

DRAFT



# for the love of noosa

# Kabi Kabi Commitment

## Welcome to Noosa, a place of great cultural and spiritual significance.

This is the place of shadows from the guardian trees. It connects us all and draws us together from around the world.

We, the Kabi Kabi First Nations Peoples, are the Traditional Custodians of this land.

We acknowledge our ancestors and Elders who nurtured and looked after this land. Without them, we would not have the natural resources of the land that we have today.

We are part of the oldest continuing culture in human history, dating back 65,000 years.

Our song lines and stories go back to time immemorial.

We have cared for this land through ice ages, climate shifts, great floods, volcanic eruptions and colonisation.

Through this time, we have adapted and learned to care for that which cares for us. We have learned to develop a deep custodianship and reciprocal relationship with all life that shares Country.

In this modern world, we often forget how much we depend on

the natural systems around us. The trees give us clean air, the oceans give us a stable climate, the mountains and rainforests give us fresh water, and the soil gives us healthy food.

Without it, we cannot thrive.

When land is whole, it is generous and sustains its custodians. As we care for and restore the land, it can once again care for us and continue caring for future generations in the face of growing threats.

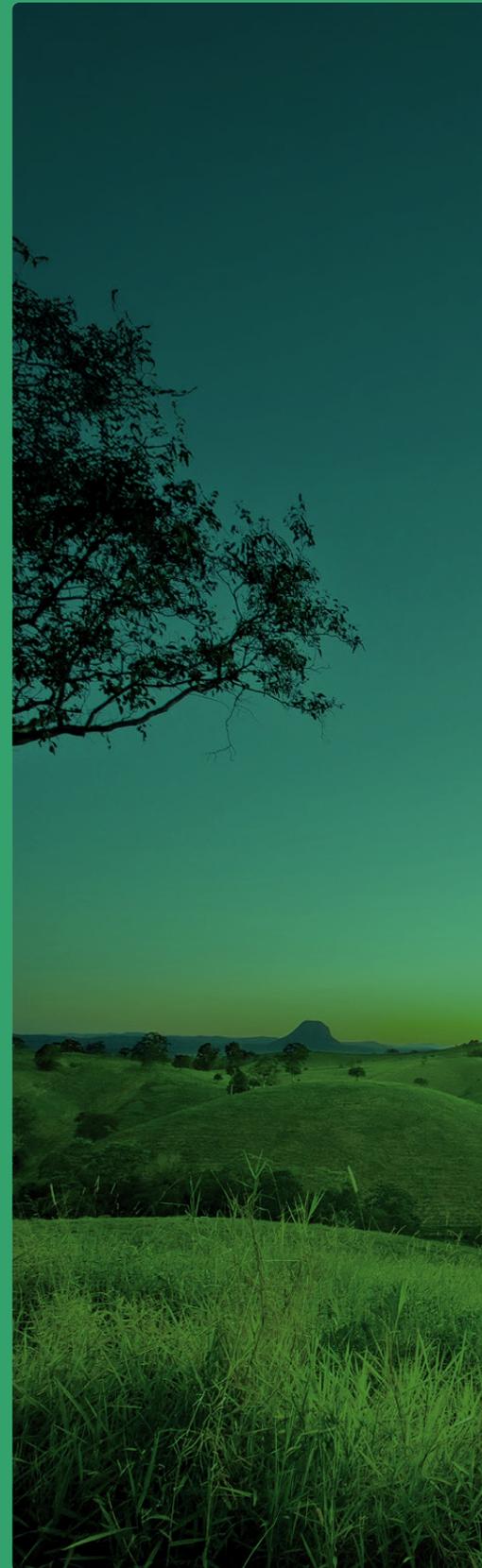
This is the Noosa we all want.

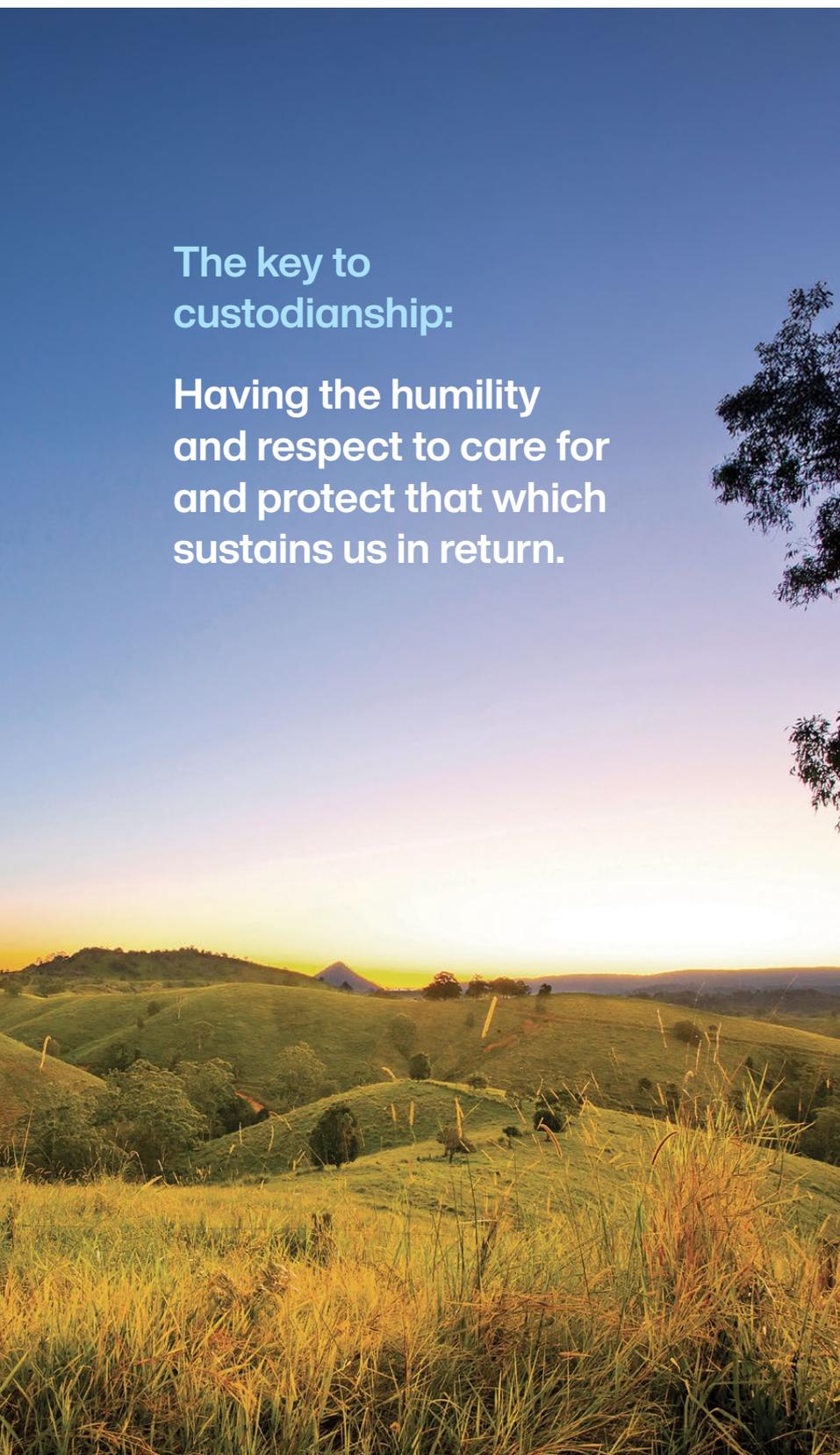
A place with water we can swim in, streams we can drink from, food that nourishes the body, oceans that replenish the soul, and air that invigorates with every breath.

A place of mutual flourishing – where our natural world is as much a part of us as we are a part of it.

**With the commitment,  
we invite you to join us  
in opening our hearts.**

To listen deeply, to learn intently, and embrace all life that shares this beautiful place with us.





The key to  
custodianship:

Having the humility  
and respect to care for  
and protect that which  
sustains us in return.

**We invite you** to tread lightly on this Country, and to listen to the Traditional Custodians to protect the totems representing all of Country.

**We invite you** to experience the beauty of Noosa. From the Koalas on the sacred Mount Cooroora in the west, to the White-bellied Sea Eagle fishing in the Everglades to the north; the Humpback Whales migrating along the eastern Noosa Headland; and the Loggerhead Turtles nesting on the white sandy beaches to the south.

