



# **NOOSA BIOSPHERE LIMITED GOVERNANCE BOARD**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION SHEET**

### **1. Community Sector Boards – a brief history:**

In September 2001, Noosa Council established five Community Sector Boards as part of its community governance thrust to engage members of our community in the planning and delivery of environmental and quality of life outcomes to which our community aspired.

The success of the former Noosa Council's community engagement program has, in a significant way, been a contributing factor in the success of Noosa Shire being awarded with Biosphere status on the 20th September 2007. In awarding this status, the Bureau of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) International Co-ordinating Council of UNESCO, noted the strong sense of community involvement and co-ordination over a broad range of human settlement and natural environmental issues.

### **2. What is a Biosphere Reserve?**

A biosphere reserve is an international conservation designation given by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) under its Programme on Man and the Biosphere. Click here for MAB [http://portal.unesco.org/science/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=6393&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/science/en/ev.php-URL_ID=6393&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

Biosphere reserves are sites that demonstrate innovative approaches to conservation and sustainable development. They share their experience and ideas regionally, nationally and internationally within the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. There are 580 sites worldwide in 114 countries. Biosphere Reserves go beyond confined protected areas, and include zones where sustainable economic development is fostered via partnerships that include local people. The most recent biospheres are governed by a set of values called the Seville Protocol. Noosa comes under these protocols.

Biosphere Reserves are about developing quality economies based on local community action and entrepreneurship, sound science, public-private sector partnerships and networking. Biosphere reserves also provide learning sites to experiment with and showcase various approaches to sustainable development that are culturally relevant to local communities. The Noosa Biosphere Reserve is the first in Queensland.

### **3. What are the benefits of biosphere reserves?**

Although voluntary, the biosphere reserve concept can be used as a framework to guide and reinforce projects to enhance people's livelihoods and ensure

environmental sustainability. UNESCO recognition can serve to highlight and reward such individual efforts.

### **3. What are the benefits of biosphere reserves (Cont'd)**

Designation of a site as a biosphere reserve helps to raise awareness among local people, citizens and government authorities on environmental and development issues. It can help attract additional funding from different sources.

Biosphere reserves can contribute to a global network of high profile pilot sites or "learning places" to explore and demonstrate approaches to conservation and sustainable development, providing lessons which can be applied elsewhere.

The biosphere reserve concept is based on the conclusion that a sustainable future and an acceptable quality of life for our community requires a balance and integration between social wellbeing, cultural and heritage values; economic prosperity and environmental sustainability, education, research and development and tourism.

### **4. Noosa Biosphere Limited (Governance Board)**

Following a recommendation from the Amalgamation Transition Committee the Sunshine Coast Regional Council in 2008 endorsed the continuation of the four existing Community Boards and the inclusion of an additional two Community Boards to form part of the structure to direct and manage the Noosa Biosphere Reserve. In addition, the NBL Company was formally constituted and endorsed by Council. The company is governed by a Governing Board consisting of up to eleven directors who have duties and responsibilities under the Corporations Act.

The Objects for which the Company is established are to:

1. assist in the management of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.
2. establish, promote and maintain the Noosa Biosphere Reserve brand.
3. promote conservation of landscapes, ecosystems and species and genetic variations.
4. foster economic and human development that is socially, culturally and ecologically sustainable.
5. provide support for demonstration projects, environmental education and training, research and monitoring related to local, regional, national and global issues of conservation and sustainable development.
6. promote best practice land and water conservation, sustainable living, sustainable business and sustainable tourism practices in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve, supported by nationally and internationally recognised education and research opportunities.
7. promote community, industry and government understanding of the interaction between conservation of the environment, ecologically sustainable human development, and how that is supported in a UNESCO Biosphere.
8. facilitate the establishment of partnerships which advance the Noosa Biosphere Reserve as a learning place for sustainable development.
9. promote and assist in the implementation of the Australian Biosphere Reserve Management Principles prescribed pursuant to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000 including the implementation of the Management Plan prepared pursuant thereto.
10. work towards the expansion of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve to include adjacent areas that share environmental values that meet the criteria of UNESCO's Biosphere Reserve designations.



