Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation

DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

World Class. It's in our nature.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation acknowledges the Kabi Kabi/Gubbi Gubbi people, the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters on which we meet. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and recognise the strength, resilience, and ongoing connection to country of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation acknowledges and thanks the many partners and stakeholders it works with to advance the Noosa Biosphere Reserve as a member of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves under the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme.

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1. Chair summary

The 2022/23 year was both a challenging and exciting year for the NBRF. Starting as Chair in September 2022, I was involved in our Noosa Biosphere Reserve 2022 'Grow for Noosa' Gala and Noosa Biosphere Awards. What a joyful way to celebrate our Noosa Biosphere Reserve and achievements of the community in working to support it. Funds raised from the Gala were contributed to Terri Waller's SevGen new initiative, 'Deadly Distribution Time: Grow Sunshine'. Monies were used for the purchase of a refrigerated vehicle enabling them to deliver locally grown native fruits from 'Galeru: Forever Fruits' indigenous food farm throughout the region.

In the first half of 2023 we conducted two **Sustainability Forums**, with over 50 stakeholders represented from across the Noosa Shire. A resounding common theme was the need for collaboration across these organisations. From here we have been able to develop our organisational Strategic Plan and prioritise a program of work. We will discuss this further in the Report.

Some of our highlight achievements from the year, detailed in Section 8 of this Report:

- **Koalas on the Move!** A community education and driver awareness campaign to reduce koala vehicle strikes during peak breeding season – one of the greatest threats to our local koala. The campaign was a great success with no koala strikes on the targeted hot spot roads for the first year ever. The project was funded from monies raised at the 2021 Noosa Biosphere Gala.

- **DAF Surfer Education Campaign (aka Surf Safe Noosa)** is a community education campaign designed to help surfer and water users understand local conditions and stay safe year-round. This project was an outgrowth of the NBRF 2021 Marine Species Symposium where public education was ranked as the highest priority of four recommendations made as a result.

- **Glossy Black-Cockatoo Bioacoustics Monitoring** We received and reviewed the final report and briefing on the initial round of monitoring and are working on a proposal for additional monitoring for the 2024 breeding season.

- **Tackling Eco-Anxiety** project/PhD with ZEN, NDLC, NSC & CQU an ambitious project combining tree planting initiatives and quantitative analysis of pre and post planting to determine the impact on health and wellbeing relating the phenomenon of "eco-anxiety" in youth.

At our last AGM, we welcomed Richard Brown, Honorary Associate Professor in Economics at the University of Queensland and Bill Allan, CFO of INGO Destiny Rescue, who, along with general board duties, assists us with our finances, governance, IT and legal.

Our Executive Coordinator, Sharon Wright, completed her contract. We thank her for her dedication to the NBRF.

We are pleased that the Auditors report found the NBRF in a robust position with the principal activity of the Trust continuing to be identified as enabling innovative projects and ideas that enhance biodiversity conservation and promote sustainable living as well as Noosa Biosphere values in the Shire.

The NBRF gratefully received support and confidence of Noosa Shire Council as we continue to deepen and broaden our relationship.

We acknowledge and thank our dedicated NBRF team; our volunteer directors, consultants, advisors, and volunteers for all the hours of work and their deep dedication toward the sustainability of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve and success of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation.

Fiona Berkin

Chair
Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation

2. Financial report

The Auditors report and the statutory accounts are included in detail at Appendix D. The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation is required to report against relevant accounting standards.

The Financial report is prepared on a going concern basis which contemplates continuity of normal business activities. Funds may be received in one year to be utilised over a 3-year period depending on the relevant project funded. The ability of the Foundation to continue to operate as a going concern is dependent on sufficient cashflow from operations, donations etc to meet its projects and liabilities.

Statement of financial position

As of 30 June 2023, our financial position shows total equity of $364,595 (2022 - $218,109) with an operating result of $146,486 (2022 - $44,765) as represented by the net income and expenditure set out in the following sections.

NBRF has no significant capital assets. Our total assets are $375,997 of which $265,911 are the Foundation's bank deposits which reflects project funds not yet paid out or allocated.

Total liabilities are $11,402. The difference between assets and liabilities is the Equity of $364,595 (2022 - $218,109).

Income

NBRF had a total revenue of $382,022 (2022 - $274,115) for the fiscal year, made up of:

$20,000– Noosa Council Grant – Sustainability Forum

$70,203 – Environmental grant (awarded in 2021-2022 year – brought into revenue in 2022-2023 year)

$50,000 – funds received 2022 year and held over – now brought into revenue (from DAF Surf Safe Noosa)

$8,182 Noosa Council Grant – re Koalas on the Move campaign

$5,000 - Grant Noosa Council – Data Portal Pilot – (Returned to Council 2023-2024 year)

$186,000 – Operational Grant (NSC)

$13,400– Fundraising income (Gala ticket sales)

$10,500 – Sponsorship (Gala)

$4,903 – Gambling Community Benefit Fund

$13,834 – Donations (online and Gala auction)

Funding and grants received

NBRF secured funding from Noosa Council Community, Environment and Climate Change Grant Project Round 17 for the following projects: Sustainability Forum and Data Portal.

NBRF also secured $50,000 from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries in 2022 year which was held over to 2023 year, for the implementation of a collaborative public education campaign around water user safety in Noosa – Surf Safe Noosa.

Expenditure

Expenses totalled $235,537 (2022 - $229,350), made up of direct project related costs $63,912 (2022 - $51,411) and operational related costs $171,625 (2022 - $177,939).

GRANTS EXPENDED AND OTHER PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT	AMOUNT	RECIPIENTS
PhD Top-up Scholarships	$10,000	UniSC
Koalas on the Move Campaign	$28,474	Various
Sustainability Forum	$19,642	Various
DAF Surf safe	$5,796	Various
Total Project Expenses	**$63,912**	

COMMITTED PROJECT FUNDS HELD

PROJECT	AMOUNT
Blue Biosphere PhD	$17,000
Conservation Indicators PhD	$20,000
Koala Bluetooth Tag & App	$25,000
Bull Shark Ecology	$30,000
Total funds held	**$92,000**

OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

Total expenses for the year of $235,537 were proportioned as set out in Figure 1.

The contract support staff are attributed to contractors supporting the Board by undertaking NBRF administration and external marketing communications.