**We invite you** to share your experiences of Noosa with others and encourage them to visit the region also with care and respect.

Together, we can be custodians of our collective home and transform it into one that is enduring, one that nurtures, and one that sustains nature now so that it can sustain our children indefinitely.

**We thank you** for helping us to make the Noosa Story into one that redefines our relationship with the living world. The place that defines what it means to be a Biosphere Reserve and shows the world how we are truly different by nature.

**This is the commitment we make together,  
for our children and their children after.**

# The draft Noosa Promise

Inspired by the Kabi Kabi Commitment

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**Noosa is the place of Shadows** – where guardian trees meet the sea, nature thrives, and the spirit of the land connects us all. Whether I am here for a day or a lifetime I have a shared responsibility to protect this place for all who follow.

— **I promise to tread lightly.**

By walking gently on Country, leaving no trace, and respecting sacred places and wildlife.

— **I promise to celebrate Noosa's diverse communities.**

By honouring Noosa's deeply held values, embracing diversity, and respecting the people who call Noosa home.

— **I promise to give back more than I take.**

By volunteering, donating and acting in ways that regenerate nature, enhance culture, and support local businesses, artists and conservation efforts.

— **I promise to connect with culture and Country.**

By seeking to understand Noosa's cultural roots and honouring the wisdom of those who came before, especially the Kabi Kabi Peoples as Noosa's Traditional Custodians.

— **I promise to protect what sustains us.**

By keeping land, rivers, ocean and air clean – reducing waste, choosing local food, and conserving water and energy.

**This is my commitment** – to be a custodian of Noosa with a legacy of leaving these lands and waters better than I found it, so that others, yet to come, may experience the spirit and beauty of Noosa.

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## Acknowledgment of Country

Noosa Council proudly acknowledges and respects Australia's First Nations people and their deep and abiding connection to this country. We recognise the Kabi Kabi People as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters of the Noosa area and offer gratitude for their careful custodianship of this unique environment over thousands of years. We pay respect to the Kabi Kabi people, past, present and emerging.

# Introduction

**Noosa is a place people fall in love with – some stay for a weekend, others for a lifetime.**

Over time, our town has grown, not just in popularity but in complexity. While tourism has helped shape Noosa's economy and identity, it has also brought challenges that affect the everyday lives of residents.

This draft Destination Management Plan is a commitment to putting community first – protecting the lifestyle, environment and character that make Noosa special, while managing tourism in a way that respects and sustains our shared home.

Noosa's universal appeal stems from its ancient forests, pristine beaches, and enduring values that trace back 65,000 years to the Kabi Kabi First Nations People—the traditional custodians of the lands and waters of Noosa.

This deep connection to Country continues to shape Noosa's future and underpins the Noosa Promise inspired by the Kabi Kabi Commitment, which invites visitors, residents, and businesses to become stewards and custodians of this place—treating lightly while in Noosa and leaving the lands and waters better than they were found.

noosa  
is a place  
people fall  
in love with

## The Challenge We're Tackling Together

As Noosa's popularity grows, so too do the pressures.

The impacts of increased visitation, population growth, and shifting travel behaviours—such as the rise in short-stay rentals—are being felt across the Shire more widely and deeply than ever before.

Many in the community feel that the balance has tipped, and that the benefits of tourism are no longer being shared in ways that feel fair or sustainable.

These challenges aren't unique to Noosa—but our response can be.

The community has voiced a clear desire for a new approach—one that protects what makes Noosa special and redefines the role of tourism in shaping its future.

The draft Noosa Destination Management Plan offers an opportunity to reset the balance. It focuses on listening to the community, learning from global best practice, and leading with care.

By working together—residents, businesses, Traditional Custodians, and visitors—we can shape a future where tourism supports, rather than compromises, Noosa's environment, lifestyle, and values.

Together, we can protect what matters most and ensure Noosa remains a place we're proud to share—now and for generations to come.



Vehicle congestion, Moorindil St, Tewantin



4WDs on the beach, Noosa North Shore



Overcrowding, Noosa Main Beach

# Background

1



## 1.1 A Plan for Noosa's Future

The Noosa Shire draft Destination Management Plan (DMP), shaped in collaboration with the community, offers a clear and long-term guide to balancing Noosa's unique environment and lifestyle with sensitive visitor management.

It encourages bold leadership and meaningful change, inviting both locals and visitors to play an active role in caring for Noosa.

As a community-led document, the DMP outlines key priorities, supported by targeted actions and measurable outcomes, to help us know that we're on the right track.

These priorities are designed to protect Noosa's natural assets and way of life, while consciously managing the visitor economy and enhancing the visitor experience—creating a strong foundation for shared responsibility.

By taking this approach, Noosa can lead the way in responsible, forward-thinking, and regenerative tourism preserving its natural beauty, rich environment, vibrant culture, and strong sense of community for generations to come.



## 1.2 Why a Destination Management Plan (DMP)?

Noosa's global reputation as a beloved visitor destination is well recognised, and tourism has long played a vital role in shaping the Noosa we know and love, supporting local businesses and providing services and amenities that benefit residents.

But, like many other iconic destinations such as Barcelona, Venice, and Queenstown, many in the community feel that Noosa is being loved to death.

Post-COVID population growth, high year-round visitor numbers, and changing travel behaviours—like the rise in drive tourism and short-stay rentals in residential areas—are placing increasing pressure on Noosa's environment, lifestyle, and the very qualities that make it special.

In response, the community is calling for change in how tourism is managed and how it contributes to Noosa's future.

Extensive community engagement revealed a strong desire to build on traditional environmental practices (e.g., to minimise harm) and embrace a regenerative tourism model that commits to leaving Noosa better than it was found.

While the community acknowledged Noosa's strong pedigree in sustainability, the aspiration to move towards a regenerative approach, appears to have been built on an even stronger commitment to Noosa's environment, through strengthening community and cultural values, building a thriving and resilient economy, and creating an even better experience for everyone.

### The difference between sustainable and regenerative tourism



#### Sustainable Tourism

Minimise harm

VS



#### Regenerative Tourism

Leave it better than you found it

Noosa's Destination Management approach is more than a plan, it's a promise to continue our strong commitment to protect and enhance our place.

Through ongoing, thoughtful planning, and bold actions, the plan aims to strike a meaningful balance—protecting Noosa's values, heritage, environment, and lifestyle for current and future generations, while aligning the visitor economy more closely with what the community cares about most.



Trees for Tourism tree planting event, Tourism Noosa

## 1.3 A Draft Vision for Destination Management

Across Noosa Shire, communities share a common vision:

A way of life and travel (or visitation) that supports residents, respects the environment, and nurtures a thriving local economy – working in harmony with nature and looking after the place we love, together.

## 1.4 Noosa's Guiding Values

At the heart of the draft Destination Management Plan are the community's values – those that make Noosa 'Different by Nature.' These values were shaped through ongoing community engagement, including the Noosa Shire Liveability Survey (November 2021), the Noosa Corporate Plan (June 2023), and during consultation on the DMP Discussion Paper (October 2023).

### Values underpinning Noosa's Destination Management Plan

Noosa Value	Aim
<b>Accessible and Inclusive</b>	Ensure Noosa is for all – a welcoming, accessible destination where everyone belongs and diversity is embraced.
<b>Climate Conscious</b>	Accelerate and embed climate resilience and disaster ready planning into all aspects of destination management, including preparing for more frequent and extreme events, promoting low impact travel, sustainable transport, local food production and carbon reduction initiatives.
<b>Community-Led</b>	Put residents' wellbeing and quality of life at the heart of every decision and align tourism with the community's values, lifestyle, and long-term aspirations.
<b>Cultural Respect and Diversity</b>	Honour and integrate the knowledge, heritage, and rights of Traditional Custodians, ensuring that tourism reflects and respects Indigenous culture and values.
<b>Leading Change</b>	Embrace forward-thinking policies and actions that are bold, collaborative and transparent, and position Noosa as a leader in responsible and regenerative destination management.
<b>Nature Positive</b>	Actively restore and regenerate Noosa's natural ecosystems, making sure tourism leaves a net positive impact on our environment.
<b>Resilient Economy</b>	Support a diverse and resilient economy by fostering small business, local enterprise, innovation, regeneration and circular economy principles, while ensuring that tourism remains a positive contributor to community wellbeing and environmental integrity.
<b>Regenerative Tourism</b>	Expect and encourage visitors to respect our environment, culture, and community values through education, responsible tourism initiatives, and clear behavioural expectations.
<b>Values over Volume</b>	Encourage visitor experiences that align with our environmental and community values, emphasise authenticity and regenerative practices over high volume tourism, and ensure visitor numbers are within sustainable capacity for Noosa.

