa. Where this experience is increasingly valued by locals and visitors, supporting vibrant local industries to achieve a wise balance of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

In 2050, Noosa will be living proof of protection and prosperity when locals and visitors can still:

- Swim, surf, boat and fish in clean waters flush with fish
- Spy a koala in forests footsteps from where you live, work or stay
- Enjoy clean and green food made in Noosa and celebrated in its restaurants
- Gaze on natural vistas and vibrant, communal villages free of city crowds and symbols

What is already distinct and special, the experience of residents and visitors to Noosa will be protected and maintained. Noosa will be a haven from the loss of the natural balance elsewhere. Noosa will be climate resilient and contribute to local and global carbon mitigation.

As a result of protecting Noosa's environmental assets, prosperous local tourism, property, food and other industries will thrive in niche, high-yielding markets where they actively pursue strategies to build real wealth and an enviable quality of life for their local employees and communities.

These strategies include a destination management approach in the tourism industry, rather than merely destination marketing. In the property industry, it means capitalising on exclusivity as well as finding new ways to protect a population cap under pressure from so much growth in the nearby regions. In the hinterland, it means producing the most suitable, sustainable and valuable food, and branding it in ways which captures, deepens and promotes the Noosa experience.

Mission

Working together on 'big ideas' research, fundraising, advocacy and action

Our mission is to work together with stakeholders to develop big ideas research, fundraising advocacy and action for projects that enhance biodiversity conservation and promote sustainable living in Noosa. Securing environmental protection, in ways which inspire healthy and prosperous communities, will require the NBRF to connect its mission's components.

1. Working Together

The NBRF is committed to deepening its engagement with philanthropy, governments, universities, business and community organisations wherever opportunities exist to pursue shared goals and solutions. We will support Council in its role as the lead agent of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve and strategically canvas expertise to catalyse a common understanding and develop big ideas.

2. 'Big ideas'

The NBRF will continue its focus on finding and developing science-based long-term 'transformational' ideas which make change happen efficiently and cost effectively.

3. Research

The NBRF is an expertise-based institution, where it retains a key role in collaborating and funding foundational and applied science to solve the challenges faced by Noosa. Science will underpin all projects funded by NBRF, utilising evidence-based approaches to more accurately define the problems facing Noosa, and in turn, designing the most cost-effective solutions.

4. Fundraising

A core mission of the NBRF will be to raise new funds, co-investment and real and significant in-kind contributions to match investments by the Noosa community. The NBRF will implement a professional fundraising strategy, reaching out to philanthropists, trusts, foundations, corporations, state and federal governments. Its Direct Gift Recipient (DGR) status will help leverage many of these investments.

5. Advocacy and Action

Many of the solutions required need change in policy at local, state or federal level, or they require the education and mobilisation of the community. Advocacy will be an essential tool for the NBRF to achieve its vision. Some of this advocacy will be undertaken by the NBRF directly, through communication and education, often it will be undertaken by project partners with a successful track record in securing the policy change and action.

Guiding principles

The NBRF will deliver projects and research that:

- preserves and enhances the biodiversity within the Noosa Biosphere Reserve;
- encourages and supports sustainable living throughout the community;
- increases understanding about the Noosa Biosphere Reserve through communication and education; and
- share the Noosa Biosphere Reserve experience to contribute to ongoing research and biosphere reserve management benchmarks.

The guiding principles in which we operate are:

- Achieve positive impact on the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.
- Be informed and guided by evidence and peer-reviewed science and social science.
- Pursue opportunity to leverage NBRF funds with other stakeholders.
- Seek evidence that the idea wouldn't happen (at least not easily) without the NBRF's involvement.
- Engage other community actors from Noosa and its surrounds.

How we work

The NBRF has developed a systematic approach to the projects it supports. A 10-year Action Plan will be developed in consultation with priority area industry and science/research groups based on a common understanding of key issues and opportunities.

We will structure the Action Plans over a three-phase milestone timeline:



Our modus operandi for 2018-2028 is:

PHASE 1: Investigate (typically first 12 months)

1. **Identify** priority areas and key issues
2. **Canvass** priority area expertise to develop a common understanding and big ideas, by:
 - i. Consulting stakeholder groups
 - ii. Scientific market research of existing research and gap analysis
 - iii. Convene a symposium of scientists, community groups and philanthropists/funding bodies to identify a project that has agreed scientific rigour and local and philanthropic support.
3. **Scope** a 10-year Action Plan & Key Projects facilitation paper for each Priority Area.
4. **Respond** with proposed deliverables: a 10-year Action Plan and framework of where to source funding support. Consult with local Council and stakeholders.