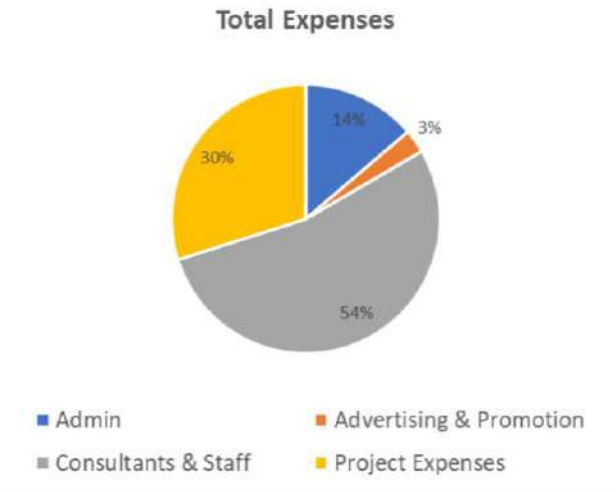


Figure 1: Operational Expenses

NB: Advertising & Promotions – see page 12 for more information.

Value creation

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board, and funds received, typically have a multiplier effect (the value of work performed or total project value in comparison to total funding received) that adds significant value to the Noosa Biosphere Reserve community and environment.

A conservative number has been estimated with the Chairperson spending on average two days a week and the remaining Board members spending approximately a half day per week on Foundation-related activities. Given the experience and seniority of the Board, we have assumed a consulting rate of $200 per hour for this comparison. We've calculated that this in-kind contribution from the Board members is conservatively estimated at over $200,000 – adding to the overall value of the NBRF for the community and Council.

This multiplier effect represents significant value for the Noosa Council in continuing support that achieves tangible outcomes in across environmental, social, cultural, and economic areas of the Noosa Shire.

3. The Board

The Board is made up of up to seven volunteer Directors and one Noosa Council appointed representative who collectively guide the direction of the Foundation and liaise with project stakeholders.

Directors are appointed for terms of up to three years to ensure creative stimulus is maintained and the broadest range of community skills and experience engaged.

The 2022/23 Board consisted at various times of the following Directors: Fiona Berkin (current Chair), Linda Venables (current Deputy Chair), Cr Tom Wegener (Council Representative), Prof Rod Smith, Jady Smith, Dr Jan Green, Rowan Rafferty, Duncan Thompson, Bill Allan, Assoc. Professor Richard Brown, and Jennifer Black.

The Board thanks the following directors whose terms expired during the fiscal year – Duncan Thompson, Prof Rod Smith, and Jady Smith. Resignations were also received from Rowan Rafferty and Dr. Jan Green and their time and efforts are also greatly appreciated and acknowledged.

A recruitment process for new directors was conducted in August 2023 with new Directors Prof. Ian Lowe and Peter Hunnam selected and commenced their terms in October.

See a full list of Board members in Appendix B.

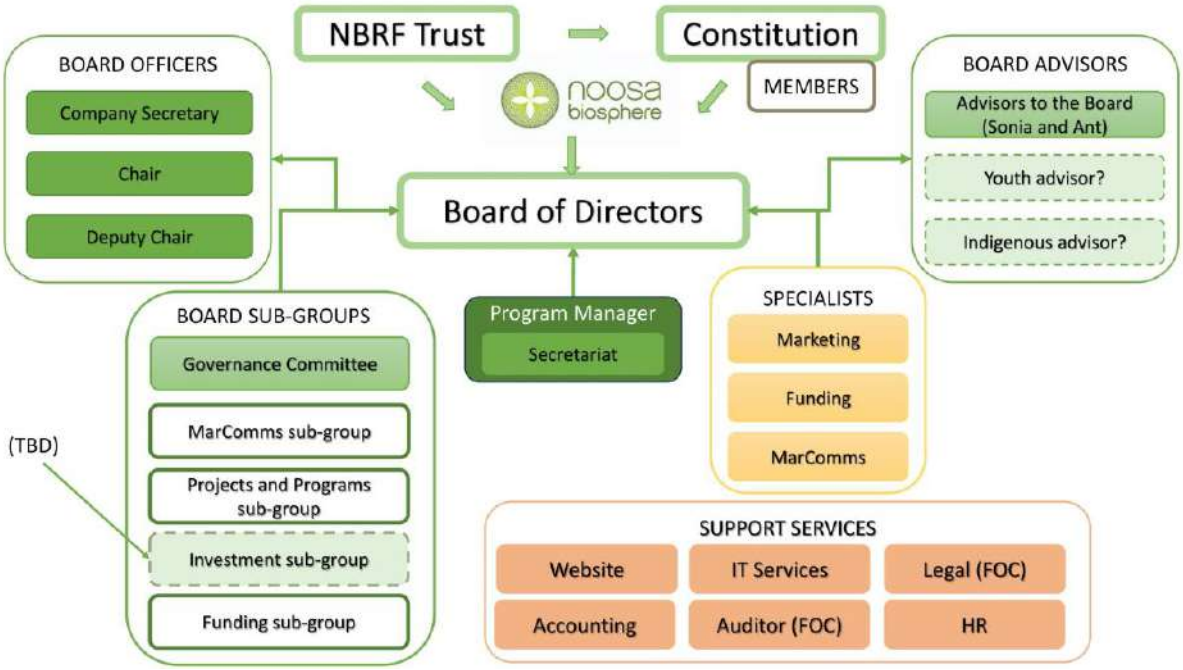


Figure 2: Operational Framework

4. Strategic Plan

4.1 Sustainability Forums

As an enabling body, the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation hosted the inaugural Noosa Biosphere Sustainability Forum, a series of stakeholder workshops conducted in February and May 2023 in partnership with Noosa Council.

The two workshops had approximately 50 stakeholders partake. In addition, a series of in-depth one-on-one interviews were offered to all participants, sustainability and biosphere reserve management experts were consulted in April and May, and the NBRF Board also held a strategic alignment workshop in July. Overall, the collaborative process was independently facilitated by strategist Jacqui Wilson-Smith, Director of the Sustainable Innovation Co. and delivered robust and meaningful engagement with all stakeholders.

The overarching purpose of the Sustainability Forum was to highlight sustainability in action and to identify opportunities to build regional capacity and resilience by collaborating with local businesses, social enterprises, community services, environmental conservation groups and research institutions across key pillars of sustainability: Environment, Economic, Social and Cultural.

Quality input from stakeholders was instrumental in removing silos, building trust, and designing a vision together for the Noosa Biosphere Reserve that is in harmony with community and visitors alike. We were delighted that our partners and community groups shared values and many similarities and that our differences were respectfully heard and understood.

From this Forum engagement process, we have gained a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities to collaborate on and we aligned on prioritising three core programs that we can all work together on that will conserve, restore, and enhance the Noosa Biosphere Reserve whilst inspiring biosphere reserve values-based behaviours.

Thanks to Noosa Council Environmental Services, Economic Development and Social Services teams for their input in developing a successful Sustainability Forum.

4.2 Strategic Statement

From the Sustainability Forum outputs, we were able to develop our Strategic Statement for the Foundation (see following page).

