

Notice of Meeting

Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting

An Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting of Byron Shire Council will be held as follows:

Venue	Conference Room, Station Street, Mullumbimby
Date	Thursday, 20 April 2023
Time	2.00pm

Shannon Burt
Director Sustainable Environment and Economy

*I2023/562
Distributed 13/04/23*



BYRON
SHIRE
COUNCIL

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

What is a “Conflict of Interests” - A conflict of interests can be of two types:

Pecuniary - an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom the person is associated.

Non-pecuniary – a private or personal interest that a Council official has that does not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in the Code of Conduct for Councillors (eg. A friendship, membership of an association, society or trade union or involvement or interest in an activity and may include an interest of a financial nature).

Remoteness – a person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to a matter or if the interest is of a kind specified in the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

Who has a Pecuniary Interest? - a person has a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is the interest of the person, or another person with whom the person is associated (see below).

Relatives, Partners - a person is taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter if:

- The person’s spouse or de facto partner or a relative of the person has a pecuniary interest in the matter, or
- The person, or a nominee, partners or employer of the person, is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.

N.B. “Relative”, in relation to a person means any of the following:

- (a) the parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descends or adopted child of the person or of the person’s spouse;
- (b) the spouse or de facto partners of the person or of a person referred to in paragraph (a)

No Interest in the Matter - however, a person is not taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter:

- If the person is unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of the spouse, de facto partner, relative or company or other body, or
- Just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, the Council.
- Just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of the Council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter provided that the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

Disclosure and participation in meetings

- A Councillor or a member of a Council Committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the Council or Committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.
- The Councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the Council or Committee:
 - (a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or Committee, or

- (b) at any time during which the Council or Committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

No Knowledge - a person does not breach this Clause if the person did not know and could not reasonably be expected to have known that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which he or she had a pecuniary interest.

Non-pecuniary Interests - Must be disclosed in meetings.

There are a broad range of options available for managing conflicts & the option chosen will depend on an assessment of the circumstances of the matter, the nature of the interest and the significance of the issue being dealt with. Non-pecuniary conflicts of interests must be dealt with in at least one of the following ways:

- It may be appropriate that no action be taken where the potential for conflict is minimal. However, Councillors should consider providing an explanation of why they consider a conflict does not exist.
- Limit involvement if practical (eg. Participate in discussion but not in decision making or vice-versa). Care needs to be taken when exercising this option.
- Remove the source of the conflict (eg. Relinquishing or divesting the personal interest that creates the conflict)
- Have no involvement by absenting yourself from and not taking part in any debate or voting on the issue as of the provisions in the Code of Conduct (particularly if you have a significant non-pecuniary interest)

Committee members are reminded that they should declare and manage all conflicts of interest in respect of any matter on this Agenda, in accordance with the [Code of Conduct](#).

RECORDING OF VOTING ON PLANNING MATTERS

Clause 375A of the Local Government Act 1993 – Recording of voting on planning matters

- (1) In this section, **planning decision** means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979:
- (a) including a decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but
- (b) not including the making of an order under that Act.
- (2) The general manager is required to keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee, the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.
- (3) For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is required to be called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the council or a council committee.
- (4) Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document and is to include the information required by the regulations.
- (5) This section extends to a meeting that is closed to the public.

OATH AND AFFIRMATION FOR COUNCILLORS

Councillors are reminded of the oath of office or affirmation of office made at or before their first meeting of the council in accordance with Clause 233A of the Local Government Act 1993. This includes undertaking the duties of the office of councillor in the best interests of the people of Byron Shire and the Byron Shire Council and faithfully and impartially carrying out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested under the Act or any other Act to the best of one's ability and judgment.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BUSINESS OF MEETING

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 3.1 Confirmation of minutes from Biodiversity Advisory Committee meeting held on 16 February 2023 6

4. STAFF REPORTS

Sustainable Environment and Economy

- 4.1 Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update 14
4.2 Future Discussion Items for Biodiversity Advisory Committee 29
4.3 Community Member Presentation - Gerard Wedderburn-Bishop - Carbon Sequestration for Byron Bay 39

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

**Report No. 3.1 Confirmation of minutes from Biodiversity
Advisory Committee meeting held on 16
February 2023**

5

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Michelle Wilde, Project Support Officer

File No: I2023/382


10

RECOMMENDATION:

**That the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 16
February 2023 be confirmed.**

15

Attachments:

1 Minutes 16/02/2023 Biodiversity Advisory Committee, I2023/160 , page 8  

20

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1

Report

The attachment to this report provides the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting of 16 February 2023 .

Report to Council

- 5 The minutes were reported to Council on 23 March 2023.

Comments

In accordance with the Committee Recommendations, Council resolved the following:

23-070 Resolved that Council notes the Minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 16 February 2023.

