



Welcome to *The Biosphere Bandicoot*

Rob Gell, Chair

Welcome to the first edition of the biosphere reserve foundation's newsletter, *The Biosphere Bandicoot*.

The Biosphere Bandicoot and the foundation's web site, biosphere.org.au, are key steps toward better communication with members and stakeholders.

The Biosphere Bandicoot will be a showcase for community efforts to live and conduct business more sustainably within the internationally recognised ecosystem of the biosphere reserve. We hope that it will help people to tap into the rich array of resources available, as well as sparking new partnerships.

The newsletter's name comes from the foundation's iconic Southern Brown Bandicoot recovery effort.

The foundation adopted this flagship project in order to raise community awareness of declining biodiversity and the need to live more sustainably. The conservation of these fragmented populations, on land managed by many private landholders and public agencies, poses a significant challenge.

This year, the recovery effort has expanded from an initial project at The Pines at Frankston to a major, collaborative program to protect remnant bandicoot populations across the biosphere reserve. It is a classic example of the



foundation's unique ability to broker collaborative partnerships that would not otherwise occur, to build a more sustainable future.

There have been many other successes this year, as the pages of this newsletter will reveal. We hope you enjoy *The Biosphere Bandicoot*.

Biosphere Green Corps team makes a difference

From June to December 2007, the biosphere reserve foundation's bandicoot recovery team is hosting a Green Corps training program for 10 young people, which is focussed on The Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve at Frankston.

Frankston City Council is accommodating the program. Other partners include the Frankston North Community Group, Parks Victoria, Chisholm Institute and Friends of The Pines. Biosphere reserve foundation members Leon Costermans

and Hans Brunner have contributed individually, as have Kevin Alexander from Frankston City Council, David Nicholls from Chisholm Institute, and Terry Coates from the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne.



Green Corps participants are gaining work experience in habitat restoration, wildlife monitoring and community engagement. Their work is contributing greatly to the Southern Brown Bandicoot recovery effort at The Pines, which provides the closest known habitat to Melbourne. Participants are also gaining experience at Carrum Indigenous Nursery, where Alison Kuitert delivered training in propagation and nursery management, as part of their work towards a Certificate II in Bushland Management.

In addition to the obvious environmental benefits, this program is providing a group of young people with the opportunity to work alongside the scientific experts of the bandicoot recovery team, together with much needed pathways to further education and the workplace.

Members of the Green Corps team with a Southern Brown Bandicoot.

The biosphere is finished, right?

A vision from outgoing Executive Officer, Graham McLennan

We need to learn how to live more sustainably. This isn't a choice. But many feel confused and powerless.

The biosphere reserve foundation — I'll call it "the biosphere" for short — is committed to leading the community to engage in sustainable practice. Community empowerment and the linking of social, environmental and economic elements of sustainability are at the core of our approach.

This is precisely why the biosphere is such a great opportunity. It is why the biosphere is growing stronger every day. We are pulling everyone together and acting as a catalyst for the changes we know are coming.

By leading on change together and "bringing it on" so to speak, we can all help to shape and protect our common future.

The biosphere is working hard with its partners to position itself as the focal point for sustainable living in this region and in Victoria. But as part of the global biosphere community, we have a chance

to lead the world. That's exciting and achievable, and something that you are part of!

Our "Taking it to the Streets" project will, subject to securing funds from Sustainability Victoria, help us gain the widespread community participation in sustainability that is so crucial (see story below). With an empowered, informed and proactive community, there is no limit to what can be achieved.

The biosphere for me is about the here and now. It's about our lives, our happiness and well-being, our environment, our jobs, our safety and security, our water, our food, our fuel, our homes. It is about trust, respect, equality and sharing a common purpose.

The biosphere is the perfect vehicle to achieve community-based sustainability. That's why it was set up, and that is what it will do.

I can sense that the time is right, and that the biosphere community is up for the challenge.

The biosphere is finished, right?

Not a chance! It has only just begun.



Farewell Graham

In May, we were fortunate to gain the talents of Executive Officer, Graham McLennan (pictured above). Graham produced an ambitious major projects plan, including concepts to better engage with the business community. He also vastly improved the foundation's strategic networking and communication with stakeholders, particularly councils and roundtables. Sadly for the foundation, Graham recently returned to Scotland with his family. His outstanding contribution during his short time with us will yield great benefits over future months and years. Thank you Graham!