# The Noosa DMP Process

# 2



## 2.1 Phase 1: Community Engagement

The draft Noosa Destination Management Plan was shaped through extensive engagement and collaboration with the Noosa Shire community.

The process included a wide range of engagements—workshops, stakeholder sessions, pop-ups, coffee chats, individual and organisational submissions, and two detailed “Your Say” surveys—designed to hear from as many voices as possible.

Together, the community contributed over 1,300+ hours of their time and 1,000 + unique responses, reflecting a deep commitment to shaping Noosa’s future.

### The goals of this engagement were to:

- Gather ideas, suggestions, and solutions from the community to inform the vision and plan
- Identify and prioritise key issues, challenges, and opportunities for destination management
- Understand the level of change the community is willing to accept

This rich feedback was carefully analysed, ensuring every contribution was considered.



40k

Postcards Distributed

to Noosa households



17

Stakeholder Conversations

342 pages | 153,000 words



8

Coffee Chats

94 pages | 25,500 words



7

Facilitated Workshops

74 pages | 33,500 words



596

Have Your Say Short Surveys

222 pages | 118,000 words



202

Have Your Say Detailed Surveys

291 pages | 108,000 words



67

Individual Submissions

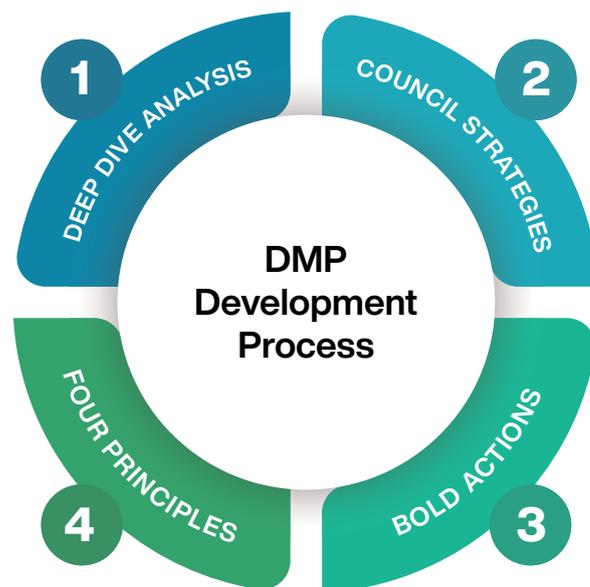
193 pages | 73,000 words

Average novel is 80,000 words.

The data generated 6.5 novels.

## 2.2 Further Analysis of Feedback

The community's priorities and proposed solutions were then aligned to Council's strategic documents to identify which actions were already underway, which were progressing well, and which needed to be initiated. The DMP seeks to advance and accelerate some existing actions of priority to the community and Council, as well as advance a number of new initiatives in response to community priorities.



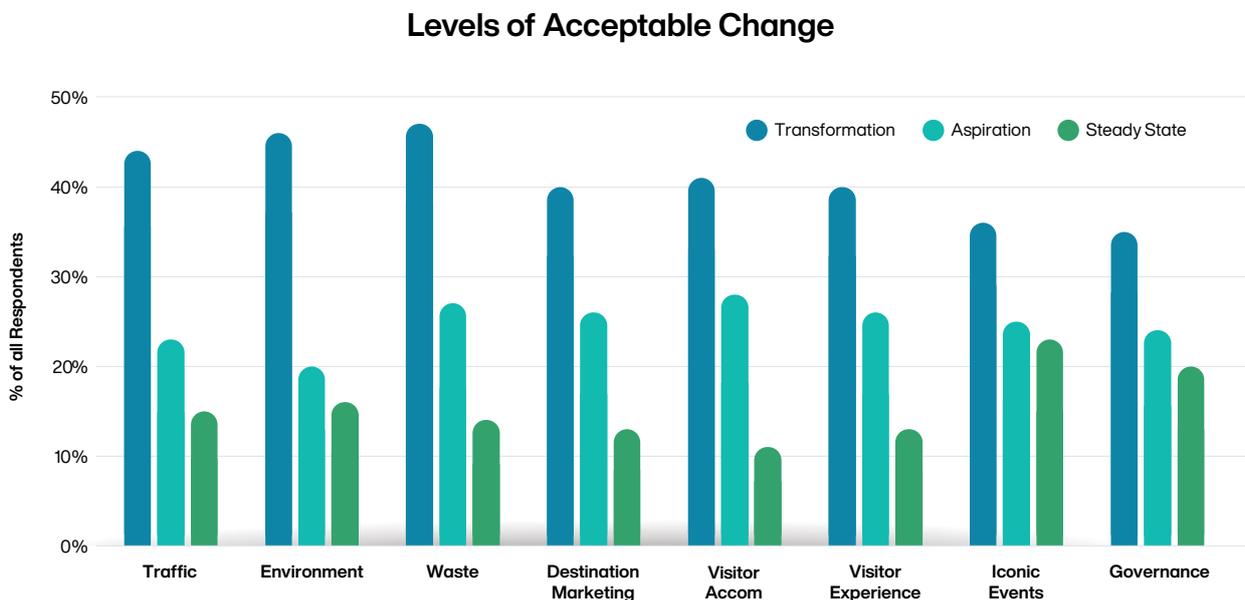
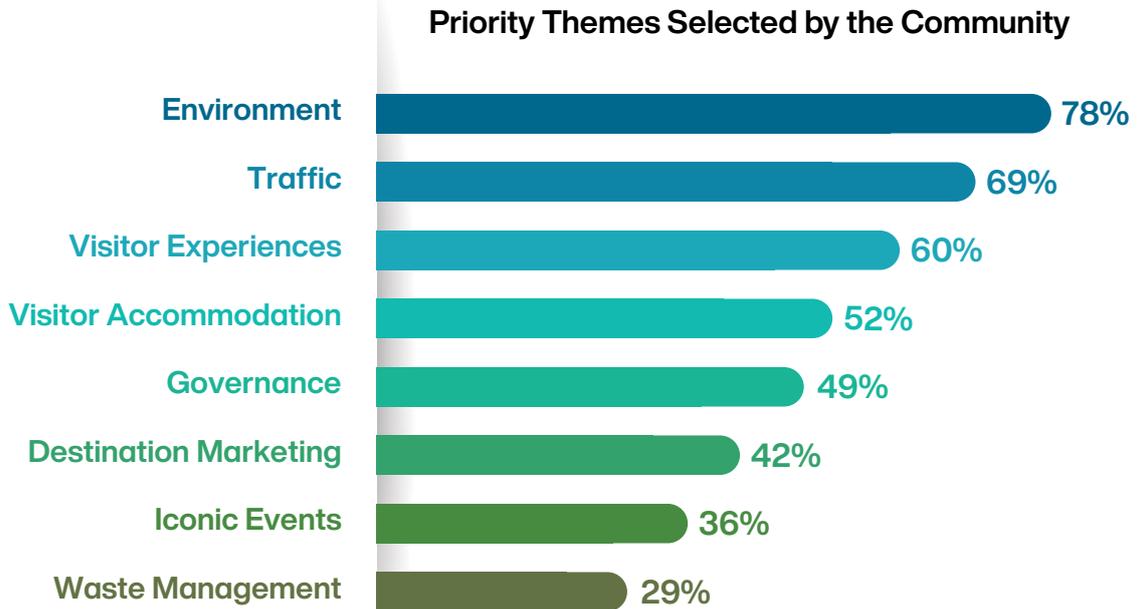
- 1 Community Feedback initiated over 1,000+ unique responses, culminating in over 3,000 pieces of feedback to be analysed.
- 2 Feedback overlayed on Council's higher order strategies and plans, to establish status of the solutions – which were already underway and which had yet to be initiated.
- 3 A collaborative cross-council process identified around 30% of the issues identified as community priorities, and suggested solutions either requiring further attention or that were new.
- 4 Stage 4 of the process identified ways in which these community priorities could be accelerated, through a suite of Guiding Principles, Actions and Tasks, aligned to the community's priority solutions.