10

Minutes of Meeting

Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting

Venue	Conference Room, Station Street, Mullumbimby
Date	Thursday, 16 February 2023
Time	9.00am



BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 - ATTACHMENT 1

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 - ATTACHMENT 1

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 16 FEBRUARY 2023

Minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, 16 February 2023

File No: I2023/160

PRESENT: Cr S Ndiaye, Cr P Westheimer

Staff: Shannon Burt (Director Sustainable Environment and Economy)
Liz Caddick (Biodiversity Team Leader)
Caitlin Weatherstone (Project Officer-Koala)
Julia Adams (Sustainability Team Leader) left at 10:00am
Ruby West (Student Intern)
Andrew Cameron (Agricultural Extension Officer) left at 10:10am
Claudia Caliarì (Biodiversity Projects Officer)
Pete Boyd (Biodiversity and Agricultural Projects Officer) Joined at 10:10am
Michelle Wilde (Minute Taker)

Community: Liana Joseph,
James Jackson
David Milledge
Leonard Cronin
Dave Rawlins (Brunswick Valley Landcare)
Lindsay Murray
Martin Brook
Stephen Millard

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 - ATTACHMENT 1

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 16 FEBRUARY 2023

Cr P Westheimer (*Chair*) opened the meeting at 9:02am and acknowledged that the meeting was being held on Bundjalung Country.

ATTENDANCE VIA AUDIO-VISUAL LINK: Cr S Balson

APOLOGIES:

Sharyn French (Manager Environmental and Economic Planning), Chloe Dowsett (Coast & Biodiversity Coordinator)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY

Dave Rawlins declared a non-pecuniary interest in Report 4.2 Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update. The nature of the interest being that Dave is an unpaid volunteer participating in Indian Myna trapping.

Dave Rawlins declared a pecuniary interest in Report 4.2 Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update. The nature of the interest being that Dave is a paid contractor working at one of the six sites for the 2022 Koala Habitat Restoration Project.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Report No. 3.1 Confirmation of Minutes from 17 November 2022 meeting
File No: I2023/41

Committee Recommendation:

That the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 17 November 2022 be confirmed.

(Westheimer/Cronin)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There was no business arising from previous minutes.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 16 FEBRUARY 2023

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

Report No. 4.1 Meeting Schedule for 2023 Biodiversity Advisory Committee
File No: I2023/71

Committee Recommendation:

1. That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the scheduled meeting dates and times for 2023 and include a meeting in November / December 2023.
2. That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee advise of any agenda items for future meetings.

(Ndiaye/Westheimer)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

Report No. 4.2 Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update
File No: I2023/42

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the update on current projects and programmes being undertaken by Council staff.

(Westheimer/Ndiaye)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried..

Report No. 4.3 Brunswick Valley Landcare Support Officer quarterly report, July to September 2022.
File No: I2023/129

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee note the report.

(Westheimer/Ndiaye)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 16 FEBRUARY 2023

Report No. 4.4 **Best Practice Management of Camphor Laurel on Rural Land**
File No: I2023/79

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes this report and requests that Council's website information on Camphor Laurels is updated.

(Westheimer/Jackson)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

Report No. 4.5 **Carbon sequestration and incentive schemes**
File No: I2023/43

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes this report on carbon sequestration and incentive schemes currently available in Byron Shire.

(Westheimer/Ndiaye)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

Report No. 4.6 **DNA of feral dogs and dingoes**
File No: I2023/45

Committee Recommendation:

That the Committee notes the report.

(Westheimer/Ndiaye)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 11:05am

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

Report No. 4.1 Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update

5 **Directorate:** Sustainable Environment and Economy
Report Author: Lizabeth Caddick, Biodiversity Officer
File No: I2023/74

Summary:

10 This report provides the Biodiversity Advisory Committee with an update on current projects and programs being undertaken by the Biodiversity and Agriculture team, to deliver the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Coastal Koala Plan of Management, Flying Fox Camp Management Plan, Agriculture Action Plan and Pest Animal Management Plan, including:

- 15 • Koala projects
- Flying Fox projects
- Pest Animal Management program
- Vegetation mapping projects
- Agriculture projects

20

RECOMMENDATION:

25 **That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the update on current projects and programmes being undertaken by Council staff.**

30

Report

Koalas

Koala Vehicle Strike

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Actions:

- 5 **4.25** *Work with RMS, local wildlife groups and Regional Koala Communications Group to identify road strike hotspots in Byron Shire.*
- 4.26** *Seek funding for road strike mitigation trials at priority road strike hotspots.*
- 4.27** *Consider roadkill mitigation measures and opportunities to improve wildlife connectivity into design work for new roads and road asset upgrades.*
- 10 DPE have advised that they are going to review the traffic speed data that was collected as part of the recent trial of the use of relocatable variable message signs at black spots in Byron Shire over the 2022 koala breeding season (September to December). Signs and other road infrastructure used to mitigate wildlife vehicle strike is expensive, and there is currently limited data available on effectiveness.
- 15 Geolink have developed a preliminary Feasibility Assessment for koala vehicle strike mitigation measures in the key road-strike black spot that extends from Granuaille Rd to Lismore Rd, coming into and out of Bangalow. Infrastructure Services, DPE and Transport for NSW are currently reviewing the mitigation options presented.
- 20 Staff met with representatives from Broken Head Landcare and Bangalow Koalas on 1st March to progress the Koala LED radar speed signs project. Staff are working with these groups to select suitable sign locations and collate wildlife and road strike data that confirm the significance of the area around Broken Head Rd for native wildlife.