Taking it to the streets ... of the biosphere reserve

The biosphere reserve foundation is planning an exciting project to engage the community in grass-roots sustainability action.

The project, known as "Taking it to the Streets ... of the Biosphere", would strike at the heart of the foundation's objective of empowering the community to lead itself to sustainability.

"Taking it to the Streets" would be supported by the Sustainability Street approach developed by award-winning environmental educators, Vox Bandicoot.

The Sustainability Street approach aims to deliver basic training on waste, water and energy, and to encourage people to form neighbourhood relationships based on their own local projects. Where they

take it from there is up to their own imaginations.

The approach is based on the observation that information on sustainable living is easily accessible in many forms, but that it is neighbourhood relationships that provide people with the encouragement and energy to act upon this information and change their behaviour. It also seeks to help people make a clearer connection between their own lives and the planet that sustains them.

"Taking it to the Streets" would involve the appointment of a regional Sustainability Street mentor, who would guide the process of community engagement, development and education. Working with councils and stakeholders, four "beacon" communities, or Sustainability Street "villages", would be established in

each of the five municipalities across the biosphere reserve over a two-year period. The project would also include a virtual sustainability village, "BiosphereVille", linked to the foundation's web site.

The project would build long-term relationships with around 2,000 biosphere reserve residents, including holiday-makers. It would touch up to 80,000 biosphere reserve residents through word-of-mouth, media coverage and the creation of sustainability mentors or champions. Participants would achieve average reductions of 30 per cent on energy and water use, and waste production.

The foundation is seeking funding for the project under Round 2 of the Sustainability Fund.

Parks Vic partnership promotes biodiversity conservation

**Bob Brinkman, Chief Ranger,
Mornington Western Port District**

Parks Victoria has a strong interest in, and direct involvement with, the biosphere reserve foundation as the manager of the majority of the biosphere reserve's core and buffer zones.

These include the Mornington Peninsula and Point Nepean National Parks, Arthurs Seat State Park, French Island National Park, Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve, and several marine national parks and nature conservation reserves in and around Western Port.

These areas contain significant natural and cultural values and are extremely important for biodiversity conservation. Parks Victoria has a vested interest in promoting the biosphere reserve founda-

tion's mission to lead the community to engage in sustainable practices that help conserve and improve biological diversity.

Through participation in the biosphere reserve foundation, Parks Victoria believes that community understanding and appreciation of the values of parks and reserves will be enhanced, leading to increased participation in management. Perhaps most importantly, it will encourage complementary conservation and research programs on areas surrounding the parks and reserves.

The current Watson Creek project is a good example of how the biosphere reserve foundation can benefit the conservation of parks and reserves through improved catchment management in the adjacent freehold area (see story below).

This project has brought together a range of state agencies, local governments and community groups to address a significant waterway pollution problem to better protect the waters of Western Port and Yaringa Marine National Park.

The current Southern Brown Bandicoot recovery effort is another example of a biosphere reserve foundation project that, through community and other volunteer support, extends the conservation and protection message to the broader community.

Protection of the threatened bandicoot population in places such as The Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve is being enhanced through an integrated effort involving pest animal control and education regarding responsible pet ownership in surrounding residential areas.

Watson Creek: Little creek with a big destination

The Watson Creek Integrated Catchment Management Project was recently awarded \$28,834 under Round 10 of the Australian Government Envirofund to conduct a range of activities related to the creek and its receiving waters, Yaringa Marine National Park.

The project, which began in February, aims to improve the water quality of Watson Creek, which is considered to be one of the most polluted creeks in Victoria.

The grant will assist a range of activities,

including commissioning underwater photographs in Yaringa Marine National Park, testing the creek, holding workshops and field training days, a boat trip, and the production of a directory-style booklet that will help property owners in the catchment find ways to manage their sections more sustainably.

The project, which is managed by the biosphere reserve foundation with financial support from Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria and the Mornington Peninsula Shire, aims to demonstrate that ownership of environmental degradation and conservation is shared by everyone.