It is these (the Principles, Actions, Tasks) that are being tested with the Community during Phase 2 engagement to ensure they accurately reflect and respond to community feedback.



Phase 1 Community Engagement, Kin Kin

## 2.3 What the Community Told Us



These graphs reflect feedback received during phase 1 engagement on the DMP Discussion Paper. The first graph outlines the priorities that the community indicated were important and need action on and the second graph indicates the level of action or response our community and industry would like on each of these priority areas.

## 2.4 Summary of Community Priorities from Phase 1 Engagement

A deeper analysis of Phase 1 feedback revealed four key priorities that are important to the community.

Alongside these, the community also shared a range of potential solutions, insights, and ideas to help address these priorities.

When combined with existing actions from current Council strategies and informed by global best practice examples of what has worked well in other destinations, this feedback and process identified a set of potential solutions to respond to each priority. These have informed this draft DMP. These are outlined below.

### Protect and Steward our Environment

75%

respondents selected as a priority

#### Potential solutions:

- More initiatives to safeguard the environment
- Implement regenerative tourism initiatives
- Improve sustainability of iconic locations
- Manage public access sustainably to iconic locations
- Authentically represent Noosa's community and environmental value

### Improve Management of Short Term Accommodation (STA)

72%

respondents selected as a priority

#### Potential solutions:

- Restrict STAs in residential zones
- Improve STA management and compliance
- Integrate sustainability into accommodation
- Increase penalties and costs for STAs
- Consider incentives to encourage STAs into rental pool

## Improve Traffic Management and Reduce Congestion

69%

respondents selected as a priority

### Potential solutions:

- Introduce timed and paid parking considering low or no cost for residents
- Provide more (and improved) Park and Ride
- Expand paid and free public transport
- Build active transport infrastructure
- Introduce a congestion charge

## Align Tourism with Community Values

55%

respondents selected as a priority

### Potential solutions:

- Bold leadership in protecting community values and championing the environment
- Tourism is aligned with community values and sentiment
- Review Tourism Noosa Funding and Governance Model, improve efficiencies and performance
- Improve compliance, and enforcement of policies
- Increase community consultation on tourism decisions

## 2.5 What Matters Most to Noosa

A deeper dive into “what matters most to Noosa” revealed the following consistently strong themes from Phase 1 engagement.

- 
- **Everyone (residents, businesses, and visitors) should be encouraged to tread lightly**, ensuring their presence enriches Noosa, protects our environment and leaves a lasting, positive impact.
- 
- **Tourism can be for good**, with visitors helping to fund the cost of environmental protection, regeneration of places and land, Noosa’s infrastructure improvements, and community benefit projects.
- 
- **Noosa’s lifestyle, community, and visitor experience should be enhanced by tourism**, through thoughtful management and bold leadership, creating benefits for all.
- 
- **Resident amenity, housing supply, and accessibility should be prioritised and improved**, supporting a balanced and inclusive community.
- 
- **Traffic management and congested areas should be addressed** – by improving the way we move around Noosa and access places especially during peak periods.
- 

These themes have been shaped into four **Guiding Principles**, each supported by clear goals, practical actions, and simple ways to monitor and measure progress. Importantly, they reflect the ideas and solutions shared by the community.





## 2.6 Noosa's Destination Management Principles

### PRINCIPLE 1

## Respecting Community

Our wellbeing is fundamental to Council's decision making – enhancing our quality of life through better connectivity, accessibility and housing amenity.

### GOAL

Noosa's quality of life, connectivity, accessibility, and housing supply are improved by responsible tourism.

### PRINCIPLE 2

## Leading the Way

Noosa Council is committed to working with the community to position Noosa as a leader in destination management, where Council policies, plans and actions enrich our environment and lifestyle through globally recognised responsible and regenerative tourism.

### GOAL

Noosa's lifestyle, community, environment and visitor experiences are improved by Council leadership and responsible tourism initiatives.

**PRINCIPLE 3**

## Living our Values

We all share a deep love for Noosa – its natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and strong community spirit. We tread lightly while we're here, and every decision we make is guided by our commitment to keep Noosa special for current and future generations.

**GOAL**

Noosa forever remains a special place because everyone – residents, businesses and visitors – is committed to doing their bit to keep it that way.

These principles are supported by a suite of practical actions and tasks and will be guided by clear indicators of success to ensure transparent monitoring and measurement of progress, outlined in Section 3.6 page 32.

**PRINCIPLE 4**

## Tourism for Good

We care for Noosa's natural and built places, protect our way of life, and ensure tourism supports a healthy environment, thriving community, and helps fund the services and infrastructure that sustain us.

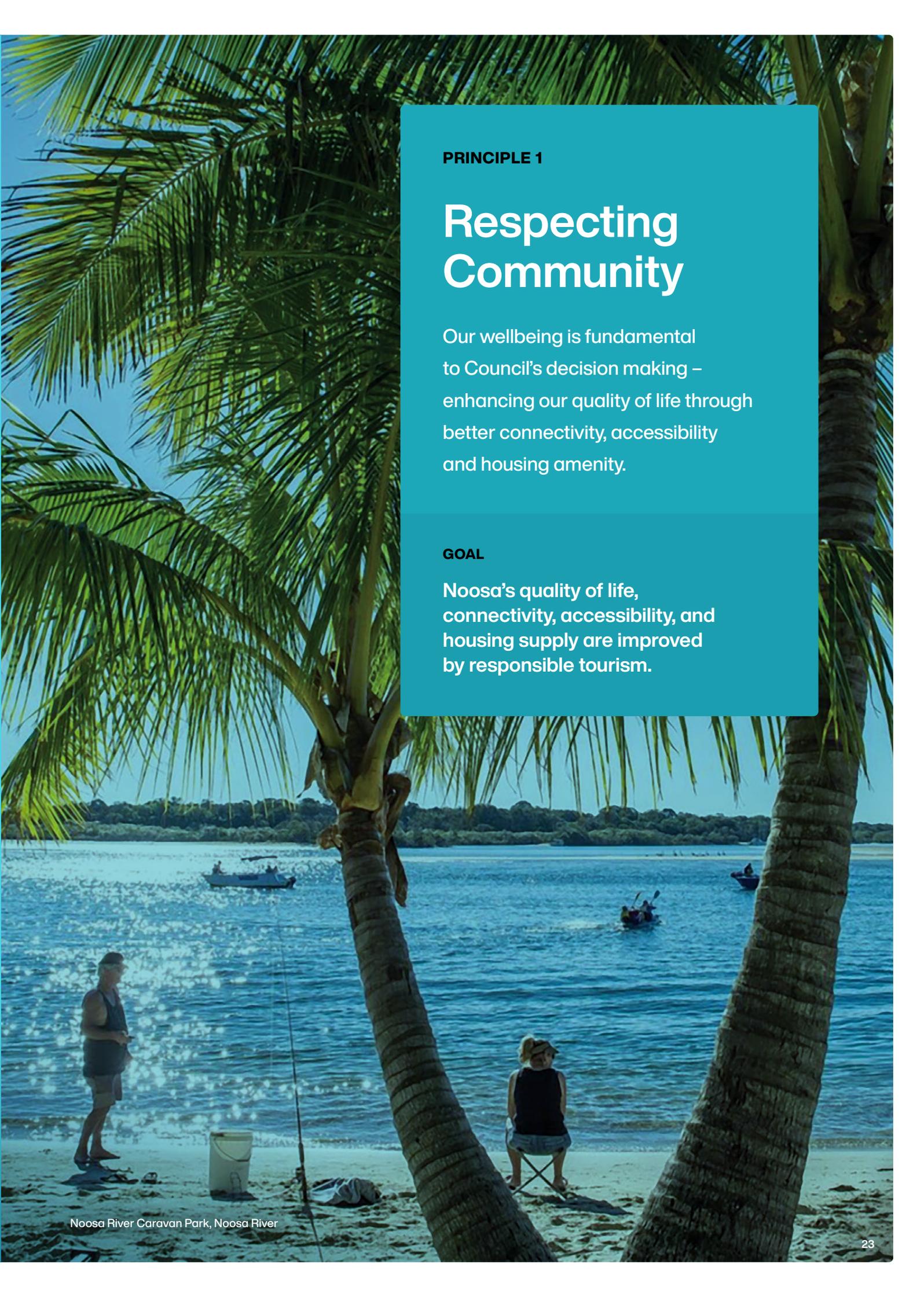
**GOAL**

In Noosa, tourism is for good – enhancing, and regenerating Noosa's environment, land, infrastructure and services.