Koala Habitat Restoration

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

- 25 **3.9** *Seek grant funding opportunities for combined Council-private landholder restoration and revegetation projects on private land.*

30 The 2022 Koala Habitat Restoration Project is still progressing, after a few setbacks due to weather, sites and contractors, with the NSW Koala Strategy grant of \$101,211. Work is in progress at the last of six restoration / planting sites aimed to be finished in the next few months. This data will be entered into the ALA Koala Habitat Restoration HUB.

Staff have begun a new NSW Koala Strategy grant funded Project of \$15,000 to support maintenance and ongoing restoration at eight existing koala habitat restoration sites in the shire.

Koala Monitoring

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

4.7 Implement a monitoring program for the Byron Coast koala population.

5 Plans are underway for the next round of koala activity monitoring surveys using SAT methods (spot analysis technique) and song meters. We have put an EOI to DPE for funding assistance of \$60,634.45 for the project. It's proposed that 70 sites will be analysed for koala occupancy and activity level in the 2023 koala breeding season July-December.

Northern Rivers Koala Network (NRKN)

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

10 **4.13 Liaise with local conservation groups and government agencies to share information (e.g. monitoring data) and identify opportunities for biodiversity conservation partnerships.**

15 The last meeting (occurs every 2 months) was on 23 February. NRKN members also met with Griffith University's Social Marketing team on 23 March to discuss a regional koala communication design and strategy to go out on banners, signs, social media etc. to be funded by the NSW Koala Strategy.

Northern Rivers Koala Conservation Strategy (NRKCS)

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

20 **4.13 Liaise with local conservation groups and government agencies to share information (e.g. monitoring data) and identify opportunities for biodiversity conservation partnerships**

The NRKCS is in the final stages of editing by authoring consultants Earthscapes, with editorial input from the NRKN members, including Byron Shire Council staff. The final strategy should be published in the coming months.

25 National Koala Recovery Team Community Advisory Committee (NKRTCAC)

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

4.13 Liaise with local conservation groups and government agencies to share information (e.g. monitoring data) and identify opportunities for biodiversity conservation partnerships.

30 On 9 March, Byron Shire Council's Koala Project Officer was successful in securing a place on the NKRTCAC team with Dr Fiona Fraser, Threatened Species Commissioner, Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and other national stakeholders. The first meeting will be held on 27 April.

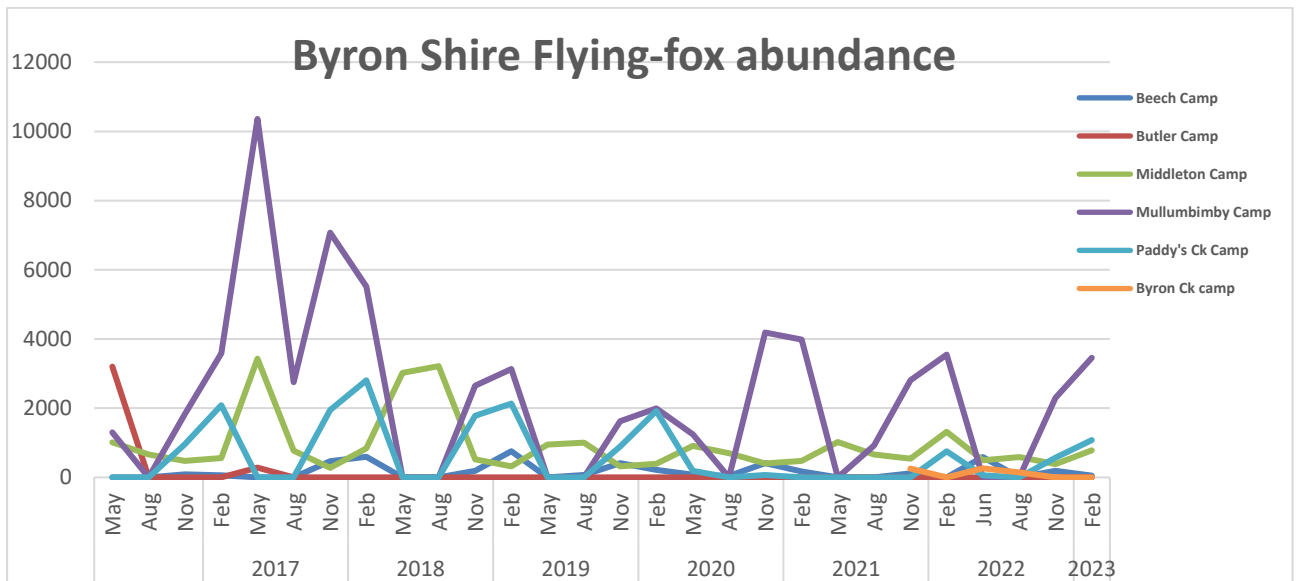
35 **Flying Foxes**

National Flying-Fox Monitoring Program - Census

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

4.9 Review and implement monitoring programs to assess effectiveness of Council ecological restoration

- 5 In February Byron Shire Council’s Biodiversity Project Officer collected data from 6 flying-fox camps in urban areas in our shire. The data was sent to state government and it’s the baseline for the CSIRO National Monitoring program. This survey is done quarterly, formally since 2016.