“This is an issue that we all need to take ownership of,” said project officer, Virginia Richardson. “And we are not targeting one farm or one section of the community. We know that pollution comes as much from towns and roadsides as it does from farms and industrial areas. It's no good blaming one section of society when we all drive cars, we all eat food grown in the area, and we all consume things that create undesirable waste products somewhere along the line.”

Further information is available online: biosphere.org.au/projects/watsoncreek



The Watson Creek agreement was signed in June 2007. It sought to build trust and a common resolve among community members, agencies and other organisations to work together to improve the water quality of the creek.

Western Port's future goes under a hypothetical microscope

In June 2007, the biosphere reserve foundation and Department of Sustainability and Environment Port Phillip Region hosted a hypothetical, "Western Port: Feeling the Heat", to examine the future sustainability of Western Port and its hinterland.

Held at the Cardinia Cultural Centre in Pakenham, the event was attended by over 150 people, including community group members, secondary and tertiary students, state and local government officers, councillors and mayors.

The event explored the implications of trends emerging since the Shapiro environmental study of Western Port in 1975.

The moderator, biosphere reserve foundation chair Rob Gell, asked the panel of economists, bankers, politicians, scientists and environmentalists to imagine themselves in the year 2025.

"What does sustainability look like in 2025, where are we now, and what has been achieved since 2007?" he asked. "What have been our successes? And what challenges are still before us?"

The outlook that emerged was generally optimistic about the community's capac-



From left, hypothetical organiser, Jack Krohn, with moderator, Rob Gell, and DSE Port Phillip Regional Director, Peter Watkinson.

ity to respond to change and find creative solutions to issues like inefficient use of resources, a drying climate and a growing population. It highlighted the need for community action to be supported at all levels of government, through legislation, funding programs and strong community engagement — as well as the challenge that this poses. Even with the "hindsight" that the scenario allowed, panel experts did not reach full agreement on the priorities or effectiveness of options for action.

The hypothetical demonstrated the value of working together innovatively to examine topical issues. The generosity of the moderator, panel members and sponsors enabled the event to reach a diverse audience that clearly valued the insights into a rapidly approaching future.

Audience feedback was positive, identifying population growth, water supply and biodiversity conservation as key issues of concern among community members.

Grant success boosts biosphere reserve foundation projects

The biosphere reserve foundation has been successful recently in attracting a number of grants.

In October, the Watson Creek Integrated Catchment Management Project was awarded \$28,834 under Round 10 of the Australian Government Envirofund (see story on page 3).

The same month, the foundation's Southern Brown Bandicoot recovery effort was awarded \$16,091 under Envirofund Round 9. The funds will assist the development of wildlife corridors across the Koo Wee Rup region, connecting small, remnant populations of the Southern Brown Bandicoot.

In September, the bandicoot recovery effort was awarded \$15,000 under

Round 10 of the WWF Threatened Species Network Community Grants Program to secure bandicoot populations around Western Port, from Cranbourne to Bayles.

Efforts to save the Southern Brown Bandicoot across the biosphere reserve are highly collaborative. The foundation warmly congratulates its partner organisation, the Cardinia Environment Coalition, which also attracted significant funding for complementary bandicoot recovery projects. Further information is available online: biosphere.org.au/projects/bandicoos

In September, the foundation was awarded a Commonwealth Volunteer Small Equipment Grant of \$2,921, to enable the purchase of a data projector,

portable DVD player, speakers and digital video camera. The equipment will be used by roundtable volunteers at meetings, presentations, education and training programs, and other events.

Congratulations

Congratulations to the many groups across the biosphere reserve that were successful in attracting grants under Envirofund rounds 9 and 10. These grants make possible a significant body of work to maintain biodiversity and educate the community about sustainability across the biosphere reserve.

Further information on projects funded under Envirofund rounds 9 and 10 is available online: www.nht.gov.au/envirofund

Dr Mangrove, Australia's Coastal Custodian of the year

Retired scientist, Dr Tim Ealey, has spent a decade-and-a-half attempting to improve the health of Western Port.

Tim's research demonstrated that silt from the spectacular erosion of cliffs around the mouth of the Lang Lang River was preventing seagrass from surviving in the area.

"In places, these cliffs are eroding at over one metre per year," Tim said. "Drastic measures are required to halt erosion where it is breaking through the protective earth bund, swallowing valuable salt-marsh habitat and farmland."

