

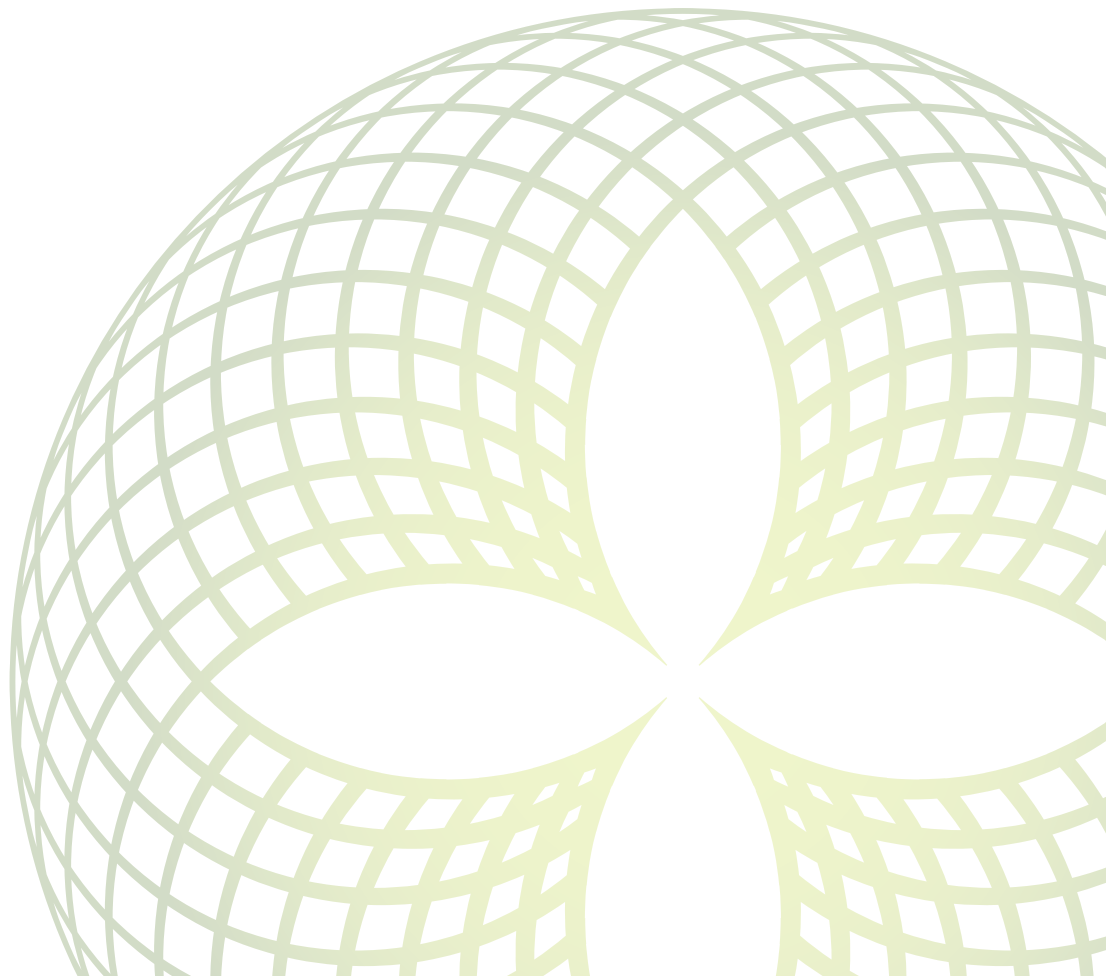
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noosa  
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Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation Limited

(“NBRF”/ “The Foundation”)

# Half Year Progress Report Fiscal Year 2017/18



## 1. INTRODUCTION - (Chair Dick Barnes)

I am pleased to submit this progress report for the first half of 2017/18 to Noosa Shire Council and hence to the community.

The Board is very encouraged by its progress and the initiatives it has in hand based on our “Back to Basics” approach begun at the end of 2016/17. We hope you agree. Each key initiative is covered below and a complete list of them is provided in Attachment 1.

We feel existing projects are going well and the new grants round is well under way.

We are significantly more visible to the community and have had regular reviews with Council and Councillors.

A year-end financial outlook is provided showing that we are managing these new initiatives within agreed budgets.

## 2. EXISTING PROJECTS

In November we reached a major milestone when our 14 oyster reefs were placed in the Noosa River. We are just finalising the necessary reporting back to the marine authorities as there had to be some modifications to the exact locations. We will now start the formal monitoring and reporting and look forward to some exciting results.



Meetings are to be held with UQ to progress the prawn initiatives.

The Keeping it in Kin Kin erosion project is largely finished and plans are being laid to resource the required remedial actions.

### 3. NEW GRANT ROUND

We are very excited to report that we began an Expressions of Interest (EOI) process for our next Grants Round which closed in September. \$330,000 is available made up of \$250,000 from the environmental levy and \$80,000 from the economic development budget.

To encourage community involvement, we announced a two tier approach for projects less than \$20,000 and those over that amount.