At the heart of this draft DMP Action Plan is a deep sense of personal and collective responsibility, to look after this place we all love – calling on everyone (locals, businesses and visitors) to “do their part” **#FortheLoveofNoosa**.

# Draft Destination Management Action Plan

# 3



**PRINCIPLE 1**

# Respecting Community

Our wellbeing is fundamental to Council's decision making – enhancing our quality of life through better connectivity, accessibility and housing amenity.

**GOAL**

Noosa's quality of life, connectivity, accessibility, and housing supply are improved by responsible tourism.

**ACTION 1.1**

## Protect our Neighbourhoods:



Together, we manage the impacts of short-term accommodation in our neighbourhoods – using Council tools like rates and charges to help keep Noosa’s neighbourhoods liveable for locals.

- Strengthen the tools available to Council—like planning rules, local laws (Noosa Short Stay Letting and Home Hosted Accommodation 2021), rates, and compliance to manage and mitigate the impacts of short-term accommodation on our neighbourhoods.

This includes addressing issues like waste management and protecting the peaceful character of residential areas.

- Encourage and incentivise an opt out program for short-stay rentals in residential areas on the coast and in Noosa’s hinterland, to revert back to affordable long-term rentals or permanent accommodation for locals.
- Advocate to the State Government for a state-wide register of STA properties and seek legislative changes in relation to STA use rights and capping STA numbers in residential zones.
- Work with existing and future tourism accommodation providers to ensure any development respects Noosa’s Design Principles, ensuring that new developments or upgrades to existing accommodation reflect local values, improve access and inclusivity and fit with Noosa’s character.

**ACTION 1.2**

## Improve Infrastructure and Transport solutions



Together, we ease congestion by making public and active transport more reliable, accessible, and appealing for locals and visitors.

- Prioritise investment in footpaths, trails and bike lanes to make walking, bike riding, and scootering safer and more enjoyable for everyone.
- Strengthen advocacy to State Government for improved public transport in Noosa—more services, better routes and connectivity, and more suitable (electric) modes—and partner with business to deliver smart options like a subsidised ferry and airport transfers.
- Encourage and incentivise locals and visitors to walk, ride or Park and Ride by making it easier, more convenient and faster to leave their vehicles outside high-traffic areas.
- Ensure we build back better when renewing or upgrading infrastructure, so our places are more resilient and able to withstand climate impacts and disasters.

**ACTION 1.3**

## Optimise Parking and Traffic Management:



Together we ensure fair and efficient access to parking and reduce congestion in high-demand areas.

- Review dynamic parking systems (including timed and regulated parking) and introduce trials of paid parking in high demand areas that are tailored to support and prioritise resident needs (considering free or low cost rates for local residents and workers) while also accommodating visitors.
- Use innovative parking management tools (e.g., vehicle recognition technology) to improve vehicle turnover in parking areas, which can improve parking availability and support the economic success of local businesses.
- Upgrade bus services and transport hubs, including exploring options for faster bus routes, dedicated bus lanes (including investigation of a one-way bus lane), and ensure all tourism marketing promotes sustainable travel options.

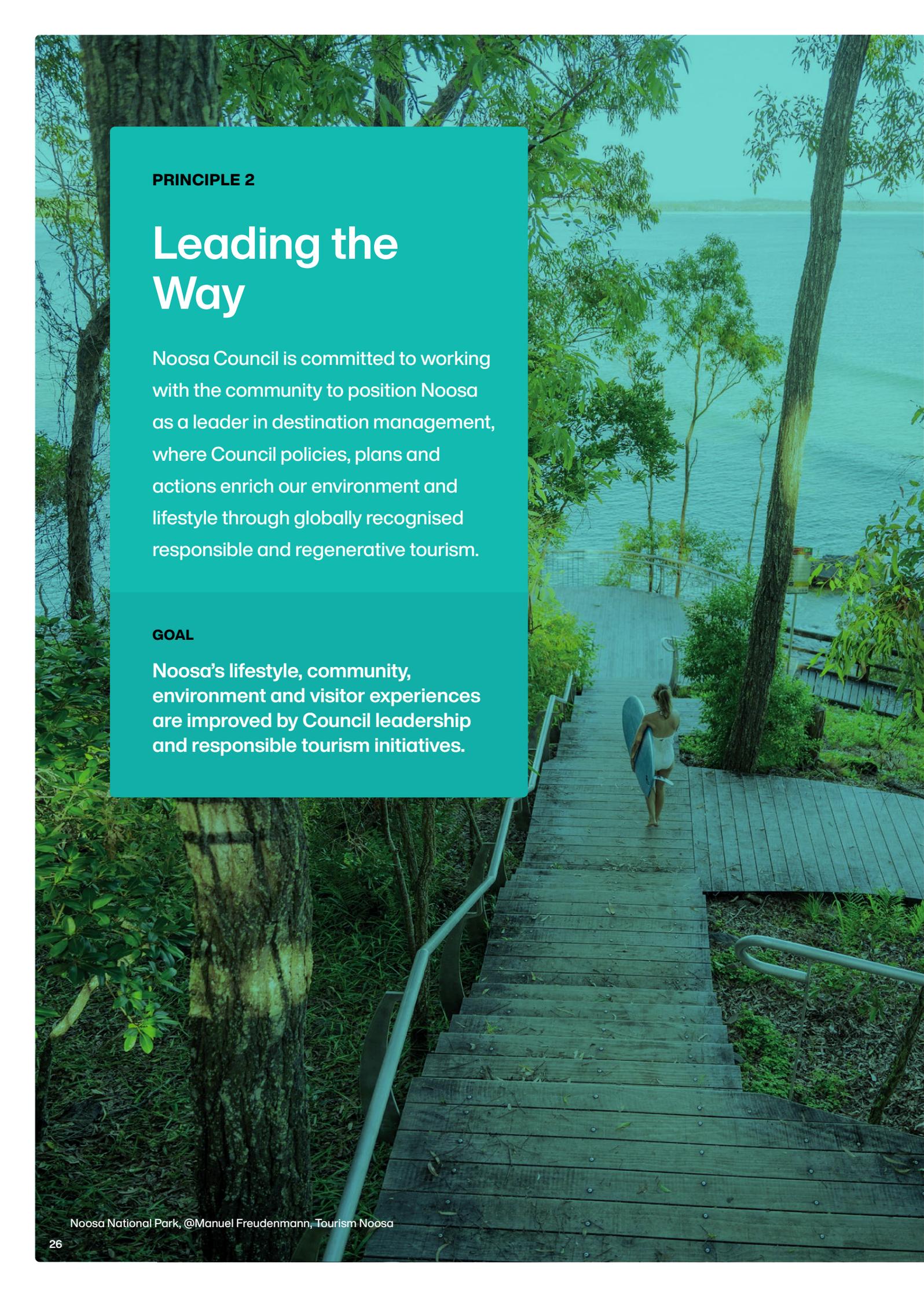
**ACTION 1.4**

## Balanced Events Portfolio:



Together, we support events that embrace Noosa's regenerative values, protect the environment, and bring benefits to locals.

- Develop and implement a new events strategy that reflects community values—includes sustainable limits on the number, scale and size of events reducing disruption, supporting low-impact events, and encouraging scheduling outside peak holiday periods.
- Support events that care for the community, and the environment, celebrate Noosa's values and give back to the region, ensuring they meet sustainability criteria while minimising impact and disruption to the community.

A scenic view of a wooden staircase leading down to a lake. The staircase is made of dark wood and has metal railings. A person is walking down the stairs, carrying a surfboard. The lake is in the background, surrounded by trees and greenery. The sky is clear and blue.

**PRINCIPLE 2**

# Leading the Way

Noosa Council is committed to working with the community to position Noosa as a leader in destination management, where Council policies, plans and actions enrich our environment and lifestyle through globally recognised responsible and regenerative tourism.

**GOAL**

Noosa's lifestyle, community, environment and visitor experiences are improved by Council leadership and responsible tourism initiatives.