10 Facts about Bats

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Actions:

2.1 Provide expert advice regarding how people can help protect biodiversity

4.9 Implement actions in the Flying Fox Camp Management Plan 2018-2023.

- 15 The Facts about Bats book is the final deliverable from the NSW Environment Trust Flying Improvement grant. The A3 sized picture book is being distributed to our local preschools and primary schools free of cost.

No Bat No Me Project – Flying Foxes/Koala

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Actions:

- 20 **2.1 Provide expert advice regarding how people can help protect biodiversity**

4.9 Implement actions in the Flying Fox Camp Management Plan 2018-2023.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.1

A joint project with flying foxes and koalas is underway, with a \$27,100 grant funded by WIRES. Contractors from Griffith University Social Marketing team conducted community testing surveys on 9 February with Council staff and with community members.

5 Communication collateral designed from the results of the surveys will be used across different platforms, including school visits by Council staff and WIRES, in the coming months.

School visits started on 29 March, with a very successful visit to Main Arm Public School. Students from years 4 and 5 were very interested in the presentation, asking lots of questions and telling their own flying fox stories.

10 **Pest Animal Management Program**

Pest Animal Management Plan 2018-23

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

4.23 *Work with North Coast LLS and private land managers to develop a coordinated cross-tenure approach to pest animal management.*

15 The team is continuing to implement the Pest Animal Management Plan while collecting information for a review of the PAMP, which is planned for 2023/2024 financial year.

Wild Dogs, Cats and Foxes

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

20 **4.22** *Develop and implement Operational Plans for target pest species.*

25 A new contract has been organised for Byron Shire 2023 Pest Animal Control. The contract stipulates pest animal monitoring and trapping is to be carried out on Council land which includes all of Councils STPs, Resource Recovery Centre, Tyagarah Airstrip and includes the 4 cemeteries (for rabbit control). If Council is satisfied there are no more pest animals on Council lands, the contractor may trap on private lands in strategic areas, for the benefit of native animal protection and primary production.

Pest	Council Lands	Private Lands	Total
Wild Dogs	1	13	14
Feral Cat	0	0	0
Fox	5	8	13
Deer	0	1	1

Table 1 Tally of Pest animals trapped/controlled during 22/23 contract

Deer

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.1

4.13 Liaise with local conservation groups and government agencies to share information (e.g. monitoring data) and identify opportunities for biodiversity conservation partnerships.

5 Byron Shire Council is actively participating of discussions related to regional deer management. A recent outcome from was the formalisation of a joint submission with the surrounding LGAs to the National Feral Deer Action Plan on 20/03/2023.

Community information workshops are planned for later this year.

Indian Myna

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:

10 **4.22 Develop and implement Operational Plans for target pest species**

15 Because internal supply of Myna traps has dried up as the people who made them have retired, Council is starting communications with Grafton Prison to understand if a partnership to build traps will be possible, as in the past interns had been engaged with similar activities. Since April 2022, Council's contractor has trapped more than 200 Indian Mynas in our Shire. We are currently looking for grants to increase community engagement related to Indian Myna control.

Rochelle (Indian Myna contractor) has created a Byron Shire Indian Myna Action Group on Facebook, now with 18 members.

Bringing Back the Bruns

20 *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action:*

4.29 Continue to develop and implement 'Bringing back the Bruns' branded projects to address improvements in riparian and instream habitat, water quality, fish passage and habitat connectivity on Council and private land along the Brunswick River and its tributaries.

25 Commencement of the Fisheries Habitat Restoration Program – Bringing Back the Bruns Stage 2 in Mullumbimby is planned for 10 May 2023. Development approval has finally been granted. The 160m riverbank rehabilitation and aquatic habitat enhancement is a joint project in partnership with North Coast Local Land Services. The project is planned to finish with riparian planting and stock exclusion before the end of June.

30 **Mapping Projects**

Updates to Vegetation and HEV mapping

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Actions:

1.14: Update and maintain Council's vegetation and HEV mapping with revised Plant Community Types (PCTs) and current aerial photography;

1.19 *Update vegetation mapping to clearly identify recently listed threatened ecological communities.*

Earthscapes Consulting are currently undertaking further updates to vegetation mapping, funded by a \$24,000 grant from NSW DPE Biodiversity Conservation Division.

- 5
- Review of new Plant Community Types (NSW State Vegetation Type Mapping) against Byron Shire Council 2021 Vegetation Mapping - reported at November 2023 BAC meeting.
- 10
- Update Council's vegetation mapping in relation to recently listed threatened ecological communities (Coastal Swamp Oak and Coastal Swamp Sclerophyll Forest). Completed, to be reported to June 2023 BAC meeting.
 - Review and update Councils High Environmental Value mapping – currently being reviewed by DPE Biodiversity Conservation Division – to be reported to June 2023 BAC meeting.

Identifying open forest ecosystems for ecological restoration

15 *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action*

4.4 *Identify priority open forest ecosystems requiring restoration through the reintroduction of fire.*

20 This project, funded by a \$11,000 grant from NSW DPE Biodiversity Conservation Division, is using GIS, expert elicitation and ground truthing to identify and mapping open forest ecosystems in Byron Shire that would benefit from the reintroduction of ecological fire management. This project is now complete and will be reported at the June 2023 BAC meeting.

