

Noosa Biosphere® Reserve Foundation Ltd

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Survey to inform better management of Koala health in Noosa Biosphere Reserve**

Researchers have released a report on a field survey to support mapping Koala distribution across the Noosa region.

The research project led by the University of the Sunshine Coast developed a novel survey approach, using highly trained detection dogs to locate koala scats (poos) across 250 sites.

The survey will help inform better management of our iconic species within the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

Dr Celine Frere from the Detection Dogs for Conservation research program says the survey is an important step towards filling in knowledge gaps of local koala distribution.

“These surveys are critical and extend our knowledge about koala distribution across the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.”

“To protect their habitat, we must know where they are, how connected populations are and how healthy they are.

“These surveys provide us with the foundation – where are koalas?

“I always say that we cannot protect what we don’t understand,” said Dr Frere.

Out of the sites surveyed, 103 contained koala scats on both private freehold and public land.

A total of 128 scats were deemed fresh enough to be collected for further genetic analysis.

“These scats will provide us with a broad scale knowledge about koala genetic diversity and connectivity across the Noosa Shire.”



The research project funded by Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation has shared survey data with the Noosa Council, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection and Queensland Parks and Wildlife.

Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation board member, Dr David Dique says research in this area is highly valuable.

“This is new information for the Noosa area.

“We excluded areas that have been previously surveyed and where there are known koala populations and focused our survey effort on freehold land.

“This has been an important survey that will inform a greater understanding of the distribution of koalas across the Noosa shire,” says Dr Dique.

Dr Frere says USC is looking to continue research in this area.

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve grants round is open for expressions of interest and closes 15 September.  
[www.noosabiosphere.org.au](http://www.noosabiosphere.org.au).

### **About Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation**

The Noosa Shire as a region is distinct from other, more developed urban areas on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland and elsewhere in Australia, and has achieved global recognition for the high values of its natural environment. In 2007, this exceptionalism was internationally recognised with 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 is entrusted by UNESCO and Noosa Council to protect our global status as a biosphere reserve.  
[www.noosabiosphere.org.au](http://www.noosabiosphere.org.au).