Tim considers that seagrass, which provides important nursery habitat for fish, will never regenerate in the Lang Lang area until the erosion is stopped.

"Mangroves play an important role in shoreline stabilisation and can protect what concrete sea-walls cannot," he said. "They can also be regarded as giant solar collectors channeling energy into the Western Port ecosystem when their leaves fall."

Tim said the original mangroves were probably killed by siltation following the draining of the Koo Wee Rup Swamp. They were also burnt for ash to use in soap-making, poisoned, used as stock food during drought, and cut down to improve the view.

In conjunction with the Western Port Seagrass Partnership and the Lang Lang Foreshore Committee, Tim has planted over 3,500 mangrove seedlings along the Lang Lang coastline to stabilise cliffs and restore water quality, energy flow into the bay, and marine habitat.

Through his work with the students of Bass Valley Primary School, to whom he is affectionately known as "Dr Man-



Member for Flinders, Greg Hunt, presents Dr Tim Ealey (left) with the 2006 Minister's Award for Coastal Custodians. Photograph by gregnoakes.com

grove", Tim has engaged the community in the restoration of the mangroves and the Western Port ecosystem.

Tim is a director of the Western Port Seagrass Partnership. In December, he won the 2006 Minister's Award for Coastal Custodians for his work to restore the seagrass and mangroves of Western Port.

Margaret Hancock: A life's work for conservation

Margaret Hancock, President of the Phillip Island Conservation Society (PICS) for the last twenty-five years, was recently awarded a PICS life membership.

"Margaret's dedication to the cause of



conservation on Phillip Island has extended from the practical, hands-on work to being an articulate spokeswoman for PICS on innumerable occasions, and a wonderful leader," the citation said. "This life membership is indicative of the esteem in which Margaret is held by all PICS members."

Margaret (pictured) has been a member of PICS since its inception in 1968 and a committee member since 1974.

Margaret, who still carries weeding tools in her car in case she needs to do some impromptu weed removal during her travels, considers her efforts to remove weeds and plant trees at Cape Woolamai to be one of her major achievements.

Another major achievement was her work to help translate the Phillip Island Planning Scheme into the Bass Coast Shire Planning Scheme following council amalgamations.

"Planning is the basis for everything," Margaret said. "If you don't get your planning right, your land and water management right, you're wasting your time."

After almost forty years dedicated to conservation on Phillip Island, Margaret is a source of inspiration and wisdom for the community. When asked what she has learnt along the way, Margaret emphasised the importance of retaining a seat at the table.

"Never resign in a huff!" she said. "I was on the Cowes Foreshore Committee, which advised council on the foreshore from the Nits to Point Grant. Eventually we resigned because the council was not taking our advice on board. We thought they'd renege, but they didn't, so it was a waste of time to resign."

"I've also learnt that if you attend a meeting, take a copy of the constitution!"

Empowering students for a sustainable future

Marnee Fraser
Dromana Cluster Educator

The Students for the Biosphere project within the Dromana Cluster of Schools arose out of involvement in the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI Vic). With the majority of schools receiving five-star accreditation to AuSSI Vic over the past four years, sustainability projects required a link to a local context, so that teachers and students would develop a greater appreciation of their unique local environment.

The question was asked: “How can we consider solutions to global sustainability issues without further investigating our local environment?” Our aim is to build the students’ capacity to better understand and appreciate their immediate geographical area.

A web site was developed to provide background knowledge on the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve. Students were encouraged to apply online to join the cross-cluster student leadership team. Links were also made to the National Framework for Values Education and the nine Values for Australian Schooling, as these values reflected the responsibilities inherent in a productive, harmonious and successful community.

The inaugural Students for the Biosphere

conference was held in May 2007 at the Peninsula Community Theatre, involving 120 students in years four to 12.

Environmental theatre troupe, Vox Bandicoot, facilitated the day’s program, combining theatre and workshop activities in a mini-Kyoto summit, “From Little Things Big Things Grow”.

Motivational speaker, Jason Clarke, delivered the keynote address, encouraging students to examine their values in regard to the environment and the proactive role they could take in making a difference to the consumption of natural resources.

“Schools will be important in preparing and empowering students to assume responsibility for creating and enjoying a sustainable future.”

