

REPORTS FOR NOTING BY THE COMMITTEE**6 NOOSA ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY - IMPLEMENTATION YEAR ONE ANNUAL UPDATE**

Author **Craig Doolan, Environmental Services Manager**
Environment & Sustainable Development Department

Index **ECM/ Environment Strategy/Biodiversity Plan**

Attachments **1. Noosa Environment Strategy – Year 1 implementation comments**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the report by the Environmental Services Manager to the Planning & Environment Committee Meeting dated 8 September 2020 providing the year 1 annual progress report on implementation of the Environment Strategy.

REPORT

At the June 2019 Ordinary Meeting Noosa Council endorsed the Noosa Environment Strategy & Implementation Plan. The Noosa Environment Strategy is the key strategic policy document for Council related to our environment and the way we live within it. The Strategy identifies key strategies, outcomes and measurable targets that guide decision-making and support prioritisation of investment over the 10 year life of the strategy.

The Strategy provides a clear monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework for the Strategy that consists of;

- Annual reporting on the progress of specific implementation actions associated with the Environment Strategy.
- Biennial reporting against the 12 targets identified in the Environment Strategy, to measure the success of the Strategy's implementation.

The Environment Strategy was endorsed in June 2020, after the development of the 2019/20 budget. The outcome of this was limited initial dedicated resources to developing monitoring programs, however several key programs have advanced;

- Development of new Bushland Operational Assessments (BOAs) to measure change in bushland condition over time.
- Start of the development of a report card system for the Mary River sub catchments with the Noosa Shire.
- Continuation of waste to landfill audits.

It is anticipated that by the end of the 2020/21 year, most of the long-term monitoring baselines will be in place or well progressed.

One year has passed since the adoption of the Strategy, and this report provides an update on the progress of the specific actions identified in the Implementation Plan. There are 42 actions within the Environment Strategy Implementation Plan.

This made up of 4 ‘enabling actions’ that sit across the whole Strategy, and a series of specific actions related to each of the four main themes; *Biodiversity*; *Waterways, Wetlands & Coasts*; *Sustainable Living*; and *Climate Change Resilience & Adaptation*.

Of the 42 actions, 29 were expected to start in Year 1, and this is what is being reported against here. The remaining 13 actions were not intended to begin in Year 1, however some progress has begun on some of these and, where relevant, a brief comment has been made on the status of these in Attachment 1. Key achievements and brief detail about the progress of each individual action in the Implementation Plan can be found in Attachment 1 to this report.

Summary of progress

Each of the actions in the Environment Strategy Implementation Plan have been categorised against the following criteria

- **On target** – action is progressing well, as we would have hoped for at this stage of the plan.
- **Progressing** – steps have been taken towards this action, but it is not quite where we hoped to be at this stage.
- **Needs Attention** – either has not started, or not significantly progressed.
- **Not planned to begin** – has not begun and is intended to be initiated in future years, as identified in the Implementation Plan.

	On target	Progressing	Needs Attention	Not planned to begin
Environment Strategy	17	9	3	13
<i>(Enabling Actions)</i>	1	2	1	3
<i>Biodiversity</i>	7	-	-	4
<i>Waterways, Wetlands & Coasts</i>	3	2	1	2
<i>Sustainable Living</i>	3	3	1	4
<i>Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience</i>	3	2	-	

Significant achievements in the Year 1

Multi-year Environment Collaborative Grants

In September 2019 a revised Environment Grants Policy was endorsed by Council which led to the first round of the new Multi-year Environment Collaborative Grants. These grants are designed to encourage collaboration between different community groups, as well as with Council. The ability to run grants over several years allows support of larger-scale, strategic initiatives that provide for significant, long-term positive impact on the Noosa environment. All grants must align with and support the implementation of the Noosa Environment Strategy.

After opening in November and December 2019, Council received 10 applications, of which 5 were successful. These grants allocate \$750,651 over the next three years for major environmental projects being managed by community partners.

Waste Education Centre and the Noosa Landfill Resource Recovery Centre

The waste education centre has been completed, with a new building being completely fitted out. School groups are already visiting the site. The centre features interactive displays, a 3D landfill, and a 3D compost and worm farm. The Noosa Men's Shed made a 100% recycled conveyer belt for the students to experience sorting the recycling. The Ed Shed will be open to the general public in the near future.

