



Council Policy

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABLE LIVING POLICY

Corporate Plan Reference:	<i>The Noosa Environment</i>
Endorsed by Council:	21 February 2019
Policy Author:	Manager Environmental Services

POLICY BACKGROUND

This policy will outline the principles by which Noosa Council will partner with the community to manage our natural environment, and live and work sustainably.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Environment Strategy, which will provide details of key strategies, environmental management targets and prioritisation. Other action plans and strategies will be developed as required to implement the intent of the Environment & Sustainable Living Policy and Environment Strategy.

COUNCIL POLICY

The vision of Noosa Council is *Noosa: different by nature*. Nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than our commitment to our environment and sustainability.

Historically, Noosa has chosen a different path to other areas of south-east Queensland and today we reap the benefits, with large tracts of retained vegetation, the healthiest waterways in the region, and an engaged and active community.

These great strengths also form the basis of our economy as people travel from all over the world to enjoy Noosa's natural environment. The value of the Noosa brand also provides great opportunities for new 'smart' and 'green' industries to develop and thrive, diversifying our economy beyond tourism, whilst offering high economic value and low environmental impact.

More than 50 years of environmental activism, dating back to 1962 when Dr Arthur Harrold established the Noosa Parks Association, has resulted in a community that places high value on the natural environment. It has also resulted in a community that seeks to live sustainably.

On 20th September 2007, the Noosa Shire was designated a Noosa Biosphere Reserve under the UNESCO Man and Biosphere program.

This policy sets out the principles by which Council will seek to maintain and continually improve on this historical trajectory and its Biosphere Reserve covenant. It recognises that Noosa will continually strive for a higher standard in the way we manage and live in our environment.

Through the planning scheme (The Noosa Plan), appropriate development that provides for broader community benefit will still occur, but it will be undertaken in a way that minimises environmental harm and provides for best practice sustainable environmental design.

Our goal is that the Noosa environment continues to be protected, enhanced and valued by the community.

Statement of Environment Principles

The following principles will help guide strategic decisions, investment and prioritisation of environmental and sustainability initiatives.

Noosa Council will work with the community to:

1. Build shared values, understanding and appreciation of Noosa's natural environment.
2. Build strong partnerships and whole-of-community effort to protect and enhance the environment and to conserve its resources.
3. Preserve indigenous cultural heritage as part of our environment and engage with traditional owners about matters affecting the environment.
4. Recognise interconnections between people, livelihoods, lifestyle, economy and the natural environment, and ensure this approach is included in management planning and project delivery.
5. Reduce human impacts on the environment by avoiding and minimising such impacts before resorting to mitigation, offsets or rehabilitation.
6. Take an integrated approach to protecting native flora and fauna as well as aquatic ecosystems to build on existing biodiversity and connectivity across the landscape.
7. Increase the resilience of the community, the economy and our natural assets to environmental hazards and climate change.
8. Ensure ecological sustainability is fully integrated into decision making in order to help secure the continued availability of natural resources for present and future generations.
9. Use an evidence-based approach to managing the environment and adapt appropriately as new information arises.
10. Apply the precautionary approach to environmental decision making where there is uncertainty, to avoid or minimise harm.
11. Actively communicate with the broad community to improve awareness and build capacity around environmental issues.

The principles of this policy will be delivered through the Environment Strategy, the Noosa Planning Scheme, and a range of other plans and policies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director Environment & Sustainable Development is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the Environment & Sustainable Living Policy.

The principles set out in this policy will apply, where appropriate, to all sections of Noosa Council.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- *Noosa Council Corporate Plan*
- *Noosa Council Environment Strategy*
- *Noosa Sustainability Principles*
- *Noosa Council Environment Levy Policy*

Version control:

Version	Reason/ Trigger	Change (Y/N)	Endorsed/ Reviewed by	Date
1.0	New Policy		Council	21/02/2019