4.3 Strategic Plan

Our strategic plan focus is as follows:

- Conserve, protect and responsibly use what we love most about our biosphere reserve.
- Work and collaborate better on biosphere reserve matters through a biosphere collective.
- Learn about, experience, respect and enjoy our biosphere reserve better.
- Communicate biosphere reserve values and stories better to community and visitors.
- Manage our biosphere reserve smarter with enabling technologies.
- Champion sustainable investment to support our Noosa Biosphere Reserve vision.

OUR GOALS

As the enabling foundation, we inspire and empower our partners and community to facilitate programs that conserve, restore, and enhance the Noosa Biosphere. Our purpose is further demonstrated under three core goals:

Biosphere Values – Liveable, happy, healthy. Our approach is to enable these Biosphere Values through culture, learning, education, research, and communications.

Thriving Nature – Sustainable use. NBRF seeks to encourage and support sustainable use of our biosphere reserve through conservation, regeneration, zero emissions, regenerative approaches, and research.

Smart Economy – Innovative and Green. NBRF seeks to encourage and support innovative and green opportunities in; green industries, sustainable economic development, circularity, skills / talent, and technology.

NOOSA BIOSPHERE RESERVE FOUNDATION

Strategic Statement 2023-2025

Foundation objectives

1. Maintain UNESCO status by achieving the MAB outcomes
2. Inspire behaviour change to conserve biodiversity and support sustainable development through surfacing evidence-based information and creating a common purpose for community and partner action.
3. Design and deliver a long-term partnership of initiatives that deliver impactful outcomes across nature, people and economy.
4. Amplify the designation of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve by recognising NBRF's work, and pursuing intention status to attract collaborators.

Our ultimate goal is to sustain the Noosa Biosphere Reserve principles, creating a thriving region for residents, visitors and businesses to live in harmony with nature.

Operationalising our strategy and enabling goals:

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE	RESPONSIBILITY	ATTRACT PARTICIPATION
BEHAVIOUR	**OPERATIONAL**	**SHARED INTEREST**
Connect	Governance	Awareness
Facilitate	Funding	Volunteer
Advocate	Connection	Invest
Collaborate	Service Delivery	Lead
Fund	Advocacy	Partner
Share	Reporting	Advocate

NOOSA BIOSPHERE RESERVE FOUNDATION

Strategic Statement 2023-2025

Our Vision

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve is increasingly valued as living proof that, by respecting country, and people living in harmony with nature, we inspire happy, healthy, thriving communities.

Our Purpose

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation (NBRF) celebrates the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve by engaging, inspiring and facilitating partners and community to promote a balance between people and nature.

Our purpose is categorised under three key areas:

BIOSPHERE VALUES	THRIVING NATURE	SMART ECONOMY
Liveable, happy, healthy	***Sustainable use***	***Innovative, green***
Culture	Conservation	Green Industries
Learning	Regeneration	Economy
Education	Zero Emissions	Circularity
Research	Regenerative	Talent and skills
Communications	Research	Technology

We activate these programs by collaborating with our community groups, with the goal to attract sustainable investment to maximise project viability and outcomes.

The impact of the NBRF is measured by positive Man and Biosphere (MAB) outcomes including:

TRUSTED PARTNERSHIPS | ATTRACTION OF FUNDS | ALIGNMENT WITH NBRF GOALS | SHOWCASE + CELEBRATE OUTCOMES

4.4 Delivery of Strategic Plan

The three-year Strategic Plan has been developed to give definition of the direction required of the NBRF from 2024 – 2027. Highlights of the strategy include:

BIOSPHERE RESERVES WORKING TOGETHER

With the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Reserve to our South and the Great Sandy Biosphere Reserve to our north, there are several opportunities to collaborate on projects and programs.

- A koala tracking program which recently received grant funding has recently created a cross-biosphere partnership to maximise the opportunities and benefits of the program.
- Some species of birds which migrate along the eastern seaboard have seen a dramatic decline in recent years due to climate change, loss of habitat and other human induced pressures. A cross-biosphere program to identify opportunities for connectivity of suitable habitat, tracking of species flight paths and a presence / absence research program is currently being explored.
- Symposiums, conferences, and seminars are a wonderful opportunity to bring members of different biosphere reserves together to share experiences and progress biosphere principles collectively.

BIOSPHERE RESERVE AWARENESS – MAJOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

What is a Biosphere Reserve? Why is it important? How can you help?

The Noosa Shire, like many districts is constantly under pressures from population growth, climate change, increased visitation and lack of awareness and understanding of the principals of natural environmental preservation. We are aware from statistics gathered from Noosa Shire Council and other authorities that many residents identify the natural environment as the number one reason they live here. This priority is echoed by visitors who cherish the pristine beaches, old growth forests and of course the Noosa River.

Through 2024-2027, the NBRF seek to engage with its many stakeholders and partners to deliver a major education program, reaching across all age groups and demographics. The principle aims of the program are:

- Raise awareness of what a biosphere reserve is and why it is important to protect for future generations.
- Identify what it means to live in a biosphere reserve and how to implement changes in our daily behaviours to nourish and cherish our biosphere reserve and preserve for present and future generations.
- Seek input and ideas for how we can best manage the Noosa Biosphere Reserve under the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Program.
- Create opportunities for new partnerships, working groups and collaboration with the green economy.
- Explore ways to incorporate new learning materials to promote living in a Biosphere Reserve into the schools curriculum.
- Involve children in designing and promoting the campaign.

INITIATE AND ENABLE NEW PROJECTS WITH OUR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN THREE CORE AREAS:

- Thriving Nature
- Biosphere Values
- Smart Economy

Several proposed projects and programs have been identified for the next three years which are either advancing or are in the exploration phase. We have identified such by implementing a process that recognises vision, purpose, and goals. Details will be provided in early 2024.

INCREASED FUNDRAISING AND PHILANTHROPIC ENGAGEMENT

The NBRF have a big vision for the Noosa Biosphere Reserve and to enable the projects and programs which are currently progressing or proposed for the future, it is paramount that we increase our revenue. With the engagement of a highly experienced and successful fundraising consultant, the NBRF has a detailed marketing plan for the three-year period and beyond.

The current Aims and Responsibilities of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation are highlighted in Figure 3 below.

ADVANCING RELATIONSHIPS TO IDENTIFY INCREASED COLLABORATION AND RELATED OPPORTUNITIES

Since the inception of the NBRF, there have been numerous relationships formed with stakeholders, partners and indeed our Authority, Noosa Shire Council. Many have similar goals, visions, and purpose with regards to the natural environment. Whether it be to conserve and protect koala' or identify the ways to transition to a green economy, there are many projects and programs which share a similar vision and yet they are often working in silo.

A key component of our strategy is to increase collaboration with likeminded organisations to maximise efficiencies and benefits across the biosphere. We aim to do this by:

- Mapping our stakeholders, identifying opportunities for collaboration between various groups.
- Identifying synergies with Councils projects and programs with those of our stakeholders and partners to seek opportunities for collaboration, input, and progression.
- Increasing awareness of state, federal and international collaboration opportunities.