Yuroi-Ringtail Forest Project Rehabilitation

The Yuroi-Ringtail project is a major strategic partnership with medium and long term plans for restoration of the sites post harvesting and ultimately transferring of the sites to National Park. While harvesting still continues across the site, there has been some progress towards initiating restoration on some sections. There has been weed control and plantings of over 80ha, facilitated by Noosa & District Landcare, mostly funded through an innovative partnership with The Bodyshop Australia, as part of the global Bio-bridge Program. Well ahead of schedule, plantings were not planned to occur until 2023. This has resulted in more than 25,000 plants already in the ground. This was supported by community planting days in June 2019 and February 2020. These days were so popular, we needed to limit numbers, with around 130 participants at each.

Private Land Conservation

The first year of the Noosa Environment Strategy saw significant extra resources dedicated to Land for Wildlife and Voluntary Conservation Agreements, our two flagship private land conservation programs. For the first time since de-amalgamation, Council had a dedicated officer for these programs and was also able to effectively resource these programs. There were 48 new properties signed up to the Land for Wildlife program, representing an area of 575ha (348ha conservation/under rehabilitation). The total number of properties in the Land for Wildlife program in Noosa is now 304.

A new incentive scheme valued at \$50,000 was also implemented that provides native plants (leading to more than 9000 plants in the ground in the first year), loans of equipment, and contractor support for conservation outcomes on participating properties. The contractor support was only available to participants who undertook to work with the contractor, therefore building their own skills in managing their property for environmental outcomes.

Amendments to the Private Land Conservation Partnerships Policy Guideline were endorsed by Council in January 2020, to allow for split-zoning to be used as a mechanism for Voluntary Conservation Agreements. This allowed a more streamlined and economical process for some VCAs, while ensuring robust protection. The result of this was 5 new VCAs in 2019/20 year, the first since de-amalgamation. This represents 79ha under permanent protection.

Solar PV systems on Council buildings

During the 2019/20 year, Council continued with its roll out of roof top solar on Council buildings. Council now has installed over 500 kilowatts of solar PV across Council-owned buildings. The installation of solar has reduced Council's electricity costs by between 30 - 60% with emissions from electricity similarly reduced. Council also installed a solar system which comprised innovative light weight solar panels at the Noosaville Library which complemented the iconic architecture of the library's curved roof.

Previous Council Consideration**Ordinary Meeting Minutes, 15 December 2016, Item 6, Page 9**

That Council note the report by the Principal Strategic Planner to the General Committee Meeting dated 12 December 2016, and:

- A. *Endorse the Biodiversity Assessment Report provided at Attachment 1 for the purpose of informing the development of an Environment Strategy and supporting Biodiversity Conservation Plan other than for the following issues:*
 - 1. *Note that this is not the only substantial area of coastal mainland remnant vegetation between Byron Bay (300 km south in northern NSW) and Bundaberg (250 km to the north) as referred to on page 17, item 2.1, paragraph 2; and*
 - 2. *Note that Noosa Council considers the koala as a threatened mammal for West Cooroy State Forest for the purposes of the table on page 128.*
- B. *Request staff to prepare a discussion paper for the purposes of community consultation for the development of an Environment Strategy and Biodiversity Conservation Plan.*

Ordinary Meeting Minutes, 21 February 2019, Item 8, Page 20

That Council note the report by the Manager Environmental Services to the General Committee Meeting dated 18 February 2019 and:

- A. *Adopt the Environment and Sustainable Living Policy provided at Attachment 1 to the report;*
- B. *Approve the draft Environment Strategy for the purposes of community consultation, as provided at Attachment 2 to the report.*
- C. *Approve the Community Engagement & Communications Plan for the draft Environment Strategy, as provided at Attachment 3 to the report.*

Finance

The first year of the implementation of the strategy occurred through business and usual budgets, however year 2 Council has allocated \$150K as part of 2020-2021 budget from the Environment Levy towards implementation actions in the Environment Strategy.

Risks & Opportunities

This status check on implementation actions for the first year shows that there has been progress primarily in the areas of program delivery that form part of Councils usual business. such as in bushland management, and working with partner agencies in this area.

More effort will be needed to progress some of the newer and more complex aspects of the plan, including the completion of the Noosa River Plan and the development of the new Climate Change Response Plan to bring together previous efforts on mitigation and adaptation. Noting Council has recently endorsed the project scope for the Climate Change Response Plan to be initiated and for the formation of a Stakeholder working group to have input into the finalisation and importantly implementation of the River Plan.

The Noosa Environment Strategy has been successful in focusing investment in core areas and promoting new investment (such as increased investment in private land conservation partnerships and the Multi-year Environment Collaborative Grants). Most of that investment has come from the Environment Levy and leveraging off these funds with other community partners. This has created a bit of gap in some areas of *Sustainable Living* and *Climate Change, Adaptation & Resilience*, where these are not funded by the Environment Levy. Plans to address this in 2020/21 have met with challenges due to a much tighter fiscal environment through COVID. This is unlikely to change within the next year or two, so we must work harder to develop partnerships and take advantage of stimulus from higher level of government to achieve these outcomes.