#### ACTION 2.1

## Sustainable Visitation:



Together, we advocate for responsible management of Noosa's most sensitive areas – supporting managed access to preserve the experience for all and encouraging improved behaviours in areas where nature needs to rest.

- Work with partners including State Government to explore ways to sustainably manage access and congestion at our most iconic and sensitive locations (e.g., Noosa North Shore, Noosa River, Cooloola Recreation Area, Teewah Beach, Noosa Heads National Park) so that nature can rest and the experience for all is preserved.
- Explore the use of new technologies (e.g., mobility sensors and real time APPs) to ensure visitor numbers and activities are sustainable and within an established carrying capacity of Noosa's environment, waterways and infrastructure.
- Develop a local Surf Management Plan to help everyone enjoy the waves safely and respectfully – ensuring Noosa's World Surfing Reserve stays special for future surfers and ocean lovers to come.
- Work with Research partners and State Government to improve our understanding and response to climate and disaster risks to Noosa's iconic places and tourism industry.

#### ACTION 2.2

## Management of Noosa River:



Together, we advocate for a quality Noosa River experience through sustainable river management and working with relevant authorities to ensure the rivers health is prioritised.

- Work closely with State Government, Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) and river users to ensure the health and quality of the waterways are enhanced, to improve the biodiversity, aquatic health and scenic amenity of our much-loved river.
- Support MSQ in removing abandoned vessels and regulating vessel use to ensure limits to permanent occupation of vessels and use of vessels for short stay letting.
- Develop programs to engage landowners to support regenerative agriculture to protect Noosa's River system – supporting landholders practices, reducing soil and pollutant runoff, enhancing sustainable and local food production.

**ACTION 2.3**

## Review Funding of Tourism:



Together, we support alternative ways to fund tourism – for example through visitor contributions and other user-pays options.

- Pilot a range of user-pay models to shift how tourism is funded, such as:
  - Regulated and timed paid parking in high-traffic areas
  - A fee for driving into and therefore contributing to congestion in high-traffic areas
  - A visitor levy on overnight stays (subject to State Government approval)

- Collaborate with major booking platforms, such as Airbnb, to contribute to environmental and community initiatives that matter most to locals.

- Review all elements of the Tourism Noosa Funding Agreement to ensure its purpose, model and funding are aligned to achieve the outcomes of the Destination Management Plan (DMP).

**ACTION 2.4**

## Champion DMP Delivery:



Together, we establish a Destination Stewardship Council comprising individuals with the expertise and influence to champion the successful delivery of Noosa's DMP.

- Establish a Destination Stewardship Council with the ability and influence to help drive the successful delivery of key DMP actions – helping to implement, monitor and measure DMP progress.

- Establish a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to measure DMP progress ensuring actions are successfully delivered within agreed timelines.

- Measure Community Sentiment on the DMP every two years to ensure DMP actions are dynamic and reflect current community sentiment and values.

### PRINCIPLE 3

# Living our Values

We all share a deep love for Noosa – its natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and strong community spirit. We tread lightly while we're here, and every decision we make is guided by our commitment to keep Noosa special for current and future generations.

### GOAL

Noosa forever remains a special place because everyone – residents, businesses and visitors – is committed to doing their bit to keep it that way.



### ACTION 3.1

## Joint Custodian Program (For the Love of Noosa):



Together, we ensure that Noosa is kept special for future generations, by participating in a Joint Custodian Program that invites visitors, businesses and locals to actively support Noosa's regenerative tourism values and actions.

- Develop and implement a Noosa Custodian Program (For the Love of Noosa) encouraging locals, businesses and visitors to become ambassadors in ways to care for Noosa and leave it better than they found it.
- Promote opportunities that are easy for local and visitors to participate in – such as tree planting, bush care, beach clean-ups and cultural walks recognising that everyone can play a part in protecting Noosa.
- Encourage creative and engaging ways for visitors and residents to be involved and reward behaviour change, such as the promotion of 'voluntourism' opportunities where visitors participate in voluntary programs that support our community and environment.
- Assist local businesses and community groups to create unique experiences that showcase Noosa's natural beauty, history, and culture—through local food, art, live music, and traditions—to offer authentic Noosa experiences for locals and visitors.

### ACTION 3.2

## Build Industry Capability and Experiences:



Together we improve the Noosa experience by supporting programs that build the knowledge and capability of our tourism businesses so that they can demonstrate leadership in promoting regenerative practices, environmental accreditation, and authentic cultural traditions and storytelling.

- Council together with the Tourism Industry lead the way in investing in programs to achieve responsible, regenerative tourism – including lasting initiatives that support the 2032 Brisbane Olympics net zero commitment, and deliver regenerative experiences, that help our residents and visitors give back.
- Partner with the Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation (KKPAC) to support local tourism operators in learning and sharing Kabi Kabi traditions, stories and culture — as taught and entrusted by KKPAC.
- Support, facilitate and promote nature-based and eco-certified businesses that actively contribute to environmental protection and enhance community and visitor wellbeing.
- Support and show case local food and beverage producers to develop regenerative experiences that deliver fresh, nutrient rich and locally grown food and beverage that helps sustain and promote the wellbeing of locals and visitors while in Noosa.

### ACTION 3.3

## Use Smart Modes of Transport:



Together, we commit to reduce congestion in high-use traffic areas by using smarter ways to move around Noosa and continuing our strong advocacy for improved public transport.

- Make it easier, safer and more enjoyable to get around Noosa without a vehicle, to encourage more locals and visitors to commit to taking public transport, walk, scoot or ride their bikes more often in areas of high-traffic use.
- Explore innovative ways to incentivise those who choose smarter ways to travel – Park and Ride, Public Transport or Active Transport (walking or riding a bike) – with potential support from revenue from visitor contributions.
- Maintain and prioritise public open spaces for recreation use, not carparking (e.g., Noosa Heads Lions Park) unless there is an overriding community benefit to do so.
- Trial innovative approaches that prioritise pedestrians and enhance the experience for all in congested areas at high peak times.

### ACTION 3.4

## Our Stories Reflect Our Values:



Together, we embed Noosa's regenerative aspirations and expectations of respectful, responsible visitor behaviour in every story we share about Noosa.

- Showcase local businesses that care for Noosa – those that are actively protecting, enhancing the environment and contributing to the community's long-term wellbeing.
- Share Noosa's story to inspire and unite locals and visitors, honouring and celebrating how everyone contributes to making this place so special, from our pioneer families to our living legends and young people – capturing how this place feels like home whether you're here for a day or for a lifetime.
- Work with and advocate strongly to the State Government to support seasonal rest periods and establish sustainable carrying capacities for in our most sensitive natural areas, giving these places time to recover and stay resilient to improve and preserve the wilderness experience for all.
- Help more people understand what Noosa's most loved places need, to stay healthy by working with our dedicated volunteer and community groups and using our promotions and marketing to share practical, everyday tips that support their protection and long-term care.
- Ensure our promotions of Noosa reflect and respect Kabi Kabi Peoples, ensuring their knowledge, culture, and care for Country guide how we look after this place and share Noosa's story.
- Celebrate Noosa's unique character by enhancing and regenerating our special places in ways that reflect our rich history, vibrant culture, and local creativity—from food and drink to art and live performance and other experiences that capture the spirit of Noosa.

