

The Wollumbin Biosphere Reserve

The Mt. Warning Shield Volcano bioregion has the highest biodiversity and some of the most beautiful landscapes in NSW and Southern Queensland. It has the most threatened species and is situated geographically in a moist coastal region where southern temperate and northern tropical species overlap and are at their extremities.

This bio-region is also located on the edge of Australia's second largest urbanised area – the Moreton Basin conurbation stretching from Noosa Heads to Ballina. The beaches and waterways of N.E. NSW and S.E. Qld are under immense development pressure. Many wetlands and estuaries have been altered to facilitate canal estates. Coastal dunes have been cleared, burnt and built upon, encouraging coastal erosion.

Staging and Boundaries

The exact size and boundaries of the proposed Biosphere reserve are yet to be determined and will alter with time. The bioregion suggested is all the elevated and eroded land formed by the volcanic uplifting and out-passing from the Mt Warning/Wollumbin volcano and includes the adjacent coastal plains, beaches and marine areas

Aboriginal Heritage: Past, Present and Future

The bioregion represents the main area inhabited by the Bunjalang nation. Contemporary residents and visitors are very fortunate to be able to enjoy such an awe-inspiring landscape and such a wealth of natural resources as a result of the exemplary stewardship exercised by the original inhabitants. It is our duty and honour to pass these priceless benefits and conservation ethics on to future generations.



Would you like to see all sectors of our community working in harmony to build a strong, independent and secure regional economy?



Would you like to see conservation and economic development as mutually supportive activities across our region?



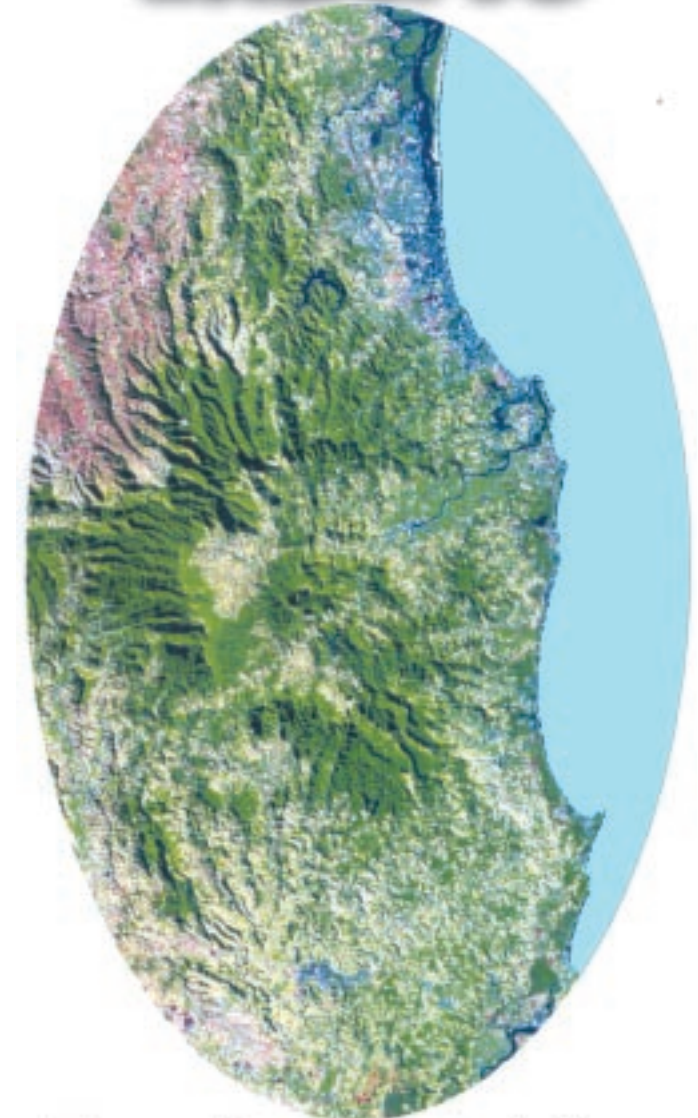
Do you see this part of Australia as somewhere that has something special to offer the world as a place of beauty and quality lifestyles?



Would you like to see the Far North Coast of NSW and SE Queensland recognised as a region of world-wide significance?