The NBRF has a big vision and a passionate and highly experienced board of executive professionals who are dedicated to execute this. As we progressed with developing our vision, it was important to review our internal structure and seek ways in which we could maximise the benefit of effort being exuded.

Upon review of our structure, we looked carefully at our aims, responsibilities, and goals to identify ways in which we could potentially improve the way we operate.

To deliver these, the Board has proposed to assign activities under five sub-committees:

- Governance
- Projects and Programs
- Marketing and Communications
- Fundraising
- Investment

Whilst the Board retains overall accountability, individual elements of responsibility have been delegated to each Sub-Committee. These governance changes are due to take effect in the next fiscal year.

The NBRF have an ambitious and exciting strategy. We believe that with the continued passion, commitment, and support of all our authority, stakeholders, partners and indeed Board members that these ambitions can be obtained and will make a huge contribution to a thriving Noosa Biosphere Reserve for present and future generations.

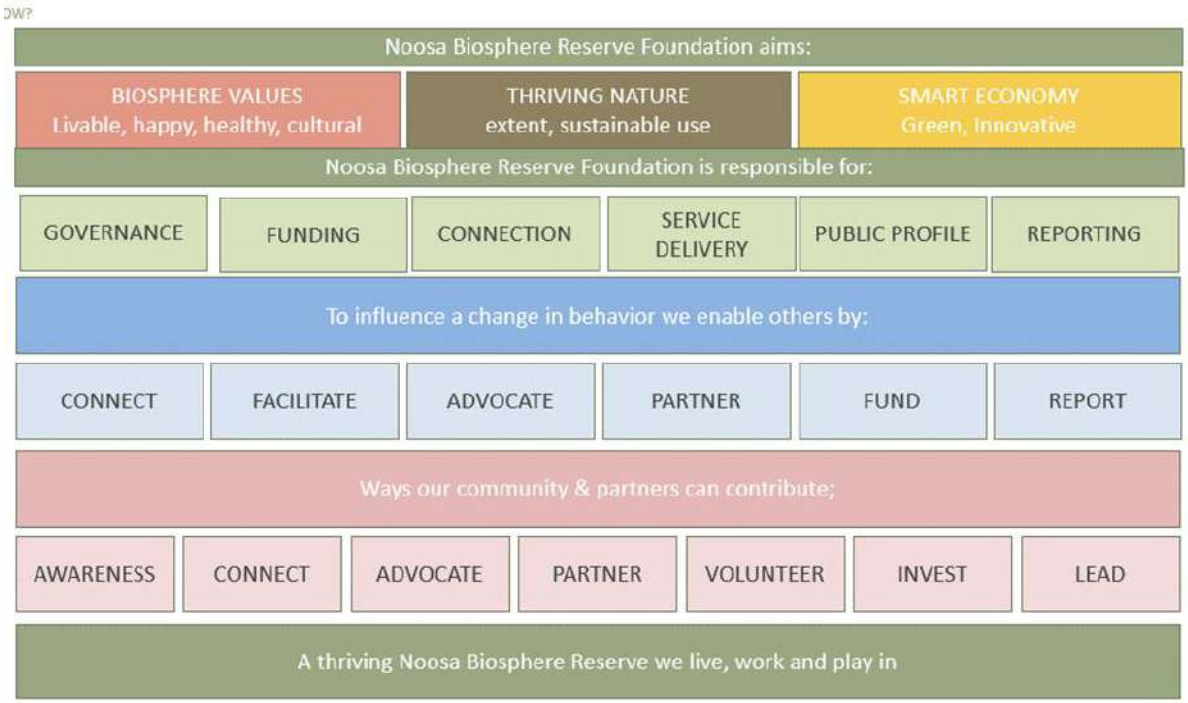


Figure 3: NBRF Aims, Responsibilities and Goals

5. Partnerships and engagement

Noosa Shire Council

Noosa Shire Council remains a committed partner of the NBRF and actively support our endeavours to help ensure the Noosa Biosphere Reserve continues to be a leading example of a community sustainably living in balance with the natural world. We will continue to work closely with the Noosa community, our partners, and supporters to build on these relationships and promote Biosphere values and how to be a 'Smart Biosphere.' We thank the Noosa Councillors and staff for their ongoing support.

Recent collaborations include two Sustainability Forums, Koalas on the Move! education campaign and road signage, providing input into council staff Environment Strategy Monitoring Report, the Biosphere Periodic Review process, participation in the Earthcheck program, providing input into the Destination Management Plan, as well as assisting with the recent UK Consul-General international cooperation visit.

We anticipate providing even more value in the coming years via new collaborative opportunities that are developing out of the increased capacity of the NBRF board and advisors as we engage with Council's Climate Change, Environment, and Economic Development teams.

University of the Sunshine Coast

The University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC) and NBRF partnership continues to develop following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2021. The MoU commits both parties to support and coordinate research and education that enhances biodiversity conservation and promotes sustainable living in Noosa.

CURRENT COLLABORATIONS

1. **The Blue Biosphere**: PhD research seeking to better understand the iconic marine species and how they use the waters in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.
2. **Conservation Indicators:** PhD research seeking to develop a comprehensive set of benchmarks for conservation and sustainability planning that can be used for environmental management best practice enhancement and provide important data for future planning.
3. **Bull Shark Ecology:** – recently launched with a media day alongside UniSC and other partners/stakeholders this scientific research project will help to inform our understanding of Bull Shark behaviour and movements throughout the region with the goal of both improved safety and conservation outcomes.
4. **Koala Bluetooth Tag and App:** collaborating with eight partner organisations, to develop technology to produce innovative solar-powered Bluetooth koala ear tags paired to a smartphone application and a digital platform to enable the public to participate in koala conservation.

Australian National MAB Committee

In November 2022, all Australia Biospheres met in the Great Sandy Biosphere, kindly hosted by Burnett Mary River Group (BMRG). Over the course of two days, we addressed:

- Revision of Australian MAB Committee Terms of Reference
- MAB Youth Ambassadors
- Branding and Australian Biosphere Website
- Commonwealth Funding Application

We jointly submitted an (unsuccessful) funding application to The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, Minister for the Environment and Water, in which we provided:

- Executive summary: How Biosphere Reserves align with election commitments
- Australian Biosphere Reserves maps and statements.
- Funding pitch – $250k of untied per biosphere reserve per year, over seven years.
- Highlights of what is happening in other countries.