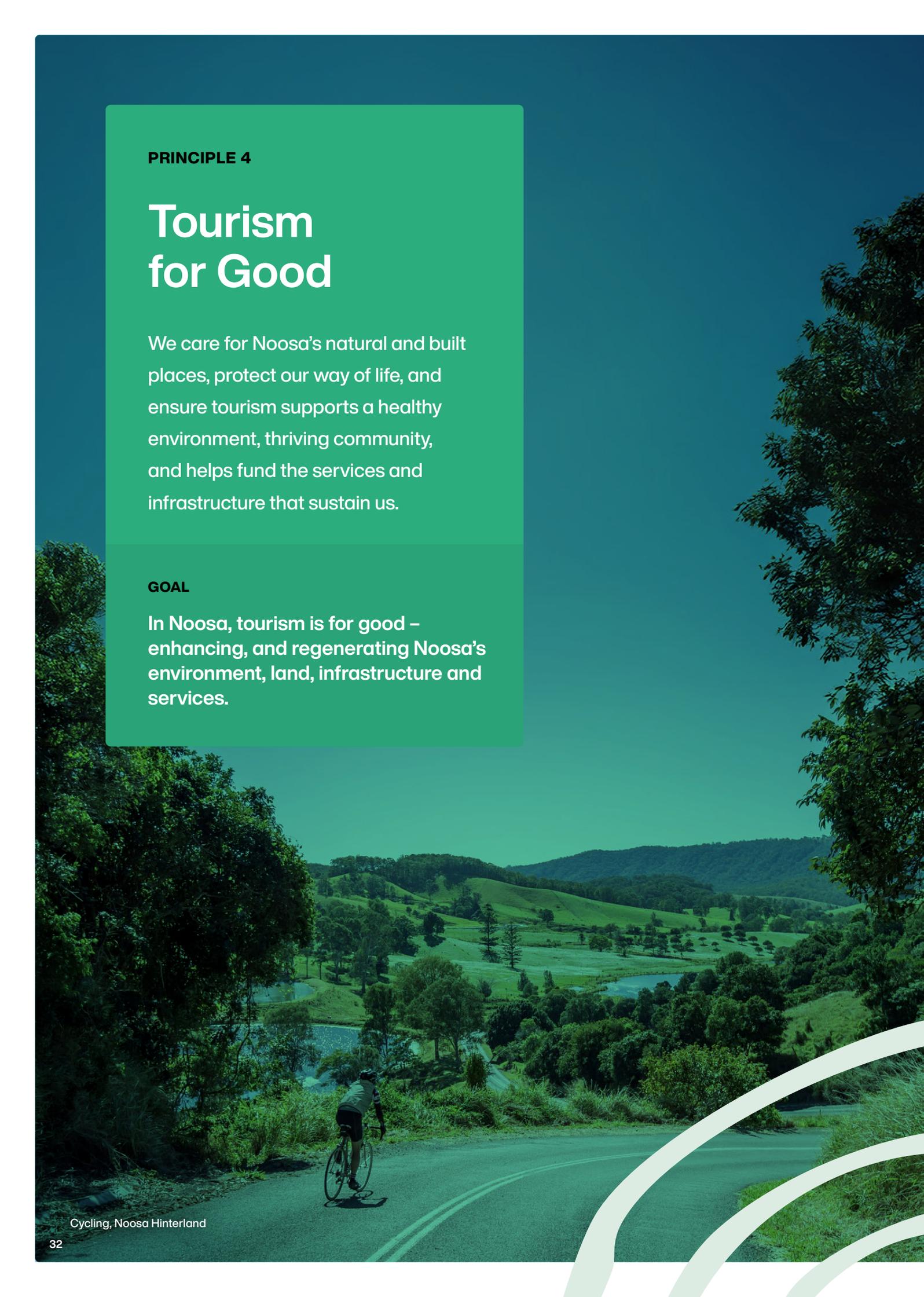
**PRINCIPLE 4**

# Tourism for Good

We care for Noosa's natural and built places, protect our way of life, and ensure tourism supports a healthy environment, thriving community, and helps fund the services and infrastructure that sustain us.

**GOAL**

In Noosa, tourism is for good – enhancing, and regenerating Noosa's environment, land, infrastructure and services.



#### ACTION 4.1

## Enable Visitor Contributions:



Together, we advocate for user-pay contributions and partnerships, so visitors are directly supporting local projects that protect nature, enhance community spaces, and improve shared infrastructure.

- Work with the State Government and Local Government in other key tourism destinations to pilot a visitor contribution model, that enables revenue generated to be directed towards such things as community priorities, infrastructure, resilience initiatives and regenerative tourism.
- Investigate the establishment of a new Community & Environment Benefit Fund, as a mechanism to ensure transparent allocation of funds from such revenue sources as visitor contributions to local initiatives that benefit Noosa.
- Encourage online booking platforms, to contribute financially to each year from revenue generated in Noosa, ensuring they are supporting a destination that supports their business.

#### ACTION 4.2

## Regenerative Tourism Industry:



Together, we adopt sustainable and regenerative practices by developing and delivering programs that helps the tourism industry to lead the way and encourages everyone to contribute.

- Support our tourism industry and businesses to lead by example in sustainable and regenerative practises – reducing energy, waste and water use and incentivise regenerative behavioural change in locals and visitors, with Noosa Council-operated tourism assets, such as the Noosa Holiday Parks, leading by example.
- In partnership with Tourism Noosa and our business community, lead the transition away from single-use plastics to reduce waste to landfill, reduce plastic pollution, encourage compostable products and to encourage and incentivise behaviour change.
- Embed regenerative practices that actively support water security, reduce waste to landfill, and promote a circular economy— as an example, by partnering with initiatives like Give a Sheet, which transforms discarded linen (used hotel sheets, towels, napkins) into valuable raw materials that can be re-used.

**ACTION 4.3**

## Noosa's Tourism Organisation Aligns with the DMP:



Together, we support the alignment of Noosa's regenerative tourism approach, and the DMP, reflecting community values and protecting Noosa's lifestyle and character.

- Partner with Tourism Noosa (and other stakeholders) to ensure funding, marketing and programs reflect community values and align with the direction of this DMP.
- Ensure Tourism Noosa delivers programs and industry development to both grow and improve the experiences and offerings that reflect Noosa's values and provide opportunities for visitors to contribute positively to the protection of Noosa's lifestyle and character.

**ACTION 4.4**

## Lead in Destination Accreditation:



Together, we commit to leaving Noosa better than we found it working towards global accreditation for the destination in acknowledgement of a commitment to our values.

- Work together as locals and visitors to earn global recognition for Noosa due to a genuine community-led approach, and commitment to leave this place better than we found it.
- Understand and demonstrate the true value of Noosa's natural assets when we tell our story, by showcasing how our beaches, bush, and river significantly contribute to community wellbeing, cultural richness and to a thriving, sustainable economy.

## 3.5 Destination Stewardship Council

The Destination Management Stewardship Council is a strategic collective of changemakers, and decision-makers committed to driving the implementation of the Destination Management Plan (DMP).

The intention is that this group will be established to be action-oriented and outcome-driven. Its purpose will be to ensure accountability, maintain momentum and remove barriers to progress. The Stewardship Council will act as a high-level governance and oversight body, aligning cross-sectoral efforts and championing initiatives that reflect the values and priorities of the DMP.

While Terms of Reference have yet to be determined, it is intended that this group will comprise of individuals and organisations with the authority and influence to deliver meaningful change, particularly in areas where Council's role is limited to advocacy – such as matters governed by State or Federal jurisdictions.

Alongside representation from the Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation (KKPAC), membership will include representatives from relevant State and Federal agencies whose mandates intersect with environmental stewardship, land use, infrastructure and tourism. Membership will also include key local organisations. Their collective influence will ensure that strategic goals are achieved, with a strong emphasis on cultural inclusion, regeneration, and the long-term wellbeing and resilience of Noosa.



Wooroi Trails, Tewantin



## 3.6 Measuring Success

Underpinning the final Destination Management Plan, will be a robust Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of key performance indicators, responsibilities, timelines to be developed following this round of community feedback on the draft DMP.

Monitoring outcomes and regularly reviewing progress will ensure that the DMP is not only visionary but also actionable and accountable.

Success will be measured not just by what we do, but by the positive impact we create—on Noosa's environment, community, culture, and economy.

## Potential Success Measures for Consideration

### Respecting Community

#### How will we know if we are succeeding?

- An increase in availability and participation in smarter ways to travel – park and ride, public transport or active transport (walking or riding a bicycle).
- All events meet sustainability criteria and improved results of community sentiment.
- Parking is easier to access at the places we want to go to.
- An increase in accessible and inclusive accommodation.
- An increase in the number of properties reverting to long-term rental or permanent housing supply.

### Leading the Way

#### How will we know if we are succeeding?

- Destination Stewardship Council is established and driving action in line with the DMP.
- Community sentiment and satisfaction rate with tourism management improved.
- Alternative funding sources including Visitors contribution are supporting Tourism and Destination management.
- We understand the carrying capacity of our most sensitive places, we manage access to these to ensure the experience is preserved for all.