Review of coastal wetland and littoral rainforest mapping

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Actions:

25 **1.19** *Update vegetation mapping to clearly identify recently listed threatened ecological communities.*

1.30 *Continue development of Coastal Management Programs for the Shire's coastline and estuaries, ensuring CMPs are consistent with the intent of this Biodiversity Strategy.*

30 As part of the development of Coastal Management Programs for Byron Shire, a Stage 2 study has commenced to fill a key information gap. Council has engaged a consultant to review the coastal wetlands and littoral rainforest areas as mapped in the *SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021* following a State-led minor review undertaken in 2018. This will primarily be a desktop assessment using Council's High Environmental Value mapping (currently being updated), as well as other data such as Plant Community Types (PCT) mapping, Council and agency staff input, and guidance provided by the Department of Planning and Environment on mapping criteria.

35

5 Depending on the outcome of the project, if there are any proposed key mapping amendments or changes to Council's planning framework in relation to coastal wetlands and littoral rainforest provisions, these would be further considered in a later stage of development of the Coastal Management Programs. There will be opportunity for stakeholders and community to provide input at the decision-making stage (Stage 3).

Wildlife Corridor Mapping

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Actions

1.18 Update Council's wildlife corridor mapping and liaise with other NRJO Councils to ensure consistency in wildlife corridor mapping across the region.

10 The draft Wildlife Corridor System (Landmark 2022) was on public exhibition from 31 October to 12 December, with over 100 submissions were received. Staff have reviewed and will be organising a Councillor Workshop in forthcoming months to update Councillors on the feedback received and proposed amendments.

Farm Extension

15 *Agriculture Action Plan action:*

1.3 Develop and maintain a database of farmers and primary production stakeholders to: identify farmers issues and opportunities and enable easy forwarding of relevant information and activities to specific farmers and stakeholders.

20 The Byron Farmers Network database now has 350 members and is an excellent resource to share information and advice with the growers community, for both Council and other agencies that work to support farmers in the region.

The farm extension program is ongoing, with visits, emails and phone conversations with local producers to provide support, advice and information.

During Feb/March 5 emails total went out to the Byron Farmers Network.

25 **Agriculture Workshops/Field Days**

Agriculture Action Plan action:

1.4 Develop and deliver (or refer landholders to) workshops and field days on best practice farming, innovation, productivity, sustainable land use and biodiversity.

30 We had a field day at Conscious Ground Organics in Myocum Feb 3rd which was a great day of learnings of diverse forms of production from organic beef and pork as well as an array of vegies and value add product all being sold locally. We had 16 registrations and 15 attendees.

35 A very successful day with a collaborative workshop on Native bush foods held at "Byron Bush foods" Farm in Nashua. With local industry and indigenous representatives Rebeca Barnes, Delta Kay, Mindy Woods and Anthony Hotson. The event was a sell out with over

40 attendees and was a great day of learning around the potential of native bush foods being a high yielding commercial opportunity here in our region.

5 A year on from the floods, we hosted a farmers get together for reflection and moving forward, in collaboration with NSW DPI, BSC flood recovery team and The Paddock. Event included a free lunch to connect with farming friends, a talk from Andrew Cameron on regenerative agriculture and its role in creating resilience going forward and a quick tour of the plot at The Paddock showcasing some of the great work they have been doing.

10 Staff and Councillors attended the Regeneration Festival, held at Mullumbimby Community Gardens on 4 March 2023. The event was well attended by community members interested in bush regeneration, permaculture and sustainable agriculture. Staff provided information on the Byron Farmers Network at the Brunswick Valley Landcare stall, and participated in a panel discussion themed ‘what is regeneration?’

Sustainable Agriculture Activities

Agriculture Action Plan actions:

15 **1.2** *Establish and support an agricultural mentoring program to support new and existing farmers in starting up, expanding their enterprise or changing their land management practices.*

1.5 *Establish and maintain links to relevant organisations for the benefit of information sourcing, project collaboration, resource sharing and support.*

20 **3.6** *Investigate, develop and support processes and arrangements that increase opportunities to access and activate underutilised farmland.*

25 The Farms’ incubator program has launched with Andrew Cameron conducting 3 mentoring sessions so far with the two new farmers. We are working closely with the Mullum Farmers market as they are very supportive of hosting a new farmers stall at the markets in the name of supporting the growth of local agriculture. This would be a great leg up for the new farmers and highlight the importance of supporting new local farmers.

30 The official launch of the incubator program will be on April 3rd at The Farm, with invitations to new farmers and landholders who have expressed interest in hosting farmers on their unused land, from our Byron Farmers Network. A great way of connecting landless farmers with land and encouraging the development of agriculture.

Soil Test Video

Agriculture Action Plan action:

1.6 *Source and provide current best practice farming information and techniques to assist farmers to improve productivity and sustainability by practice change*

35 An instructional and inspirational how and why to test soils was filmed in conjunction with Graham Lancaster from EAL at Southern Cross University. This will be launched with the

offer of 10 free soil tests to local farmers to help farmers get a clear benchmark for where they are at with their soils and make better decisions in terms of improving production, cost effectiveness and land resilience. This exercise will also give us a great snapshot for soil in our region.