Other key alliances

- Zero Emissions Noosa
- Tourism Noosa
- Noosa And District Land Care
- Noosa Environmental Education Hub
- Noosa Integrated Catchment Association
- Food And Agricultural Network
- Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee
- Great Sandy Biosphere Reserve
- Sunshine Coast Biosphere Reserve
- Western Port Biosphere Reserve
- Fitzgerald Biosphere Reserve

Noosa Biosphere 'Grow for Noosa' Gala 2022

In November, the NBRF held its third annual fundraising gala, under the theme 'Grow for Noosa' at Peppers Noosa Resort & Villas. This year's Gala focused on supporting the growth of a vibrant and sustainable local food and agriculture economy in the Noosa region and featured the second annual Noosa Biosphere Awards.

Attendees heard from several industry expert panellists as they discussed the importance of regional food resilience and the current challenges and opportunities for Noosa's food and ag industry. Panellists included Food & Agricultural Network (FAN) CEO Emma Greenhatch, chef and Slow Food Ambassador Matt Golinski, Pyrocal Managing Director, Durrel Hammond and local regenerative farmer and Kandanga Farm Store owner, Tim Scott (Country Noosa). The panel was facilitated by ABC Sunshine Coast Rural Reporter, Jennifer Nichols.

A fashion show featuring Sunshine Coast TAFE students showcased recycled fashion designs.

Noosa Biosphere Awards 2022

The NBRF sponsored its second annual Noosa Biosphere Awards celebrating sustainability excellence within the Noosa Shire and highlighting individuals, community groups and businesses aligned with UNESCO Biosphere Reserve values.

An independent panel of judges assessed entries across four categories of Land, Water, Wildlife, and People & Economy with a special recognition of two young Eco-Leaders, Jarrah Small and Spencer Hitchen.

2022 AWARD WINNERS

- **Land Category** – Rosecliffe Boutique Farm Cottages
- **Water Category** – Noosa Integrated Catchment Association – Waterwatch Team
- **Wildlife Category** – Meghan Halverson (Queensland Koala Crusaders)
- **People & Economy Category** – Plastic Free Noosa

SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

Acknowledging our Category Award sponsors: University of the Sunshine Coast; Bendigo Community Bank Tewantin-Noosa, Tourism Noosa, Tewantin-Noosa Lions Club. Gold and Silver in-kind sponsors: Alsahwa, Your Local Lifestyle, Peppers Noosa, and Empire Art Photography.

Special thanks to our judges: Shaun Walsh, Vivien Griffin, Judy Castledine, Cr Amelia Lorentson, Cr Karen Finzel, Cr Brian Stockwell and former NBRF Chair, Rex Halverson for their time and commitment.

6. Marketing, brand and communications

Marketing

In 2023, the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation developed a fresh marketing strategy that would focus its energies on building awareness and education for 'living in a biosphere'. Central to the overarching goals of NBRF is behaviour change, which is required by people who live and visit the Noosa region.

We have engaged Sonia Shillington as Board Advisor to assist specifically with building the NBRF marketing program. Sonia is the former Head of Marketing and Events for Tourism Noosa, who spearheaded the major tourism campaign, Enter the Biosphere. Sonia brings her regional knowledge and environmental marketing nous and to the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation, as a complement to the existing Board skill set.

The 'always on' marketing program continued with project promotion and documentation via social media, partner collaboration and stakeholder engagement with community groups, including activating the Sustainability Forum. Weekly email newsletters continued to circulate as a regular reporting tool to community, which featured all NBRF MAB project communications and general updates.

Brand

The NBRF continues its efforts on building a positive and valued brand profile in the Shire.

Marketing and communications supported this effort by raising the profile of partner projects and key initiatives of the NBRF, through its social and digital channels, and earned media coverage.

The most recent fiscal year reflected several profile-raising initiatives that have helped position the NBRF as a lead organisation in advancing environment and sustainability practices in the Noosa Shire, including:

- Grow for Noosa Gala
- Noosa Biosphere Awards
- Bull Shark Ecology project launch media day with UniSC
- Surf Safe Noosa campaign
- Koalas on the Move! campaign

To maintain our relationship with our biosphere reserve network and build the Noosa Biosphere brand, we regularly communicate Noosa Biosphere Reserve initiatives, nationally and internationally by contributing articles to newsletters and engaging in community groups:

- Western Port Biosphere Reserve Connector Newsletter (Victoria);
- World Network of Coastal & Island Biosphere Reserves – quarterly newsletter & Facebook group; and
- Contribute content to UNESCO MaB.

GLOBAL MEETING OF THE WORLD NETWORK OF ISLAND AND COASTAL BIOSPHERE RESERVES

One of the major events NBRF participated in this year was the global conference of UNESCO's 11th Meeting of the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves at K'Gari. Chair Fiona Berkin and Secretariat Rex Halverson were in attendance and presented on the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation's projects and future focuses. Mass media including Channel 7 and other local media profiled the event including an excerpt from NBRF's presentation.

This event was a significant opportunity for Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation to continue strengthening its local and international ties with other Biosphere Reserves, as we aim to progress our global exemplar vision within the network.

Social media, public relations, and advertising

MEDIA PUBLICITY

Earned media continues to play a key role in our communication strategy. Local news media is an important channel to communicate positive local initiatives that benefit the Noosa community.

Key media activity this period has featured:

- Global Biosphere Reserves meeting at K'Gari (Channel 7 coverage)
- Koalas on the Move! campaign
- New Chair & Board appointments
- Executive Coordinator profile
- Noosa Biosphere Awards
- Noosa Biosphere Gala
- Surf Safe Noosa campaign
- Noosa & Region Agri-Hub

SOCIAL MEDIA

As one of our key brand-building platforms, the NBRF are dedicated in planning content that will help inform and inspire our community. We are active on Instagram and Facebook and have been more recently focused on LinkedIn for business-to-business reach.

ADVERTISING

The NBRF incorporates paid advertising to amplify its message and support key campaigns as part of their individual promotional strategy. Advertising spend is predominantly targeted to local media outlets and social media marketing.

Key campaigns that utilised advertising were:

- Noosa Biosphere Awards
- Noosa Biosphere Gala
- Koalas on the Move! campaign
- Participation at the ZEN EV Expo

The Noosa Biosphere Gala & Awards 2022 included a program of advertising to help build awareness of the Awards and attract as many nominations as possible, and to support ticket sales.

The Koalas on the Move! driver awareness and education campaign heavily featured in Your Local Lifestyle and Noosa Today as well as social media paid ads to target Noosa drivers. The campaign used a unique cartoon story of a dispersing koala to stand out and cut through.

Year ahead outlook

The NBRF has developed its renewed strategic purpose and marketing framework for its 1-3 year outlook. Informed from market sentiment testing and aligned to the Foundation's business objectives, the behaviour change of residents, visitors and business communities will only come about as a result of significant education and awareness.

Understanding the impact people have on Country and the rise in population and tourism numbers, it has become more important than ever for NBRF to support knowledge-building activity to influence outcomes that will impact the future of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve and maintaining our UNESCO status.