Contact Details

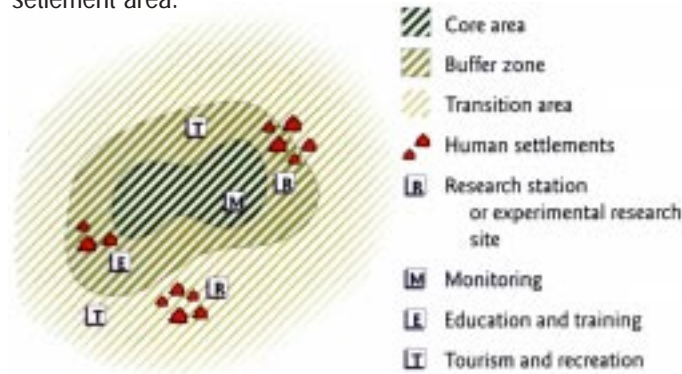
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**Byron Bay Presentation
Saturday May 9**

What is a Biosphere Reserve?

A Biosphere reserve is divided into three zones. The core, or relatively undisturbed area, the buffer area and the human settlement area.



Core Areas

Core areas are securely protected areas, such as national parks or reserves, where biological diversity can be conserved and researched. Other low impact uses, such as nature based recreation and education, are also encouraged. The core area may be regarded as a benchmark against which to measure the impact of development occurring outside the core. For example, the core area may be compared with other areas in the monitoring of ground water levels, water quality and the effects of plant and animal diseases. While the management of core areas is focussed on retaining its viability and reducing threats. Their role as a reference gives added purpose to these parks and reserves.

Buffer Areas

Buffer areas adjoin core areas and help protect them. These areas are used for activities compatible with sound ecological practices and may include both public and privately owned property. Buffer areas often include agricultural or forested land, the productivity of which may increase by being involved in a Biosphere program.

The Biosphere program invites private land-owners to voluntarily manage their land in sympathy with the core areas. Mutual benefits can be gained from cooperative management strategies, including protecting habitat and water catchments, improving fire control, reduced weed invasion, wildlife control and enhanced tourism, education and research opportunities.

Cooperative Areas

Cooperative areas are the heart of a true Biosphere, for it is within them that local communities, management agencies, scientists, economic interest and others work together to manage and develop the ecologically sustainable use of the area's resources. Cooperative areas may contain intensively managed farmland, forestry and other industries, port facilities, aquaculture and residential communities.

The main aim of getting people involved in the Biosphere program is to maintain land and marine productivity. Participation is voluntary, but the incentive for individuals and enterprises to become involved is the recognition or accreditation they could receive as sound environmental managers. For example, in the case of primary producers, participation in the Biosphere program could provide marketing opportunities to brand the products coming out of the region.

The region's great natural values include internationally significant rainforests, coastal estuaries, wetlands and heaths, sandy surf beaches and a wealth of marine life.

Why be part of Man and a Biosphere program?

The aims of a Biosphere program are to preserve the important natural values of a region, to encourage and improve approaches to sustainable use and development, and to establish arrangements that make it easier to integrate conservation and sustainable use.

Most environmental problems are interconnected, so they need to be tackled on a larger time scale. A Biosphere program does not replace the existing environmental programs of Commonwealth, State and Local governments, but aims to bring something extra to them by encouraging support. This support could include:

- .. promoting the international importance of the area;
- .. encouraging more community involvement;
- .. improving communication and education networks with national and international bodies;
- .. promoting partnerships; and
- .. establishing research and monitoring facilities.

Additional benefits of a Wollumbin Biosphere Reserve

- .. Broad community acceptance, co-operation and active participation is essential to make the project a reality.
- .. The Biosphere reserve program is community driven and provides an essential catalytic medium between local communities and their environment local governments, regional and state bodies, national governments, extending overseas to UNESCO and to other local Biosphere communities around the world.
- .. Biosphere reserve status demonstrates an aspirational ideal towards a more common future it has to be ecologically sustainable. Actively embracing the practice of sustainability places us in the driver's seat rather than trailing along behind.
- .. New and existing industries will be encouraged by this internationally recognised but locally driven program.

Where to next?

The proposed Wollumbin Biosphere Reserve is likely to be administered by a foundation or a trust. This would be an incorporated body that could form partnerships, receive donations and implement programs after community consultation. The trust or foundation would be operated by a small committee.

The proposed Wollumbin Biosphere Reserve project is community based but will need the support of local governments, state bodies such as National Parks and Wildlife Services, Department of Land and Water Conservation, Planning NSW, tertiary education institutions and local industries.

Progress will depend on enthusiasm and the energy of participants.