- 5 Aiming to have film completed with EOI for soil tests by end of May.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
2: Inclusive Community We have an inclusive and active community where diversity is embraced and everyone is valued	2.2: Enhance safety and contribute to the physical, mental, and spiritual health and well being of our people	2.2.4: Companion animals - Promote awareness of the requirements of the Companion Animals Act with respect to the ownership of companion animals	2.2.4.3	Facilitate companion animals education
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.1	Partner with DPE to implement koala vehicle strike mitigation in Byron Shire as part of the NSW Koala Strategy 2022-2026.
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological	3.1.1.2	Engage with the community regarding mitigating threats to koalas.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.1

		resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity		
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.3	Partner with Regional Koala Group to progress koala conservation in Northern Rivers region.
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.1: Native species - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.1.9	Seek funding to implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Coastal Koala Plan of Management and Flying Fox Camp Management Plan.
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.2: Pest and weed management - Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	3.1.2.1	Implement Dog, fox and cat trapping program.
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.2: Pest and weed management - Use best practice land management to improve	3.1.2.3	Participate in Northern Rivers Feral Deer Management group.

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		ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity		
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.3: Habitat restoration - Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community value	3.1.3.1	Update Byron Shire habitat restoration database and DPE Koala Habitat Restoration Archive.
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.3: Habitat restoration - Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community value	3.1.3.3	Implement 2022 Koala Habitat Restoration Project.
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.3: Habitat restoration - Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community value	3.1.3.4	Investigate grant opportunities for improving the Brunswick Estuary ecosystems and river health.
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology	3.1.3: Habitat restoration - Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community	3.1.3.5	Deliver Federal Fish Habitat Restoration Project

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		value		
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment	3.2.3: Planning - Plan to improve the quality of the natural environment	3.2.3.1	Update flora and fauna lists for the shire, including status of threatened flora and fauna.
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment	3.2.3: Planning - Plan to improve the quality of the natural environment	3.2.3.2	Update Byron Shire Vegetation and HEV mapping
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment	3.2.3: Planning - Plan to improve the quality of the natural environment	3.2.3.3	Participate in regional coastal and environmental working groups and initiatives
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment	3.2.3: Planning - Plan to improve the quality of the natural environment	3.2.3.4	Identify priority open forest ecosystems requiring restoration through the reintroduction of fire.
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.3: Protect the health of our coastline, estuaries, waterways, and catchments	3.3.1: Coastal Management Program planning and implementation - Undertake Coastal Management Program planning and	3.3.1.5	Research the effects of recreational uses on coastal biodiversity and habitats

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		implementati on		
4: Ethical Growth We manage growth and change responsibly	4.3: Promote and support our local economy	4.3.5: Regenerative agriculture - Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business and farmers	4.3.5.1	Maintain and update Byron Shire Farmer database.
4: Ethical Growth We manage growth and change responsibly	4.3: Promote and support our local economy	4.3.5: Regenerative agriculture - Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business and farmers	4.3.5.2	Provide extension services to farmers to support and promote sustainable agriculture.
4: Ethical Growth We manage growth and change responsibly	4.3: Promote and support our local economy	4.3.5: Regenerative agriculture - Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business and farmers	4.3.5.3	Deliver farmer mentoring and farmer education activities.

Recent Resolutions

N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

N/A

5 Financial Considerations

N/A

Consultation and Engagement

N/A

**Report No. 4.2 Future Discussion Items for Biodiversity
Advisory Committee**

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Lizabeth Caddick, Biodiversity Officer

5 **File No:** I2023/499

Summary:

10 This report summarises reports and information requested by the Biodiversity Advisory Committee. These requests, resourcing and alignment with Council's Operational Plan are tabled for discussion by the committee, to resolve whether these requests are taken to Council for consideration for inclusion in a future Council OP and budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

15 **That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the report.**

Report

The following requests for reports or information have been received by Biodiversity Advisory Committee members:

Information requested	Resourcing	Operational Plan & other Council Strategies
<p>The health of our Shire’s biodiversity is significantly impacted by the condition of our waterways. The 2014 Ecohealth Report Card for the Richmond River gave the catchment a D+ rating (gradings A through F).</p> <p>Do we have recent ecohealth data for our waterways?</p> <p>Requested by: Leonard Cronin</p>	<p>NSW The Ecohealth program is a partnership between the University of New England, Office of Environment and Heritage, Local Land Services, Department of Primary Industries and local councils. The team at UNE has completed the Ecohealth program in the Bellingen, Clarence, Richmond, Coffs, Port Macquarie regions in 2013-2014.</p> <p>About half of the Byron Shire is in the Richmond Catchment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coopers Ck: Score C- • Wilsons Ck: Score C • Byron Ck: Score D- • No data for the Brunswick catchment. <p>Further investigation is required to determine if the Ecohealth Program is still being provided, resourcing requirements and if there is any cost to Council.</p> <p>Further progress will require a report for Council to consider resourcing this action in a future OP.</p>	<p>There is no activity in Council’s OP that directly resources this action.</p> <p>The following action provides indirect support.</p> <p>OP 3.1.3.4 Investigate grant opportunities for improving the Brunswick Estuary ecosystems and river health.</p>
<p>What programs exist to improve the</p>	<p>Council already delivers a range of riparian restoration projects</p>	<p>There are several OP actions</p>