In alignment with the Foundation's business objectives, the marketing objectives flow down to include:

- Amplification of the NBRF brand to drive awareness, trust, and brand reputation.
- Inspire behaviour change amongst residents, business, and visitor communities to aid in maintaining the UNESCO status.
- Maximise strategic stakeholder engagement to increase fundraising and collaboration.

In FY24, NBRF will launch a brand campaign that is underpinned by education messaging that will inspire and enable behaviour change in the region. It is anticipated that the campaign work will be rolled out across various touchpoints, and we will collaborate heavily with industry partners to further the campaign reach:

- B2C: digital – socials, online publications
- POS via B2B channels (accommodation, retail POS talkers; VIC collateral; distribution via partner network on EDM/check-in emails)
- Website landing page
- Digital creative executions
- Social media advertising
- Basic printed collateral with QR code for POS locations
- Events integration via TN

Fundraising

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation has taken bold steps to become financially sustainable by creating a fundraising plan.

The plan began by engaging a consultant to develop a cultural and systematic fundraising process. It's been initially identified that the Foundation has potential interest with local, national and some international prospects. Noosa, a favoured destination of national tourists, is critical in its preservation, sustainability and partnership with people.

The initial stages of the fundraising program has been to create and set up a database with automated marketing. This initial stage is critical in establishing a safe place for data to be stored and allowing for segmentation, accurate communication and relationship building. Automation is essential to make limited human resources go further. The projects to fundraise for will be decided as part of the Strategic Plan, and small enlistment events will occur early in 2024. The future looks good and is favourable for fundraising.

8. Projects

The NBRF continues to partner with universities and other stakeholders to develop and deliver projects focused on new research and innovative solutions that inform best practice management and enhance environmental, social, and economic capital in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

Projects adhere to the aims of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme and align with our four priority areas of Land, Water, Wildlife, and People & Economy

Since its inception in 2015, the NBRF has funded 28 environmental/socio-economic sustainability projects and public education campaigns valued at more than $5 million. This is a 3.7:1 return on an investment of around $1.4 million from the Noosa Council and project partners.

A summary of completed and current projects is below with more detail in Appendix A.

Completed projects

SURF SAFE NOOSA – WATER USER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

An outcome of the 2021 Marine Species Symposium, NBRF worked closely with key local stakeholders including the Noosa World Surfing Reserve Steering Committee, Noosa Council, Surfrider Sunshine Coast, University of the Sunshine Coast, Noosa Surf Lifesaving Qld, Tourism Noosa, and the Queensland Government to develop this unique campaign.

This campaign can be used annually and throughout the year.

KOALAS ON THE MOVE! CAMPAIGN

This campaign was made possible by the generous support of our Wild Koala Fund donors, Noosa Council, Sandy Bolton MP Seeds for Change grant, Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Koala Crusaders and Wildcare Noosa.

This initiative has now been taken on by the Noosa Council Environmental Services team as an annual conservation best practice with signage placed and communications via both Council, NBRF and other partners social media, websites, and newsletters.

GLOSSY BLACK-COCKATOO BIOACOUSTICS MONITORING

Due to several challenges the first trial period was not able to identify Glossy Black-Cockatoo nesting sites, however roosting sites including watering holes, drink and feed sites were observed in three locations. The monitoring established that we do have breeding pairs near one or more of these sites though the exact nesting locations were unable to be confirmed during this period of reporting. A proposal to extend this project during the next breeding season is currently under consideration.

TACKLING ECO-ANXIETY

The interim report is available on the NBRF website, and all milestones have been completed awaiting final documentation as part of the related PhD. The PhD process is expected to finalise in early 2024.

SUSTAINABILITY FORUMS

Two forums were conducted with extensive post session consultations and internal onboarding of the results resulting in a refreshed Strategic Statement and Plan for the NBRF. A follow up session with participants is being planned to showcase outcomes of the initial forums and their integral contribution to the new NBRF Strategic Statement and Plan. Activating project and collaborations from these sessions is a core priority of the new NBRF Program Manager.

Current and continuing projects

CONSERVATION INDICATORS - ONGOING

This PhD in progress, in partnership with UniSC, has multiple potential applications for Biosphere Reserve evaluation and best practice management including the identification of priorities for conservation and sustainable development along with main threats, causes and potential solutions. The goal is to develop a set of priority environmental, socio-economic and management indicators and provide an initial assessment based on these top-priority selected indicators as benchmarks for future progress.

BLUE BIOSPHERE

This PhD was started however due to illness the initial researcher had to resign. A new agreement with UniSC has been signed and a replacement recruitment search initiated.

Researchers will use shore and aerial-based observational surveys (using a theodolite and drone) as well as acoustic receivers deployed in the water to collect behavioural and ecological data on how these species use the Noosa Biosphere Reserve marine area.

This information will be combined with environmental data and anthropogenic impacts (such as proximity to shark control program gear) to identify trends and make recommendations for the management of iconic marine species in the Noosa Biosphere.

BULL SHARK ECOLOGY – LAUNCHED NOVEMBER 2023

Significant gaps in knowledge remain for human-shark interaction risk in nearshore environments, with climate change adding complexity to this risk.

This project aims to track bull sharks in the waterways of the Noosa and Sunshine Coast Biosphere Reserves. Funding was identified as one of the outcomes in the Noosa Marine Symposium and will facilitate improved shark education and technological mitigation initiatives. It will address many of the high priority research areas currently outlined in the *Queensland Shark Control Program Research Strategy (2019)*.

The Project also significantly compliments the Blue Biosphere Project, which is focused on understanding how iconic marine species use the Noosa Biosphere Reserve marine area.

KOALA BLUETOOTH TAG AND APP – LAUNCHING SOON

The NBRF had previously committed funding to help kickstart this project from the funds raised at the Noosa Biosphere 2021 Koala Gala and was one of the two main projects supported by the Wild Koala working group (the other being Koalas on the Move!). This project is supported by a substantial federal grant and will activate in 2024.

For more information on all our projects, visit the Projects page on our website, noosabiosphere.org.au.

Figure 4: Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation supported initiatives aligned to Strategic Goals.

9. Looking ahead

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve is increasingly valued as living proof, that by respecting Country, and living in harmony with nature, we inspire happy, healthy, thriving communities.

The NBRF vision will be realised, where a genuine balance between nature, people and economy delivers unprecedented environmental, social, and economic outcomes. This is a vision of formidable proportions and we acknowledge that this will take time, but we are gaining momentum.

Every day, we become increasingly aware of individuals and organisations, locally and globally, doing amazing work to make this a reality. The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation is one such organisation.

We recognise our efforts can be fragmented and that we need to truly connect and embrace all like-minded organisations in our region to multiply our efforts and gain the momentum required.