The day was supported by representatives of the biosphere reserve foundation, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, CERES, Clean Ocean Foundation and a group of approximately 30 parents and teachers.

It was particularly pleasing to see these people actually sitting with tables of students and working through activities with them. Activities focussed on caring for the environment, taking responsibility for one’s actions, respect for the envi-

ronment and inclusion of all concerned. Students who attended the conference reported back to their schools by preparing and delivering presentations at their whole-school assemblies and individual classes.

Virginia Richardson was invited to speak to the cluster’s Sustainable Schools Team at Somers School Camp in June, where she delivered an informative presentation on the biosphere reserve. This was extremely well received and served to raise awareness of the biosphere reserve foundation.

Each of the seven cluster schools has been presented with “Students for the Biosphere” signs (pictured above) to further promote the project among the community. The design for the sign was chosen from student entries in a cluster art competition, which was won by Dromana Secondary College year 10 students, Jesse Evans and Jessica Hodgson.

The challenge now is to develop and expand the project to include all schools within the biosphere reserve. The Students for the Biosphere project has the potential to empower our students with the necessary stewardship to make a difference in their communities. The flexibility provided by the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, with its focus on personal learning, together with the current media focus on climate change, give us the opportunity to pursue a curriculum that is authentic, relevant and rigorous in its content to better engage all students in their learning.

In this, the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014), the national environmental education statement for Australian schools, “Educating for a Sustainable Future”, recognises that “schools will be important in preparing and empowering students to assume responsibility for creating and enjoying a sustainable future”.

www.studentsforthebiosphere.com.au



The Students for the Biosphere conference, May 2007.

South East Water creates a sanctuary

South East Water's service region takes in much of the biosphere reserve, positioning it to make a significant contribution through its demonstrated commitment to sustainability.

An example of this commitment is South East Water's effort to promote biodiversity at the Mount Martha sewage treatment plant.

Following an extensive audit of its properties, South East Water identified the treatment plant as a unique site warranting further biodiversity enhancement. Remnant vegetation on the site contains 35 plant species of regional conservation significance, including Common Swamp Wallaby Grass (*Amphibromus nervosus*), Onion-orchid (*Microtis spp.*), Kangaroo Apple (*Solanum aviculare*), Tasman Flax-lily (*Dianella tasmanica*) and Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra spp.*).

To improve the condition and extent of this vegetation, South East Water is creating a sanctuary on the 30 hectares surrounding the plant. This will increase habitat for locally threatened species, such as the Growling Grass Frog (*Litoria raniformis*), Royal Spoonbill (*Platalea regia*) and Hardhead (*Aythya australis*).

The sanctuary will provide an important biodiversity asset for the region and complement other sustainability initiatives within the biosphere reserve.

South East Water has been controlling rabbits, foxes and weeds, such as blackberry, at the site since 2003. This has

encouraged the regeneration of indigenous species, including Swamp Paperbark (*Melaleuca ericifolia*), Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*), Swamp Gum (*Eucalyptus ovata*), Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*), Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra spp.*) and grasses. Many more plant species are expected to regenerate over time.

Already making the most of the regenerating habitat are the Swamp Wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*), Eastern Grey Kangaroo (*Macropus giganteus*) and Swamp Rat (*Rattus lutreolus*).

Works to further enhance habitat began in 2006, and will include the restoration of two large wetlands in the northern and southern areas of the sanctuary to encourage birdlife to return. The southern wetland was planted in June 2007. Another major revegetation project will begin in October 2007.

A key aspect of the sanctuary development is to involve and educate the local community, through activities such as planting days, which will begin in spring 2008. There is also the possibility of developing a walking track throughout the sanctuary, which would connect with adjoining facilities at the historic Briars homestead.

The level of interest from staff and the community has been the most rewarding aspect of the project so far, said South East Water environmental engineer, Kristy Bebend.

"It is fantastic that more and more people are aware of biodiversity and want to be involved," Kristy said.

"They have seen the before and after shots of the weed-controlled areas, are amazed at the difference, and now can't wait to see what the area will look like in a year or two."

Sustainable living tips: Designing an edible garden

Drew Cooper, permaculture designer & consultant, viticulturalist

Well as if we needed more reasons to grow our own food. Retail fruit and veggie prices are becoming even more highly priced and conservative use of water is paramount with this crazy climate situation. Home-grown harvests can use substantially less water than commercially grown crops, no chemicals, and can be much higher in their nutrition content if grown wisely. And, of course, there are the other benefits of superior taste, convenience, lower cost (financial and environmental) and the enjoyment gained while gardening.