PHASE 2: Pilot

5. **Pilot** of project plan/s and prove big idea: Major projects are likely to have a pilot study phase of several years where the hypotheses are proven and/or adapted.

PHASE 3: Delivery

6. **Funding** sought for full projects: secure external funding to leverage NBRF investments to realise the project; form project teams and engage community.
7. **Delivery** of full project.

Priority areas

The NBRF has consulted with key stakeholders across Noosa, including its past and current project partners and experts inside and outside the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

As a result, areas in which the NBRF will focus involve the following prioritisation criteria:

- i. Iconic environmental assets of great value to the community and to philanthropy
- ii. Industries with innovative opportunities to significantly reduce threats to those assets
- iii. Issues where NBRF can make a significant contribution in line with its mission, and not duplicate work undertaken by Council or other groups.

The NBRF has categorised its focused project areas into four (4) priority areas: **marine, wildlife, land and people and economy**.

Current projects in these four priority areas are outlined below.

Marine

The **'Bring back the Fish'** project is restoring a lost habitat in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve. This project is funded for several years and will continue as a current project. The long-term outcome sought is a considered balance between marine biodiversity recovery and sustainable recreational and commercial fishing.

Land

The **'Keeping on Keeping it in Kin Kin'** project will continue the erosion repair program to support water quality in the Kin Kin catchment and Noosa river system. The project will prioritise and implement strategic on-ground works to protect and repair erosion prone areas. This project was funded in the 2017 Grants Program.

Wildlife

The **'Koala Forever Noosa'** project aims to secure the future of wild koalas and wild koala eco-tourism in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve. The results from the Koala project suggest a larger co-ordinated project is worthy of more attention. The NBRF will therefore convene a working party to arrive at a program of work for the direction of Koala Preservation for the next Decade for Noosa Council to consider at the next funding round.

People and Economy

The **'Noosa Hinterland Rural Enterprise Project'** aims to foster a range of environmentally and economically sustainable farming and other rural enterprises in a positive Noosa hinterland social environment, integrated with Noosa Biosphere Reserve objectives.

The **'Roadmap to 100% Renewable Energy'** project aims to identify the most efficient and cheapest mix of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures needed to eliminate all carbon dioxide emissions arising from electricity consumption in the Noosa Shire by 2026.

For all current projects, visit www.noosabiosphere.org.au.

Project funding

As part of the new funding deed with Noosa Council (effective 1 July 2018), NBRF will champion projects to Noosa Council for funding approval in addition to other funding sources. NBRF will focus its agenda on fundraising excellence and continuing to aim for a 3:1 return on projects it supports.

For previous projects, NBRF has been successful in obtaining additional funding for projects. In the preceding three-year term, the NBRF has supported 13 conservation and socio-economic projects valued at over \$2.7 million from an investment of around \$900,000 by Council environment levy funds. Projects have involved joint partnerships with multiple stakeholder groups, scientists and universities attracting additional co-investment to the region.

The new modus operandi will enable NBRF to convene an opportunity for philanthropists and funding bodies to join scientists and establish a working party to provide a 'roadmap' to outside funding opportunities and how approaches might be made to interested parties.

For example, findings will be linked into the present ('Bring back the Fish') and proposed (A Coordinated Koala Strategy for the next Decade).

Project funding during year 1 of the 2018-2021 deed includes \$125,000 from the environment levy, with additional funding subject to application. Funding for projects over the remaining two years of the deed is subject to Council's grants process.

NBRF Board replenishment

The NBRF has conducted a skills audit of the Board's competencies with this modus operandi in mind and will seek expressions of interest for new volunteer Director positions to complete its expertise-based board as required.

A Nominations Committee, which includes community members, will make recommendations on those who nominate. In keeping with the Foundation's legal requirements, the final new Directors will be chosen by its Members.

Candidates to become a Director will preferably be strong in one or more of the desired areas of governance, philanthropy or communications.

Contact

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