The Sustainability Forums were the beginning of this momentum, along with further community, Noosa Council, and UNESCO consultation. From this our Strategic Statement was born. The implementation of our Strategic Plan will advance this connection: “Collaboration, “Collaboration, Collaboration” – the catch cry from the Forums.

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation prides itself in the work it does in our region and recognises that it takes the entire community to embrace our Noosa Biosphere status, and have it live on for future generations.

Appendix A: Projects

Surf Safe Noosa

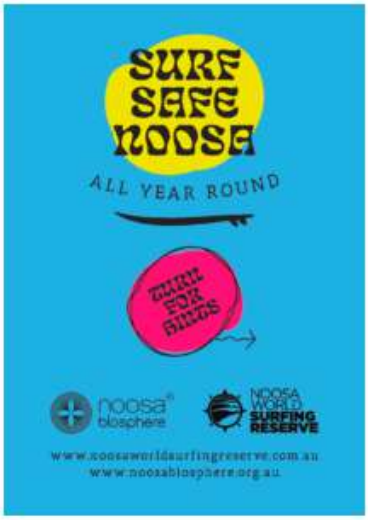
Sharks share our Noosa waters with many other iconic marine species. The Surf Safe Noosa campaign is designed to help surfers understand the local conditions and stay safe in the water.

This public education campaign features a seasonal calendar and interactive spinning game wheel by local designer, Puka Studio, and a suite of key messages illustrated by Dr Sue Pillans, designed to educate young surfers and tourists alike about how to read local conditions.

The project is a result of a series of workshops held in August 2022 facilitated by international shark expert, Dr Andrew Chin, of James Cook University in collaboration with the Queensland Government and local stakeholders.

Of the four recommendations put forward to the Queensland Government, identified at the NBRF Marine Species Protection Symposium held in 2021, public education was ranked as the highest priority.

The messaging is designed to complement the Noosa World Surfing Reserve's mission to Share, Respect and Preserve our special place and to encourage surfers to follow the Noosa Shire Surf Safety Code.



Koalas on the Move!

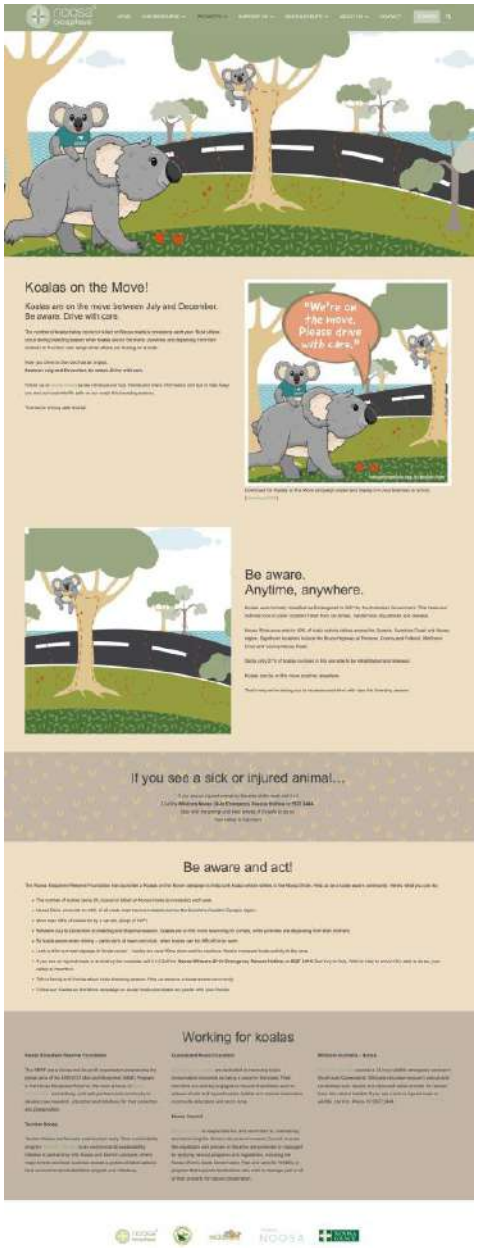
A driver awareness and public education campaign to reduce koala vehicle incidents.

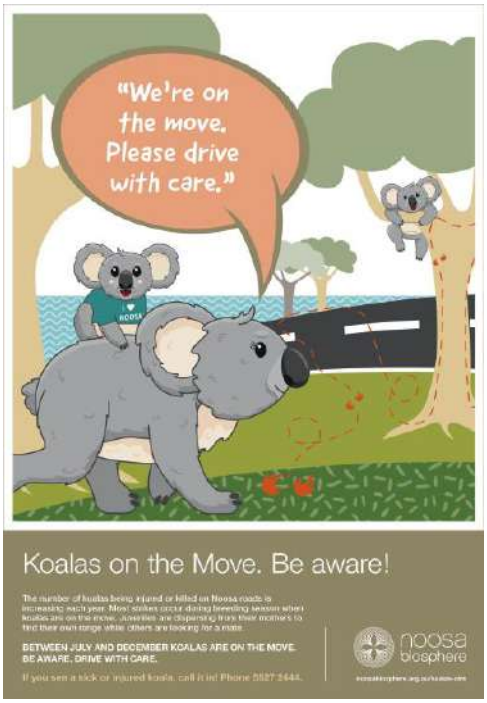
The number of koalas being injured or killed on Noosa roads is increasing each year. Most strikes occur during breeding season when koalas are on the move. Juveniles are dispersing from their mothers to find their own range while others are looking for a mate.

How you drive on the road has an impact. Between July and December, be aware. Drive with care.

Follow us on social media as we introduce our fury friends and share information and tips to help keep you and our local wildlife safe on our roads this breeding season.

This campaign was made possible by the generous support of our Wild Koala Fund donors, Noosa Council, Sandy Bolton MP Seeds for Change grant, Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads, Wildcare Noosa and Queensland Koala Crusaders.





Glossy Black-Cockatoo Bioacoustics Monitoring

Bioacoustics monitoring of Glossy Black-Cockatoo nesting sites for habitat conservation in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

The Glossy Black-Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus lathami* is a rare and threatened species, listed as vulnerable in Queensland. The Noosa Biosphere Reserve is considered a significant habitat of this black cockatoo with up to one third of the entire known population located in the region.

A key challenge in their recovery is breeding success. Pressures have been put on these large hollow dependant species by land clearing, logging, bush fires and fragmentation.

This project will utilise bioacoustic sound recorders with software to monitor and analyse calls of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo. Identifying successful nesting sites will enable better support and conservation management for local Glossy populations. This research can inform feed tree revegetation, watering hole rehabilitation, habitat protection and further nesting box installation in identified Glossy Black Cockatoo critical zones.

Bioacoustic sound recording software was developed by Dr Daniella Teixeira and has been successfully used in other parts of the country, in particular on Kangaroo Island.