Consultation




External Consultation - Community & Stakeholder



Significant external consultation was undertaken in the development of the Noosa Environment Strategy and Implementation Plan, which is highlighted in previous reports to Council.




Internal Consultation



Departments/Sections Consulted:



<input type="checkbox"/> Chief Executive Officer Executive Officer Executive Support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Services Director Community Development Community Facilities Libraries & Galleries Local Laws x Waste & Environmental Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Services Director Financial Services ICT Procurement & Fleet Property Revenue Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Services Director Community Engagement Customer Service Governance People and Culture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environment & Sustainable Development x Director Building & Plumbing Services Development Assessment Economic Development x Environmental Services x Strategic Land Use Planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Services Director Asset Management Buildings and Facilities Civil Operations Disaster Management x Infrastructure Planning, Design and Delivery



Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
<p>Implement an Environment Grants program to support community projects and programs that lead to implementation of the Environment Strategy.</p>		<p>Noosa Council has previously provided grants to environmental projects under the banner of the Community Grant Program, however in 2019 a stand-alone Environmental Grants Program was endorsed. The program consists of three grant streams;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Project Grants – for one-off projects to be completed within a year, up to \$30,000 • Environment Alliance Grants – for organisational support whose primary purpose aligns with the Noosa Environment Strategy • Multi-year Environment Collaborative Grants - Longer-term, larger-scale strategic initiatives that have multiple community stakeholders. <p>In September 2019 a revised <i>Environment Grants Policy</i> was endorsed by Council which led to the first round of the new Multi-year Environment Collaborative Grants. These grants are designed to encourage collaboration between different community groups, as well as with Council. The ability to run grants over several years allows support of larger-scale, strategic initiatives, that provide for significant, long-term positive impact on the Noosa environment. All grants must align with and support the implementation of the Noosa Environment Strategy.</p> <p>After opening in November and December 2019, Council received 10 applications, of which 5 were successful. These grants will provide \$750,651 over the next three years for major environmental projects being managed by community partners.</p>
<p>Implement an Environment & Sustainability Roundtable to provide a mechanism for local community groups, government stakeholders and experts to have input into the development of Council policy.</p>		<p>The intent of this action within the Noosa Environment Strategy was to transition the informal previous stakeholder round tables held over a period of some years, into a more formal mechanism for providing input key Council environmental initiatives.</p> <p>The last meeting of the 'informal' group was held on 22 October 2019 at which the future of the group was discussed. The group has not met in 2020 due to COVID restrictions and a clear terms of reference or structure for the group has yet to be established.</p>
<p>Support community environmental and sustainable development networks and forums to build partnerships to drive the implementation of the Environment Strategy.</p>		<p>A key tenet of the Multi-year Environment Collaborative grants program is that strong partnerships must be formed for the community to achieve the targets set out in the Noosa Environment Strategy. Noosa has a strong sector of environmental and community groups, and by prioritising funding for multiple groups to come together rather than to work in isolation, has created new partnerships to drive the implementation of the Environment Strategy.</p> <p>More can be done however, in Council continuing to facilitate and support local groups to come together, though clearly COVID restrictions have made this challenging in 2020.</p>



Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
<p>Undertake monitoring programs required for evaluating and reporting on the success of the implementation of the Environment Strategy.</p>		<p>The Environment Strategy was endorsed in June 2020, after the development of the 2019/20 budget. The outcome of this was limited initial dedicated resources to developing monitoring programs, however several key programs have advanced;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new Bushland Operational Assessments (BOAs) to measure change in bushland condition over time, and undertake annual reserve inspections on most of our bushland reserves. • Start of the development of a report card system for the Mary River subcatchments with the Noosa Shire. • Continued financial and logistical support for the Health Land & Water Environmental Health Monitoring Program. • Continuation of waste to landfill audits. • Calculation of Council's annual carbon footprint. <p>In 2020/21 Council has dedicated funding to fill the remaining key gaps in the long-term monitoring program surrounding the Environment Strategy.</p>
<p>BIODIVERSITY</p>		
<p>Protect and enhance existing ecosystems, vegetation networks and habitats</p>		
<p>Undertake environmental restoration activities throughout Council's conservation reserves. Prepare Bushland Operational Assessments (BOAs) for Council reserves to monitor the success of work.</p>		<p>Noosa Shire Council (NSC) employs 6 staff to manage its bushland reserve network including managerial, technical and on-ground staff. NSC engages both internal staff and external contractors to undertake on-ground works in designated reserves. This represents an investment of over \$1.4M per year.</p> <p>The intent within a reserve is to improve the resilience rating of all sites within the reserve over time, with a priority on working on the most resilient areas first. The exception to this is where outlier transformer weeds are present in a reserve and require control to prevent further spread. Natural Areas categorise reserves into five tiers with 1 being the highest priority, this is based on the philosophy of prioritising reserves to achieve the best biodiversity outcomes that can be achieved by allocating resources to manage ecologically resilient reserves first.</p> <p>Noosa Council supports a network of volunteers undertaking work on Council reserves, through the Bushland Care Program. The program was suspended due to COVID restrictions in March 2020, however despite this, still provided about 2500 hours of volunteer labour, planted over 1800 plants and removed over 140m³ weeds. Three larger community plantings were also held on Council bushland reserves.</p>



Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
<p>Reduce the threat of priority biosecurity risks, such as pest plants and animals, on Council land and support private landholders to do the same.</p>		<p>The <i>Noosa Biosecurity Plan</i> was completed and endorsed by Council in November 2019 and community information and education has continued through the development of new factsheets and linking these with the Land for Wildlife program.</p> <p>A quarterly surveillance program of private properties was completed with 221 properties inspected across the shire, with biosecurity risks detected at 62 of them. Pest Management officers have also partnered with Noosa & District Landcare to work on strategic eradication of the transformer weed, Cat's Claw Creeper, along sections of Six Mile Creek.</p> <p>A specific surveillance program of 84 properties (every property within 500m of property where it was found) was undertaken in partnership with Biosecurity Queensland, following the detection of Mexican Bean Tree (<i>Cecropia</i> sp.) at a property in Pomona.</p>
<p>Implement rehabilitation programs of former forestry areas in the Yurol and Ringtail State Forests, in preparation for the land to be transferred to National Park.</p>		<p>There has been weed control and plantings of over 80ha by Noosa & District Landcare, mostly funded through an innovative partnership with The Bodyshop Australia, as part of the global Bio-bridge Program. Well ahead of schedule, plantings were not meant to happen until 2023. This has resulted in more than 25,000 plants already in the ground. This was supported by community planting days in June 2019 and February 2020. These days were so popular, we needed to limit numbers, with more than 130 participants at each.</p> <p>Staff are undertaking vegetation assessments to inform the species composition of the future planting program, and allow for propagation of local provenance species.</p>
<p>Expand vegetation networks and habitat</p>		
<p>Support private landholders to achieve environmental outcomes on their property through an expanded Land for Wildlife and Voluntary Conservation Agreement Program.</p>		<p>The first year of the Noosa Environment Strategy saw significant extra resources dedicated to Land for Wildlife and Voluntary Conservation Agreements, our two flagship private land conservation programs. For the first time since de-amalgamation, Council had a dedicated officer for these programs and was also able to effectively resource them. There were 48 new properties signed up to the Land for Wildlife program, representing an area of 575ha (348ha conservation/under rehabilitation). The total number of properties in the Land for Wildlife program in Noosa is now 304.</p> <p>A new incentive scheme valued at \$50,000 was also implemented that provides native plants (leading to more than 9000 plants in the ground in the first year), loans of equipment, and contractor support for conservation outcomes on participating properties. The contractor support was only available to participants who undertook to work with the contractor, therefore building their own skills in managing their property for environmental outcomes.</p>





Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
<p>Identify priority land parcels that enhance landscape connectivity and seek to have them managed for environmental outcomes, either through direct purchase by Council, or utilising other appropriate protective mechanisms.</p>		<p>The co-contribution by landholders as part of the two programs was valued at over \$67,000 for the year. This investment in the incentive scheme also goes mostly supports local businesses, especially in hinterland areas.</p> <p>The purchase of new lands for conservation is prioritised using the Conservation Land Policy Guideline. Approaches to Council to purchase land, or land for sale bought to the attention of Council Officers, are assessed against this guideline by the Environment Levy Working Group and reported to Council to make a decision.</p> <p>One land parcel was purchased in the 2019/20 year, a 51.5ha block on Louis Bazzo Dve, Boreen Point.</p>  <p>Amendments to the <i>Private Land Conservation Partnerships Policy Guideline</i> were endorsed by Council in January 2020, to allow for split-zoning to be used as a mechanism for Voluntary Conservation Agreements, as well as the existing title covenants under the <i>Land Act</i> or <i>Nature Conservation Act</i> (creating a Nature Refuge). This allowed a more streamlined and economical process for some VCAs, while ensuring robust protection. The result of this was 5 new VCAs in 2019/20 year, the first since deamalgamation. This represents 79ha under permanent protection on private land.</p>



Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
Undertake an urban environmental education program to improve environmental outcomes for urban wildlife in strategic locations.		Not scheduled to occur in Year 1, but already progressing well through Council providing grant funding to the Noosa Integrated Catchment Association (NICA) to trial a program. A pilot program throughout 2019/20 was very successful despite the COVID challenges, and Council has provided further grant funding for the 2020/21 year.
Improve long-term survival for threatened species and ecological communities		
Undertake detailed biodiversity assessments across different Broad Vegetation Groups, with a view to understanding and monitoring the health of biodiversity across the Shire.		Not scheduled to occur in Year 1
Scope and undertake monitoring programs on populations of 6-8 key representative threatened species, to mitigate against local extinctions.		Not scheduled to occur in Year 1
Implement propagation programs that grow threatened plant species and result in new populations at appropriate, low-risk locations.		Council has provided grant funding to the Noosa & District Landcare Group for a project to identify, protect and propagate threatened plant species. The focus is especially on plants in high risk locations, such as road reserves, to ensure they have their genetic material preserved to protect against any future loss. Propagated plants are to be replanted onto appropriate Council Bushland Reserves, and private properties within the network of Landcare, and Council's Land for Wildlife programs. This particular project focused on 6 species, all listed as endangered or vulnerable under Commonwealth or Queensland legislation: <i>Triunia robusta</i> (Endangered, EPBC), <i>Allocasuarina emuina</i> (Endangered, EPBC), <i>Picris conyzoides</i> (Vulnerable, NCA), <i>Eucalyptus conglomerata</i> (Endangered, EPBC), <i>Acacia attenuata</i> (Vulnerable, EPBC) and <i>Acronychia littoralis</i> (Endangered, EPBC). This project follows a similar undertaking two years earlier that focused on 5 other threatened flora species.
Undertake targeted wild dog control in key Koala Habitat Areas as identified in Koala Threat Mapping.		Wild dog control including trapping and baiting has been undertaken in some of the identified Koala Habitat Area. This has mostly occurred on private land in the localities of Como, Kin Kin, Cootharaba, Cooran, Federal, Ridgewood and Doonan. This program consisted of two six-week stints of trapping in key locations, and two coordinated baiting program with participating landholders in September 2019 and May 2020. The trapping program captured 13 wild dogs in strategic locations this year, with research in the Moreton Bay area indicating that, at their worst, a single dog can predate on over 50 koalas.



Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
		A University of Sunshine Coast report on wild dog control program in relation to koala habitat areas identified opportunities to re-align the program to koala habitat areas and still achieve outcomes for agricultural security.
WATERWAYS, WETLANDS AND COASTS		
Maintain & improve the health of waterways, wetlands & catchments		
Develop an integrated water monitoring network for Council, community and other agencies, including event monitoring of sediments, nutrients and litter for Noosa and Mary Catchments, and a Mary River sub-catchment baseline and report card.		<i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1, however Council has been working with key stakeholders in this area for some time and planning for this is progressing.</i>
Improve the water quality and biodiversity of the Noosa River by restoring aquatic habitats, such as oyster reefs, and improving riparian vegetation.		<p>Aquatic habitats occur across a range of different tenures, and require different approaches to restore. Some examples of current program seeking to achieve this include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Bushland Care volunteers work across a range of different riparian and aquatic habitat. • Noosa Council's Natural Areas team undertakes significant restoration works in riparian areas. • Support through grants for programs such as Keep It In Kin. • Partnerships with Land for Wildlife participants in rural riparian areas. <p>A specific partnership with international conservation agency The Nature Conservancy was signed in July 2019, with the aim to start to restore some of the lost oyster ecosystems of the Noosa River. This \$2.4M project is currently in the planning stages, with a local project officer undertaking significant community engagement.</p>
Investigate and implement best practice solutions to reverse the decline of benthic biodiversity and primary production in the lower Noosa Estuary.		<p>The release of the interim report (and subsequent final report in August 2020) on the benthic biodiversity decline in the Noosa River, shows the biodiversity of the river is not as good on once thought. The report attributes this decline primarily to fine silt entering the system. This is already being addressed by two key projects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep It In Kin – restoration of upper-catchment riparian areas where there is evidence of the most soil mobilisation. • Noosa River Oyster Ecosystem Restoration – the return of oyster habitat, once abundant in the Noosa River, to specific locations in the lower catchment.




Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
<p>Enhance Integrated Catchment Management of the Noosa River and Mary River sub-catchments, with a focus on improving land use, wetland and riparian management practices through landholder engagement on on-ground rehabilitation programs.</p>		<p>The final report is still quite fresh, and there is more to be done in this area over the coming years, to better interpret the results and to take action to remediate. The hydrological work undertaken as part of the Shoreline Erosion Management Plan will also potentially feed into solutions to this issue.</p> <p>The first year of the Noosa Environment Strategy saw significant extra resources dedicated to Land for Wildlife and Voluntary Conservation Agreements, our two flagship private land conservation programs. This has resulted in more landholders being engaged and also a deeper engagement than before with specific resources for Land for Wildlife properties to undertake on-ground rehabilitation.</p> <p>Two of the five programs funded through the first round of Multi-year Environment Collaborative Grants focused on rural landholder engagement in upper catchment areas of the Noosa and Mary Rivers. This included the Keep It in Kin program (\$240,000 over three years to Noosa & District Landcare) to remediate priority riparian areas in the upper Noosa catchment, and the Hinterland Rural Extension Program (\$105,000 over three years to Mary River Catchment Coordination Committee) to work with landholders in Mary River catchments to do similar works in riparian areas. Both of these grants tap into existing well-established networks, allowing almost all the investment to go direct to on-ground works.</p>
<p>Implement a septic system inspection program in high priority areas (such as Noosa North Shore) to better understand the impact of these systems on the quality of surface water and groundwater systems.</p>		<p><i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1</i></p>
<p>Protect and enhance coastal environments and vegetated buffers to coastal foreshores</p>		
<p>Investigate the need and appropriateness of statutory mechanisms to protect Noosa's coastal and marine waters, including the lower reaches of the Noosa River.</p>		<p><i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1 however the Fishing Futures Paper completed in 2019 identified some initial options requiring further consideration and investigation.</i></p>
<p>Implement an Eastern Beaches dune rehabilitation program to improve the condition, species diversity and stability of dune ecosystems and enhance resilience to climate change.</p>		<p>There were six Community Bushland Care groups undertaking work in the dune areas in 2019/20. Volunteers undertook their own scientific trials on weed management of some of the key invasive species (asparagus fern, gloriosa lily) to find new efficiencies in management, and these trials are ongoing.</p>


Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
		<p>As part of the new Multi-year Environment Collaborative Grants program, Council has committed more than \$225,000 to these groups collectively to undertake restoration activities on the Eastern Beaches dunes. This project was due to start in April 2020, but was postponed until July due to COVID restrictions.</p> <p>This compliments existing works by Council's Natural Areas Team in the coastal areas, much of which is driven by customer requests.</p> <p>A comprehensive Coastal Management Plan will also be scoped in the later part of 2020/2021 to be undertaken in 2021/2022 to support this initiative.</p>
Manage waterways and coasts to protect environmental values while enabling sustainable public access, recreation and commercial use		
<p>Work with stakeholders to review current fishing practises and achieve sustainable recreational and commercial fishing outcomes in the Noosa River.</p>		<p>Consultation with river users, including commercial and recreational fisherman, led to the Noosa Fishing Futures options paper, released in July 2019. This provided the most comprehensive summary of stakeholders and data on commercial fishing in the Noosa River yet seen. It supported policy positions that Council provided to the State Fisheries Discussion Paper and the Draft Noosa River Plan.</p> <p>Any further actions in this area have been delayed until the finalisation of the Noosa River Plan, and will be informed by the Noosa River Stakeholder Group to be developed.</p>
<p>Undertake a stormwater quality improvement program that includes an audit of stormwater quality improvement devices, analysing current infrastructure, current best practice and options to improve infrastructure as it is due for replacement.</p>		<p><i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1</i></p>
<p>Work in partnership with a range of stakeholders including Kabi Kabi to provide an on-river presence to deliver a range of environmental and education programs, and support compliance with regulations on the Noosa River.</p>		<p>Council works closely with the Noosa Integrated Catchment Association to collect data on the Noosa River and to feed information back to regulatory authorities. In February 2020, a dedicated Noosa River Maritime Officer was employed by Maritime Safety Queensland. This has already led to vastly improved compliance and education on the Noosa River.</p> <p>Council does not yet have a regular on-river presence to deliver environmental and education programs. This will be considered with the finalisation of the Noosa River Plan. The Draft Noosa River Plan, released for public comment in December 2019 has an action to promote and support and Indigenous Land & Sea Ranger Program, to engage Kabi Kabi on-water and on-country in the Noosa area.</p>

Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
SUSTAINABLE LIVING		
Reduce waste to landfill		
Work with other agencies on a Regional Waste Strategy to develop broader regional solutions to local waste management problems.		Over the past year, Council officers have regularly met with Moreton Bay Regional Council, Sunshine Coast Regional Council and Unitywater on regional waste management solutions to the south, and the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Organisation of Councils on solutions to the north. COVID has meant that talks stalled in 2020, however meetings have now re-started. These discussions are looking at technological solutions, recognising that there are potential economies of scale in dealing with waste issues as a group. There is still the longer-term intent for a specific regional strategy, however it will progressed in the current manner in the short-term.
Improve rates of commercial recycling and green waste diversion through implementation of bulk green waste bins and targeted education and behaviour change programs for commercial users.		<i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1, however a behaviour change trial was conducted in late 2019 with a very good success rate.</i>
Develop a waste education centre at the Noosa Landfill Resource Recovery Centre, to support waste and sustainability education programs for school-aged children and the broader community.		The waste education centre has been completed, with a new building being completely fitted out. School groups are already visiting the site. The centre features interactive displays, a 3D landfill, and a 3D compost and worm farm. The Noosa Men's Shed made a 100% recycled conveyor belt for the students to experience sorting the recycling. The Ed Shed will be open to the general public in the near future.
Continue to increase the different types of recycling services available to Noosa residents.		The identification and implementation of new recycling services is ongoing, with additional waste streams being diverted as new markets are identified. Research and planning is currently underway to collect and process polystyrene on site. From the beginning of 2020, in partnership with Reviva, foam mattresses are deconstructed with the foam baled and recycled.
Provide waste and sustainability education programs to improve the understanding of waste management and sustainability in the Noosa community.		Recycling and waste education talks and workshops have been given to twelve different schools and kindies in the Noosa Shire from July 2019 - Dec 2019 speaking to over 2304 people. Weekly 'waste free Friday' Facebook posts have been used to engage with the community during the six-month period with over 40 Facebook posts. This included several campaigns such as Plastic Free July, Waste Free Friday, National Recycling Week (NRW), Soft plastics, and reducing waste over Christmas. These posts gave ideas and alternatives on how to do things better and reduce waste. These posts have reached over 120,252 people.

Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
		<p>There have been regular sliders on Councils website page and Instagram, media releases, newspaper adverts and an interview on ABC radio as part of NRW. Community movie screenings were given as part of Plastic Free July and National Recycling week. Ten events were booked out during National Recycling week (paid events), where we engaged with over 810 people in workshops/activities that included an outdoor movie, Slow Clothing Talk, upcycling clothes workshop, beeswax wrap workshops, information sessions, preloved clothing market, and an E-waste collection at Bunnings which the Men's Shed also participated in.</p> <p>A Behaviour change 6 week bin tagging trial was developed & implemented in October to remove green waste & recycling from the waste bins. Two trials were conducted, one residential and one commercial in three different areas in Noosa. The trial was very successful finding a 65% decrease in the number of bins with contamination. Bin lids and covers are used at the majority of all events in Noosa this is to give clear signage to people attending events and to stop contamination.</p>
<p>Encourage incorporation of more sustainable building elements</p> <p>Advocate for mandating minimum energy efficiency and renewable energy generation to all new development in the shire, including domestic residences.</p>		<p>The new Noosa Plan 2020 came into effect in July. This new planning scheme sets minimum requirements for sustainable building design for multiple dwellings and commercial development. These are set out in the Sustainable Building Design Works Code and supporting Planning Scheme Policy for Sustainable Design. The requirements address energy efficiency, water efficiency, landscaping, orientation, solar access, ventilation, amongst others, with a view to achieving climate responsive design that minimises the need for mechanical heating and cooling and minimises reliance on non-renewable resources. There are specific recommended standards for solar PV systems and requirements for rainwater capture and storage.</p> <p>Council will also be exploring opportunities to advocate through LGAQ for improvements to mandatory standards in the Queensland Development Code for new housing.</p>
<p>Advance the idea of a Noosa Sustainability Institute to establish a coordinated approach to research and activity occurring in our community towards sustainability.</p>		<p>Council endorsed Phase 1 of the investigation into a Sustainability Institute in 2019, this phase looked at cases studies from around Australia and the world and provided some options for a Noosa Specific Institute including a number of key steps considered appropriate before advancing this idea. Further work on this is required to collaborate and connect key local organisations, institutes, community members and experts to advance this idea.</p>

Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
Adopt sustainable agricultural practices		
Support the community to connect a circular economy for organic waste through enhanced connectivity between providers and end users.		<i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1</i>
Support on-ground actions with landholders that improve environmental, economic and social outcomes on rural properties throughout Noosa while contributing to long-term sustainability of rural landscapes in the Shire.		<p>Council is working very effectively with many rural landholders. This occurs through direct engagement through programs like Land for Wildlife and Voluntary Conservation Agreement programs, as well as indirectly through provision of grants to facilitate landholder extension and rehabilitation.</p> <p>These actions are mostly focused on environmental outcomes on these properties and more can be done to engage with landholders and local groups, such as Country Noosa, to better support economic and social outcomes as an outcome of these works. Project like the Noosa Trails Masterplan, recently completed by Tourism Noosa, provide an opportunity to also increase economic outcomes in rural communities which maintaining and valuing the landscape.</p>
CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION & RESILIENC		
Reduce emissions and resource consumption		
Identify potential areas for carbon sequestration in the Noosa Shire and support landholders to take advantage of available opportunities.		<i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1</i>
Investigate emission reduction opportunities at Noosa landfill for reducing the creation of methane-based emissions.		<p>A detailed long-term Waste Strategy is being started in 2020, with one of the main objectives to reduce methane emissions at the landfill. A workshop facilitated by industry experts and involving senior Council staff and Waste Officers was conducted in June 2020 to set out a scope for the Strategy.</p> <p>At a practical level, lateral methane collection lines have been installed and during 2019/20, a significant access void at the landfill was filled with waste to enable further vertical wells to be installed in early 2020/21. In 2020/21 a capital works project has been approved to provide interim capping across recently filled cells. This will further increase methane collection capability and efficiency.</p>

Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
<p>Implement energy efficiencies throughout Council-owned facilities and operations, such as the installation of solar PV systems and use of lower-emission transport options.</p>		<p>During the 2019/20 year, Council continued with its roll out of roof top solar on Council buildings. Council now has installed over 500 kilowatts of solar PV across Council-owned buildings. The installation of solar has reduced Councils electricity costs by between 30 - 60% with emissions from electricity similarly reduced. Council installed a solar system which comprised innovative light weight solar panels at the Noosaville Library which complemented the iconic architecture of the library's curved roof. LED lighting retrofit and energy efficiencies continue to roll out across Council buildings.</p>
<p>Investigate Noosa Council's future emission offset possibilities, identifying the options with the most environmental, social and economic co-benefits.</p>		<p><i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1</i></p>
<p>Increase community resilience and capacity to adapt to climate change</p>		
<p>Investigate, and implement if appropriate, a solar bulk-buy scheme for Noosa residents, to provide quality solar at affordable rates.</p>		<p>Council has partnered with Australian Energy Foundation to provide residents with energy and solar advice. As part of this service there is a free advice phone number which residents can call and receive advice and if requested can also be referred to a fully vetted solar supplier. To the end of June there has been 48 requests for quotation and 34 KW installed. AEF also conducted 2 information sessions - 1 face to face where over 50 people attended (despite the stormy weather and the threat of COVID) and 1 on line session where 72 people registered to attend.</p>
<p>Work with community partners to scope, develop and implement a community education program aimed at increasing the adoption of sustainable building elements and preparedness of residents to adapt to climate change impacts.</p>		<p><i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1</i></p>
<p>Encourage and facilitate the use of electric vehicles by establishing a network of electric vehicle charging points throughout the Noosa Shire.</p>		<p>Council has been working with companies that install electric vehicle charging points to identify suitable sites and design requirements. The new Noosa Plan 2020 includes electric vehicle provisions for commercial development such as service stations and other large commercial developments. An electric charging point forms part of the design for the Peregrian Digital hub/Rufous Street precinct development.</p> <p>Council is partnering with ZEN Inc to coordinate a second sustainable transport/electric vehicle expo in Noosa early 2021 to encourage the local take up of sustainable transport including electric vehicles. There is also opportunity for council to roll out electric vehicles into its fleet with successful trials completed.</p>

Environment Strategy Actions	Status	Progress comments
Undertake a socio-economic impact assessment from flooding and inundation of foreshore areas, including projected impacts on public infrastructure, private assets and commercial activities in the lower Noosa River.		<i>Not scheduled to occur in Year 1</i>
Manage the natural environment in a way that improves resilience to climate change Improve understanding and monitor changes in groundwater and wetlands and the potential impacts of climate change on their health, through the development of a groundwater and coastal vulnerability assessment and monitoring tool.		Council is partnering with postgraduate student from the University of Queensland to establish a longitudinal groundwater monitoring program within Noosa Shire to monitor the impacts of climate change and sea level rise on ecosystem health. Suitable monitoring sites are being selected with the first baseline monitoring to be completed in 2020. Monitoring equipment will be permanently installed across a network of sites to allow for repeatable, periodic monitoring overtime.