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Information requested	Resourcing	Operational Plan & other Council Strategies
<p>biodiversity of our waterways and riparian degradation?</p> <p>Requested by: Leonard Cronin</p>	<p>through the Biodiversity and Agriculture Team and Restorations Team.</p> <p>Updates to the Committee on these projects are provided at each Committee meeting.</p> <p>The Key Issues section below lists current projects.</p>	<p>that already support this aim:</p> <p>OP 3.1.3.4 Investigate grant opportunities for improving the Brunswick Estuary ecosystems and river health.</p> <p>OP 3.1.3.5 Deliver Federal Fish Habitat Restoration Project.</p> <p>OP 3.1.3.6 Undertake bush regeneration activities to maintain and expand restoration of HEV sites on Council owned or managed lands forming part of the Council bush regeneration program.</p> <p>OP 3.2.2.1 Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries.</p> <p>OP 3.3.1.11 Participate in the preparation of a Coastal Management Program (CMP) for the Richmond River.</p>
<p>Can we implement ways to deal with: Unfenced cattle damaging riverbanks and waterways and High levels of nutrients derived from agricultural runoff.</p> <p>Requested by: Leonard Cronin</p>	<p>Council already provides support to farmers on this through Council's Sustainable Agriculture Program, which includes community engagement, workshops, mail outs and one on one farmer site visits.</p> <p>There are no laws that require farmers to fence off their creeks. Education and incentive funding have had the best results by teaching the landholders the</p>	<p>There are several OP actions that already support this aim:</p> <p>OP 4.3.5.1 Maintain and update Byron Shire Farmer database.</p> <p>OP 4.3.5.2 Provide extension services to farmers to support and promote sustainable agriculture.</p> <p>OP 4.3.5.3 Deliver farmer mentoring and farmer</p>

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Information requested	Resourcing	Operational Plan & other Council Strategies
	<p>benefit of riparian fencing/ rehabilitation and incentive funds assist them to fence off the waterways and water their stock.</p> <p>The Biodiversity/ Agriculture program supports and promotes Regenerative Agriculture which supports the retention of groundcover and the reduction of fertilizer and other chemical use. This greatly reduces soil and nutrient/chemical runoff into the waterways.</p> <p>Currently, 360 members of the Byron Farmer Network are interested in commencing or already practicing Regenerative Agriculture over a number of farming types, predominantly grazing and macadamias.</p>	<p>education activities.</p>
<p>Can we implement ways to deal with: Sewage discharge in flood events</p> <p>Requested by: Leonard Cronin</p>	<p>STPs are designed for stormwater inflow with bypass containment minimising environmental impact. All pump stations are designed to handle storm water ingress.</p> <p>Whilst STPs are built to withstand designed flood events, events greater than the design can impact their functioning.</p> <p>Council has received flood recovery grant funding to increase invert heights of pumps at key locations.</p> <p>Further progress will require a report for Council to consider resourcing this action in a future</p>	<p>There is no activity in Council's OP that directly resources this action.</p>

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Information requested	Resourcing	Operational Plan & other Council Strategies
	OP.	
<p>Council develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for costed salvage, retrofit, and reinstalling suitable tree trunk hollows or sections on Council clearance work sites.</p> <p>The SOP would avoid the need for opportunistic salvage and place BSC at the forefront of proactive habitat loss compensation. Reinstalled habitat hollows are exponentially better than compensatory plantings but would not replace them.</p> <p>The SOP would allow funding for salvage and reinstalled habitat hollows to be included in Council works operating budgets, as a very minor addition to total construction or roadworks costs.</p> <p>Requested by: David Rawlins, Brunswick Valley Landcare</p>	<p>Staff have previously met with BVL regarding this and suggested they develop a spec. detailing what they would like to achieve and proposed methodology, then we can set up a meeting with IS works manager to discuss options.</p> <p>Requires input from Infrastructure Services works and project managers regarding feasibility.</p> <p>To progress will require a report for Council to consider resourcing this action in a future OP.</p>	<p>There is no activity in Council's OP that directly resources this action.</p> <p>The following OP action provides indirect support.</p> <p>OP 3.2.2.1 Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries.</p> <p>The following Biodiversity Conservation Strategy actions provide indirect support:</p> <p>4.13 Liaise with local conservation groups and government agencies to share information (e.g. monitoring data) and identify opportunities for biodiversity conservation partnerships.</p> <p>4.27 Consider roadkill mitigation measures and opportunities to improve wildlife connectivity into design work for new roads and road asset upgrade</p>

Key issues

What programs exist to improve the biodiversity of our waterways?