PROPONENT

Bushland Conservation Management

PARTNERS

Dr Daniella Teixeira, Noosa Shire Council, Sunshine Coast Council, University of the Sunshine Coast, Noosa and District Landcare, Glossy Black Conservancy, various Noosa Shire community conservation groups.

Tackling Eco-Anxiety

Tackling eco-anxiety in young people aged 18 – 28 through tree planting and off-setting transport emissions in the Noosa Shire.

This PhD research project is studying the relatively new topic “eco-anxiety,” about which there is limited academic literature, despite a recognition that “eco-anxiety” is a growing problem. It will contribute new knowledge about the best ways to intervene to alleviate eco-anxiety and change behaviours to reduce the atmospheric burden of carbon dioxide.

The study will examine how tree planting to offset participants’ own transport emissions could be used to assist in reducing eco-anxiety as well as understanding how eco-anxiety could be used to foster proactive sustainable behaviours in an under-represented population.

It will examine levels of “eco-anxiety” within a group of 120 people aged 18 -28 years old in Noosa. Levels of participants’ eco-anxiety and pro-environmental behaviours will be measured pre- and post-intervention and analysed for trends.

A sub-group of up to ten participants from each of the two intervention groups will also be interviewed to gain further understanding of their experience with eco-anxiety and the impact of the interventions.

PROPONENT

CQ University

Blue Biosphere

Understanding how iconic marine species use nearshore habitats in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve is home to a variety of iconic marine species including dolphins and sharks as well as an important 'humpback highway' during the humpback whale annual migration. The Noosa Biosphere Reserve's bays and beaches also play host to a suite of anthropogenic impacts in the water, including boating and shark control program gear (nets and drumlines). This research will fill the gap to understand how iconic marine species use the inshore waters of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve and how human activities may impact them.

Iconic marine species targeted for research in this study are whales, dolphins, and sharks, however researchers will also be looking out for rays and turtles they may find along the way.

Researchers will use shore and aerial-based observational surveys (using a theodolite and drone) as well as acoustic receivers deployed in the water to collect behavioural and ecological data on how these species use the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

This information will be combined with environmental data and anthropogenic impacts (such as proximity to shark control program gear) to identify trends and make recommendations for the management of iconic marine species in the Reserve, so we can continue to enjoy the marine life in Noosa.

PROPONENT

UniSC

Conservation Indicators

Selecting indicators of conservation success for nature and people in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

Since 2007, Noosa Shire has held UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status in recognition of efforts to harmonise sustainable natural resource management with urban and economic development. Community participation is crucial to ensure the Noosa Biosphere Reserve conservation planning is driven by its best interest and knowledge.

Through consultations we will select indicators to track progress and monitor success of conservation and community efforts across the Noosa Biosphere, and keep all stakeholders involved.

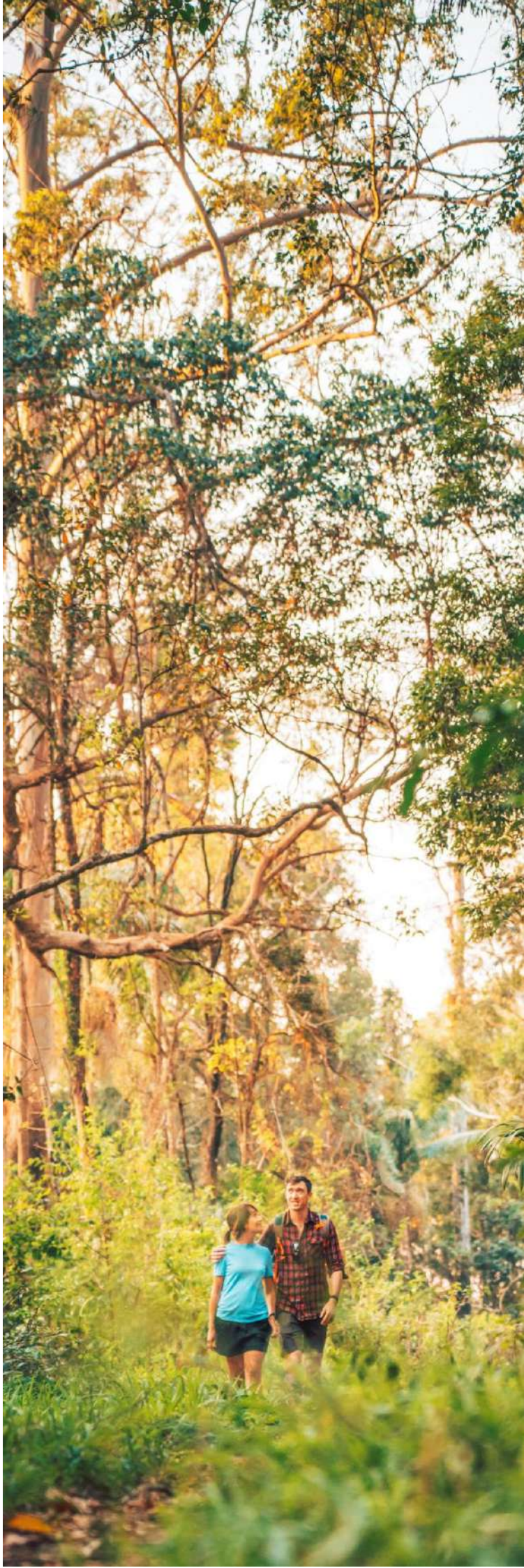
The project intends to consult the traditional custodians of the land within and surrounding the Noosa Biosphere – the Kabi Kabi and the Jinibara People, and multiple stakeholders, including governance, water, land, agriculture, and wildlife management authorities and organisations; sustainability, education, recreation/tourism, business, culture, and community groups and associations; academics; land managers; residents; tourists; and any other individuals, authorities or organisations with associations to the Noosa Biosphere.

Through participatory research and following international standard principles in monitoring and evaluation, the project aims to:

- Identify priorities for conservation, people, and sustainable development; main threats, causes and potential solutions.
- Select priority environmental, socio-economic and management indicators, using an innovative new holistic method for ranking their relative importance to one another.
- Make an initial assessment of top-priority selected indicators as benchmarks for future progress.

PROPONENT

UniSC / Forest Research Institute



Appendix B: The Board

Fiona Berkin
Chair

Linda Venables
Deputy Chair

Rex Halverson
Secretariat

Garry Hamilton
Program Manager

Cr Tom Wegener
Noosa Council Representative

Professor Ian Lowe
Board Director

Jennifer Black
Board Director

Peter Hunnam
Board Director

Bill Allan
Board Director

Richard Brown
Board Director

Sonia Shillington
Board Advisor

Ant Moorehouse
Board Advisor

Appendix C: Partners and supporters

Appendix D: Auditors report

Enclosed separately.

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