We have asked that all projects contribute in some way to both “Prosperity and Protection”.

The response was enormous with 54 applications split pretty evenly between large and small.

All had a significant leverage for the money requested meeting our target of 2:1.

A sub-committee of the Board was chosen to judge the entries that avoided any conflict of interest from Directors with links to submitters.

In the end the Grants Committee chose 6 small projects and shortlisted 3 large ones. Details and agreements are being finalised with these organisations and we will be in a position to announce shortly.

### 4. STRATEGY

A number of workshops have been held and discussions are taking place to develop an updated Strategy for NBRF. One three pronged construct we are looking at suggests that we encourage major projects in the Waterways and in the Hinterland and concentrate on improving sustainable living in the major population area.

### 5. 10 YEAR PERIODIC REVIEW TO UNESCO

A significant project is in hand to report to UNESCO on the first 10 years of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve and the vision for the next 10. An extensive questionnaire has been received and is the required format.

This is being worked on by our consultant, Kerri Watson, and involves many parties. The strategy work will be a significant input and a significant benefit from the process.

## 6. LINKS TO COUNCIL

As our major stakeholder, it has been agreed that we should be more visible to Council and we have set up a short review to be held every 2 months or so. The first was held in August and the second in November.

## 7. LINKS TO NCBA

Given the common objectives of NBRF and NCBA, a “ways of working” together team has been set up to optimise this.

## 8. GOVERNANCE

Some concern had been expressed about the historic level of governance in NBRF. This was taken very seriously and a specific workshop held to look at this. The use of external consultants was an option considered. However, we realised that four members of the Board and Staff are members of the Australian Institute of Company Directors with a specific governance focus. We obtained a 10 point governance checklist for Not for Profit Organisations and marked ourselves against this.

Overall, it was felt that the increased level of teamwork, Board communication, public communication and financial information addressed the worry areas and would serve us well in the future.

## 9. FUNDRAISING

Given our DGR status, work has started on a fundraising strategy and target.

## 10. PRESS & COMMUNICATION

In the past we had avoided communicating freely with the local press and media. We have engaged the services of Alison Cooper as a Communications expert. We have had major media successes with the new Grants Round and our projects in hand. We hope to be regularly in the press, on radio, and TV around events.

## 11. MEMBERS

As you will be aware, past and current Directors form the membership of NBRF and vote at General Meetings. It is felt that there is significant expertise and experience in the Members group that we should utilise more. With this in mind, after the formal AGM in December, we held a round table to gain input from the members which was both very valuable and well received.

## 12. FINANCIALS

Given that the new grants will not be finalised until the end of January, we estimate that only half will be spent by the end of this financial year. The balance will then roll over as a liability in 2018/19. There will be further drawdowns for the original large projects but there will still be a carry forward liability on some of these. We will try to get a better handle on this shortly.

We understand that this year's project grant for \$250,000 has been budgeted for by Council but is held in reserve and not yet paid. A number of the new smaller "big ideas" grants are initial studies which may lead to some exciting opportunities. Also, there were many good projects not able to be funded. So that we could plan another Grants Round very early in 2018/19, Council may like to consider releasing this reserve to us now that we have raised our game to enable another round to be planned.

On the Operational Budget, our modelling suggest that our non-people costs (accounting services, insurance, auditor, telephone etcetera) run consistently at \$20,000 per annum. We see no significant difference to that in 2017/18.

However, with the additional initiatives we have discussed (particularly the UNESCO Periodic Review) we are using significantly more consulting and contractor services than normal. This will be a one off extra expense. For this one year only, we plan to add the \$80,000 operational budget surplus to the ongoing budget of \$140,000 agreed with Council and spend \$220,000 in 2017/18. In that sense we are catching up with activities that should have taken place earlier when funds were saved.

This breaks down as \$20,000 for general services leaving \$200,000 for people resources. In turn, this breaks down as:-

Admin/Secretarial	\$40,000
Periodic Review	\$80,000
Strategy Input	\$50,000
Communication	\$15,000
Project Assurance	\$15,000

## 13. CONCLUSION

We hope this half yearly report conveys the high level of activity taking place in the NBRF.

This brings significant benefit to the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

There is now great teamwork and a positive environment for the volunteer Directors to enjoy which is much appreciated.

## Attachment 1 - “Back to Basics”

1. Work with the constitution to clarify roles and have common objectives and vision
2. An involved team with staff in support
3. Drive home current projects
4. Have another round of EOI big ideas projects (not necessarily big money) as soon as practical without the previous hassles so that we get projects community driven
5. Develop an overall strategy and encourage projects that also hit strategic areas we believe in
6. Take a view of a symbiotic relationship long term with World Heritage – inform ourselves
7. Write the period report
8. Good links to Council
9. Agreement on ways of working with NCBA quickly
10. Handle governance issues
11. Advocacy policy
12. Fund raising plan
13. Manage the press and communication
14. Healing process with the past contributors
15. Involve members
16. Research relationships
17. Indigenous links