## 5. Roles & responsibilities of the Sector Boards:

The role of the Community Sector Boards is to develop and facilitate a portfolio of biosphere projects. The objectives of the Boards include:

1. **The Cultural Board** - artistic expression of the local culture.
2. **The Economic Sector Board** – business, innovation and economic development.
3. **The Environment Sector Board** – care for nature and the landscape.
4. **The Social Sector Board** – social relationships in community life.
5. **The Education, Research & Development Board** - inquiry and life-long learning.
6. **The Tourism Noosa Board** – hosting of our visitors and building a sustainable tourism industry.

Based on the acceptance that the Governance Board is the supervising body<sup>1</sup> for decision-making on Biosphere Reserve governance matters, the major roles of the Noosa Biosphere Sector Boards are:

1. To provide advice, guidance and information to the Governance Board on matters relevant to the theme of their Sector Board, such advice may be at the request of the Governance Board or on the initiative of the Sector Board.
2. To assist with developing, refining and implementation of the strategies, objectives, actions and timelines from the Biosphere Reserve Action Plans adopted by the Governance Board from time to time.
3. To monitor progress on achievement of the strategies and objectives and their relevance or contribution to achieving the overall vision for the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.
4. To develop, maintain and evaluate performance against key performance indicators relevant to the Sector's Action Plans.
5. To provide feedback to the Governance Board on the overall development and progress of the plans and play a role in advancing issues/projects.
6. To provide and receive advice without fear or favour.
7. Facilitate and collaborate works to advance the achievement of actions, projects and programs that advance the vision of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

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<sup>1</sup> The Governance Board directors are the only legally responsible representatives of the sector boards with director status and obligations under the Corporations Act. Sector board members do not have this responsibility or obligations.

**6. Term of Appointment:** From December 2011 to December 2012 and then depending on re-appointment

**Appointment:** By Sunshine Coast Regional Council

**7. Selection Criteria:**

1. Understanding of what a biosphere is about and in particular the vision for the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.
2. An understanding of sustainability issues within the Noosa Biosphere Reserve community.
3. Capacity to take a holistic view.
4. A sound knowledge of and participation in Noosa Biosphere's community networks.
5. A strong governance background – someone who could be a potential Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson.
6. An understanding of public-owned companies and financial management.
7. A very high level of connection and commitment to the advancement of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve and its objects.

**Sunshine Coast Regional Council employees shall be ineligible to fill any of the community positions on the Governance Board.**

**8. Meetings:**

The Governance Board determines the time and date of its meetings and whilst this may vary from time to time depending on the current issues and projects being considered, on average, the Board meets for 2 – 3 hours every 6 weeks.

• **Obligation of Directors:**

The obligations of Directors include privacy of information, dealing with matters where members may have a material personal interest, absence from meetings, etc. and are outlined in the Operating Guidelines.

The obligation most stressed, however, is for Directors in accepting appointment, being willing to commit the necessary time, energy and enthusiasm to be a productive member of the Board.

**9. Nominations:**

A Nomination Form is attached. It is particularly important that applicants provide reasonable details of their past experience and background in order to make an objective and well-considered selection.

**10. Closing Date:**

Nominations on the prescribed form should be delivered to the Sunshine Coast Regional Council (Attention Helen Gregory), Noosa Biosphere Secretariat, Pelican Street, Tewantin, Qld. 4565 by **Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2011** or email [Helen.gregory@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](mailto:Helen.gregory@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au). For further information, please contact Raul Weyhardt – mob. 0410 512 517 or Ben McMullen – mob. 0407 643 049 or email [chair@noosabiosphere.org.au](mailto:chair@noosabiosphere.org.au).