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- Council and community riparian restoration projects to date have been mapped.
- The Council Bush Regeneration team have a strong focus on waterway restoration, e.g. along the Brunswick River (Figure 1).
- 5 • NSW Fisheries habitat Action Grant (max \$40k) riverbank rehabilitation project – Bringing Back the Bruns. Riparian rehabilitation by bush regeneration and some revegetation along 1.8km of Brunswick riverbank in Mullumbimby (approx. 3ha), on the left bank, downstream from the showground to Riverside drive.
- 10 • Flying-fox habitat improvement. Approx 450m of riparian rehabilitation. 250m along the Brunswick River left bank opposite Brunswick Terrace and along Mullumbimby Ck at River Terrace Mullumbimby.
- Flying-fox habitat improvement. Approx 150m of Paddys Ck in Bangalow. Riparian zone both sides regenerated and 600 plants added to riparian zone.
- Flying-fox habitat improvement. Approx 80m of Yoga Bera Ck in Mullumbimby. Riparian zone stabilised and revegetated. 400 plants.
- 15 • Flood rehabilitation – approx. 500m bed and banks of Upper Coopers Ck in Huonbrook re-modelled and rehabilitated following 2022 floods. This was carried out along with the rebuilding of the road adjacent to the creek.
- 20 • Bringing Back the Bruns project with North Coast Local Land Services (NCLLS). 160m of riverbank stabilisation and rehabilitation/revegetation on right bank of the Bruns R in Mullumbimby just upstream of the Mullumbimby Giants Rugby Club.
- Promotion and support of Regenerative Agriculture by the Biodiversity/Agriculture team teaches the benefits of riparian rehabilitation and protection. Agriculture incentive funds contribute towards fencing for rotational grazing which can be used to fence off riparian zones.
- 25 • Limited NCLLS funds are available for targeted riparian rehabilitation projects in the Richmond and the Brunswick catchments.

Figure 1. Byron Shire Council riparian restoration projects along the Brunswick River.

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<p>3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment</p>	<p>3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology</p>	<p>3.1.3: Habitat restoration - Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community value</p>	<p>3.1.3.5</p>	<p>Deliver Federal Fish Habitat Restoration Project</p>
<p>3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment</p>	<p>3.1: Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology</p>	<p>3.1.3: Habitat restoration - Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community value</p>	<p>3.1.3.6</p>	<p>Undertake bush regeneration activities to maintain and expand restoration of HEV sites on Council owned or managed lands forming part of the Council bush regeneration program</p>
<p>3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment</p>	<p>3.2: Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment</p>	<p>3.2.2: Environmental education and awareness - Coordinate and support environmental education to the community</p>	<p>3.2.2.1</p>	<p>Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries.</p>
<p>3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment</p>	<p>3.3: Protect the health of our coastline, estuaries, waterways, and catchments</p>	<p>3.3.1: Coastal Management Program planning and implementation - Undertake Coastal Management Program planning and implementation</p>	<p>3.3.1.3</p>	<p>Identify ICOLL water quality pollution sources</p>

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<p>3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment</p>	<p>3.3: Protect the health of our coastline, estuaries, waterways, and catchments</p>	<p>3.3.1: Coastal Management Program planning and implementation - Undertake Coastal Management Program planning and implementation</p>	<p>3.3.1.11</p>	<p>Participate in the preparation of a Coastal Management Program (CMP) for the Richmond River.</p>
<p>4: Ethical Growth We manage growth and change responsibly</p>	<p>4.3: Promote and support our local economy</p>	<p>4.3.5: Regenerative agriculture - Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business and farmers</p>	<p>4.3.5.1</p>	<p>Maintain and update Byron Shire Farmer database.</p>
<p>4: Ethical Growth We manage growth and change responsibly</p>	<p>4.3: Promote and support our local economy</p>	<p>4.3.5: Regenerative agriculture - Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business and farmers</p>	<p>4.3.5.2</p>	<p>Provide extension services to farmers to support and promote sustainable agriculture.</p>
<p>4: Ethical Growth We manage growth and change responsibly</p>	<p>4.3: Promote and support our local economy</p>	<p>4.3.5: Regenerative agriculture - Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business</p>	<p>4.3.5.3</p>	<p>Deliver farmer mentoring and farmer education activities.</p>

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		and farmers		
5: Connected Infrastructure We have connected infrastructure, transport, and facilities that are safe, accessible, and reliable	5.1: Provide a safe, reliable, and accessible transport network	5.1.1: Road network maintenance - Undertake road and transport network maintenance to meet the standards identified in the Asset Management Plan	5.1.1.8	Undertake urban roadside tree maintenance for dead, dying, and dangerous trees

Recent Resolutions

N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

5 N/A

Financial Considerations

No detailed costings for requested items provided at this stage.

Consultation and Engagement

N/A

10

Report No. 4.3 Community Member Presentation - Gerard Wedderburn-Bishop - Carbon Sequestration for Byron Bay

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

5 **Report Author:** Shannon Burt, Director Sustainable Environment and Economy

File No: I2023/310

Summary:

Gerard Wedderburn-Bishop has been invited to present to the Biodiversity Advisory Committee on his work on Carbon Sequestration for Byron Bay.

10 Other work of Gerard that may be of interest includes:

[World Preservation Foundation](#)

[Eating Our Way To Extinction](#)

[Climate Healers](#)

15 [Zero Emissions Byron](#)

Further information to be presented at the meeting.

20

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the presentation and thanks Gerard Wedderburn-Bishop for his presentation.

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Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
3: Nurtured Environment We nurture and enhance the natural environment	3.4: Support and empower our community to adapt to, and mitigate our impact on climate change	3.4.4: Net Zero - Work towards achieving Council's 100% net zero-emissions target	3.4.4.1	Develop a carbon offset policy and procedure for Council in order to achieve net zero emissions.

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

None relevant to this report.

5 Financial Considerations

None relevant to this report.

Consultation and Engagement

None relevant to this report.