### Living our Values

#### How will we know if we are succeeding?

- A year-on-year increase in business and residents signing up to the For the Love of Noosa – Joint Custodian Program.
- An increase in the number of regenerative and cultural tourism practises and experiences available in Noosa.
- Increase in participation of visitors in regenerative tourism experiences (including cultural).
- Congestion is reduced in high demand areas – during peak periods.
- An increase in Emissions reduction programs and carbon zero outcomes.

### Tourism for Good

#### How will we know if we are succeeding?

- A Fund is established which is supporting a range of community priorities with revenue generated by visitor user pays.
- Increase in the number of tourism businesses in Noosa that have an environmental certification or accreditation.
- Noosa achieves gold global destination certification through EarthCheck, with community-led initiatives contributing to the certification.
- Noosa is a single use plastic free destination.

We all have a role to play in achieving this vision.

Once the final plan is adopted it will be important to ensure each action is supported by the necessary budget, human resources, and governance structures to drive implementation and track progress.

Importantly, we will continue to listen, learn, and adapt.

Regular community check-ins, transparent reporting, and collaborative partnerships will help us stay on course and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. Monitoring and Evaluation will be guided by the Destination Stewardship Council (to be formed).

This is a living strategy—designed to change and evolve as we implement and monitor progress.

# Conclusion: For the Love of Noosa

Noosa is a place we all love and its incumbent on all of us – new or long-term resident, old or young, overnight visitor or day tripper, to keep it that way.

This draft Destination Management Plan is more than just a plan; it's a shared commitment to look after, protect and improve what makes Noosa special, for those who are here now, and for those yet to come.

By listening to our community, honouring the wisdom of the Kabi Kabi people and their traditions, and working together as residents, businesses and visitors, we're setting a new standard for tourism—a standard that demonstrates that tourism can be for good, particularly if it gives back more than it takes.

This is the Noosa we all want.

And, when we live our values, make thoughtful choices, and continue to lead the way – we ensure that Noosa's environment, lifestyle, wellbeing and economy continue to thrive.

**Together, we can ensure that Noosa remains not only a place we love, but a place that future generations will be proud to call their own.**

this is  
the noosa  
we all want.

#FORTHELOVEOFNOOSA

# Appendices

## Useful Destination Management Terms

Please note, that not all have been used in this document.

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### Bold Leadership

A community first approach – taking courageous, values-driven decisions that prioritise long-term community wellbeing, foster trust through transparent engagement, and ensure that the broader social, cultural, environmental and economic interests of Noosa are well served.

Source: Noosa Shire Council, Economic Development Branch, 2025

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### Destination Management

The process of planning, creating and managing tourism activity in a way that respects community, culture and the environment, while enhancing the experience for all, and contributing to the local economy and ensuring long-term sustainability.

Source: Noosa Shire Council, Economic Development Branch, 2025

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### Destination Stewardship

The responsible management of a destination's resources, culture and environment to ensure that tourism benefits both the community and visitors – now and in the future.

Source: Dr. Jonathon Day, "A Practical Guide to Destination Stewardship and Sustainable Tourism", 2023

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### Ecotourism

A type of travel that emphasises responsible visitation by minimising the negative impacts on the natural environment, society and culture while providing benefits to local communities. Travellers involved in ecotourism tend to focus on experiencing and learning about nature and cultural heritage.

Sources: UN World Tourism Organization (now UN Tourism), "Ecotourism" and "Sustainable Development" web pages, 2022

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### Indigenous Tourism

Travel experiences and activities that are owned and/or operated indigenous communities by the Kabi Kabi Traditional Owners or members of the Kabi Kabi communities.

These experiences introduce visitors to Indigenous cultural heritage and contemporary ways of life. They showcase and preserve these cultures and traditions while providing economic and social benefits to Indigenous communities.

Sources: UN World Tourism Organization (now UN Tourism), "Sustainable Development" webpage, 2022

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### Kabi Kabi Commitment

A formal agreement between Noosa Council and the Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation (KKPAC) – to a shared pledge to uphold sustainable custodianship of the lands and waters of Noosa.

Source: Mayor of Noosa Shire Council, September 2024

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## Local Tourism Organisation (LTO)

LTOs work at the local level, usually within one council area.

They are closely connected to local tourism businesses and focus on:

- Creating great visitor experiences
- Supporting local operators
- Running Visitor Centres
- Encouraging visitors to explore their town or area

LTOs do not receive direct funding from Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) and often rely on local government and partnerships for support.

Tourism Noosa is Noosa's Local Tourism Organisation.

Source: Noosa Shire Council, Economic Development Branch, 2025

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## Noosa

For the purposes of this document, the word Noosa is used interchangeably with Noosa Shire throughout. It refers to all parts of the shire including but not limited to – Kin Kin, Pomona, Cooran, Cooroy, Coorobah, Boreen Point, Tinbeerwah, Tewantin, Noosaville, Noosa Heads, Noosa Junction, Sunrise Beach, Sunshine Beach, Marcus Beach and Peregrin Beach.

Source: Noosa Shire Council, Economic Development Branch, 2025

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## Placemaking

The process of creating and enhancing public spaces that reflect the unique character and identity of a destination and that provide a sense of place and community for visitors and locals alike. This can include the development of public art, cultural events and community-led initiatives that celebrate the destination's heritage and culture and support the wellbeing of people and the environment.

Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), "Destination Marketing Handbook", p. 42, published 2019

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## Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO)

RTOs operate across multiple council areas, promoting the whole region as a destination and are funded by Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ).

The RTO's main focus is:

- Marketing the region to attract visitors
- Working with state and national tourism bodies like TEQ and Tourism Australia
- Supporting big-picture tourism planning and development

RTOs play a key role in shaping the region's long-term tourism strategy.

Visit Sunshine Coast is Noosa's Regional Tourism Organisation.

Noosa Shire Council, Economic Development Branch, 2025

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## Regenerative Tourism, Regeneration

 Also referred to as Net Positive.

A form of sustainable tourism that **goes beyond minimising negative impacts to actively restoring** and regenerating the natural, cultural and social systems of a destination, with the aim of creating a net positive impact and long-term resilience (e.g., in Noosa this could mean such things as regenerative agriculture, which enriches our land and ability to produce food and products locally).

For the purposes of the Noosa Destination Management Plan, it is about **"Leaving the natural, cultural, social, and economic systems better than you found them"**. This is the aspiration of Noosa's DMP.

Source: UN World Tourism Organization (now UN Tourism), "Sustainable Development" webpage, 2022

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## Resident Sentiment (also known as Social Licence)

Refers to the attitudes and perceptions of local residents towards tourism and its impacts on their community, including their perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks in economic, social and environmental aspects.

Source: UN World Tourism Organization (now UN Tourism), "Report on Resident Sentiment", 2019

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## Resilience

Resilience is the ability of a destination or business to withstand and recover from crises, such as natural disasters, economic downturns, health emergencies, political turmoil and other social disruptions.

Source: Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), "GSTC Destination Criteria", 2021

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## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

A set of 17 overarching goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the planet.

The SDGs recognise that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs, including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXTBYMfZyrM&t=38s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXTBYMfZyrM&t=38s)

Source: UN World Tourism Organization (now UN Tourism), "Sustainable Development" webpage, 2022

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## Sustainable Tourism (also known as Responsible Tourism)

A type of tourism that takes full account of its current and future environmental, social and economic impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.

Achieving sustainable tourism requires wide participation and consensus building through strong political leadership and the informed participation of all interested parties.

Sustainable tourism practices can be applied across all parts of the tourism system, from destinations to individual businesses.

For the Noosa Destination Management Plan this is about "minimising harm to the natural, cultural, social and economic systems". Noosa is already committed to this standard.

Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), "GSTC Destination Criteria", 2021

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## Transformation

Purposeful change, guided by community values, to do what is right for Noosa — strengthening its social, environmental, and economic resilience.

Source: Noosa Shire Council, Economic Development Branch, 2025

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## Visitor Carrying Capacity

The sustainable maximum number visitors a destination can accommodate without causing harm to the environment, local community or visitor experience. Carrying capacity is dynamic and can be influenced by a range of factors, including infrastructure and stakeholder perceptions.

Source: European Travel Commission, "Handbook on Sustainable Tourism", 2019

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  - 1.3 Economic Development Strategy 2021-2030
  - 1.4 Environment Strategy 2019
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  - 1.6 Noosa Plan 2020
  - 1.7 Noosa Housing Strategy 2022
  - 1.8 Value of Tourism to the Noosa Community Survey 2019
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