Substituting exotic ornamentals with food plants (fruit, nuts, veg, herbs, edible flowers, etc.) is becoming commonplace. And when combined with indigenous and native plantings, our gardens can be transformed into beautiful and functional places, whilst being environmentally appropriate. This approach to gardening can be viewed as a whole system process. Waste and water recycling can make important contributions to the system and may teach our families and friends good lessons along the way.

If you are thinking about getting started, or even if you are already underway, there are a few things we need to consider.

Design

It is worth taking your time. Spend mornings, middays and afternoons in different parts of your garden to get a feel for the amount of warmth, wind and water received. Also, think about your own energy flows throughout the property, as this will help you to decide on what to plant and where (both food and indigenous plants). We not only want to consider the light, soil and water requirements of the plants, but also how accessible they are. If you treat the design process as a creative venture, you may come up with some interesting ideas.

Continued on page 8



A Bar-tailed Godwit's bittersweet tale

Recent research by Massey University's Dr Phil Battley has confirmed that the Bar-tailed Godwit makes the longest non-stop flight of any bird.

One of the satellite-tracked birds, known as E7, left New Zealand in March 2007, flying via the Yellow Sea, where she stayed for five weeks before flying to Alaska to breed.

In September, she made the non-stop, return journey of over 11,500 kilometres in only eight days.

E7 will stay at her feeding grounds in New Zealand, resting and gaining weight until around March, when she will migrate back to Alaska.

The project is part of international research to provide crucial information about the migratory behaviour of declining shorebird species in the Pacific Basin.

Throughout the East Asian and Australasian flyways, 85 per cent of shorebird populations are declining, and 40 per cent of shorebirds inhabiting Oceania are classified as threatened or near threatened.

The vast reclamation of tidal mud flats, such as the 40,000 hectare Saemangeum reclamation in South Korea, is impacting



Bar-tailed Godwit. Photographs by Digger Jackson.

heavily on birds. Saemangeum is a major staging point for migratory shorebirds in the Yellow Sea.

This highlights the importance of protecting Western Port, which supports more than five per cent of Victoria's population of eight migratory shorebird species, including the Bar-tailed Godwit.

Designing an edible garden (from page 7)

Soil conditioning

Check out your soil before considering planting. It is essential to understand the nature of your soils. If the soil is too sandy or too heavy it would be wise to add some organic matter, such as manures or composts, to increase water holding capacity or improve drainage. An adequate soil will allow water to penetrate easily and remain moist for several hours. Keep a thick covering of mulch over all soils.

Conserving water

Whether you catch the rain, divert your waste, pump from a bore or use town water, we can all irrigate our plants sen-

sibly. A well thought out irrigation plan is important. Use drip-systems and mulch well. Plant low-water-using local plants alongside your food plants as an alternative to your usual ornamentals.

A creative, functional food garden can bring much joy to your family and friends. And with the complementary use of local habitat plants, your garden can become a productive and well integrated ecosystem. Happy growing.

Drew offers permaculture and edible garden design, landscaping and education on the Mornington Peninsula and surrounds. 0407 466 523, drew@ediblegardens.com.au

ACT biosphere reserve gets green light

The ACT Parliament's Standing Committee on Planning and Environment has recommended that the ACT be nominated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve by December 2008.

The committee argued that biosphere reserves are a relatively low profile, even neglected, component of Australia's suite of policy responses to the sustainability challenge.

The committee called for a national review of biosphere reserves within Australia.

It said this review should include a proposal advocating the development of a national UNESCO biosphere reserve trade mark and accreditation scheme for quality products and services produced within Australian biosphere reserves.

Welcome Noosa

Noosa was among 23 new reserve sites added to the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere global network in September. The network now extends to 529 sites in 105 countries.

Noosa is considered as a "biodiversity museum" critical to maintaining biodiversity representation and quality in southeast Queensland.

Noosa has much in common with our own biosphere reserve, having urban areas and a major tourism industry. The Noosa community will aim to manage urban growth in a sustainable manner and develop sustainable tourism strategies.

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