Identifying and nurturing sustainability oriented identities
A case study from Noosa

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Biosphere?
What is the project?
Where are we up to?
Next steps?
Some lessons?
What is a Biosphere?

- UNESCO designation

- Celebration of a community that attempts to live in a sustainable manner

- Each biosphere is different – however core aims include:
  - Conservation
  - Sustainable development
  - Logistics support [learning]
Noosa region achieved biosphere status in September 2007

- Boundary of former Noosa Shire, to 3 km offshore.
- First Biosphere in Queensland ... now joined by the Great Sandy Biosphere
- 50,000 people live in
- Seasonal population of up to 65,000
- Diverse mix of coastal and hinterland communities!
UNESCO in declaring the Noosa Biosphere Reserve particularly noted:

◦ a sophisticated level of human settlement and a high level of inter-relationship with the natural environment

◦ the strong sense of community involvement and community co-ordination over a broad range of human settlement and natural environment issues.
Noosa Biosphere Limited was established in December 2008

- Noosa Biosphere’s **organisational focus** is through Noosa Biosphere Limited (NBL) with links to UNESCO MAB secretariat in Paris.
  - NBL is a company owned by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and directed by a 9 member board drawn from the community, sector boards and Council.
- NBL’s role is to foster partnerships with Noosa organisations, businesses and community to help create a sustainable Noosa.
- NBL has no legislative powers.
Six volunteer community boards operating under the Noosa Biosphere Limited umbrella

- Tourism Noosa x 10 volunteers
- Social Board x 10 volunteers
- Cultural Board x 10 volunteers
- Economic Board x 10 volunteers
- Environment Board x 10 volunteers
- Education, Research & Development Board x 10 volunteers
Benchmarking the socio-sphere

Support NBL’s desire for better engagement with people in the region
How?

~ Action research

~ Data collection using Sensemaker™
  ~ Narratives to explore sense of place, identity, values

~ Sense making

~ Action probes
Compatible

Values

Incompatible
Awareness
Compatible

Primary target
What do they have in common with NB?
What can be used as focus for engagement?

Incompatible

Aware

Unaware
Benchmarking Project Process

Engagement

Focal questions, themes

Data collection tool

Testing

Action design

Implementation

Action
Benchmarking Project Process
Representations
Relationships
Emotions
Actions
Inside and outside
Representations

Just because you can’t see it, doesn’t mean it isn’t there
Emotions
IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED
- CALL AN AIRSTRIKE
Status?

~ Theme’s and questions identified
~ Instrument designed
~ First test complete
~ Reflection and revision stage
Some lessons ....
Concepts....
People who took responsibility for:

- Sustainable economy
- Culture and heritage
- Nature conservation

More likely to support local business
People for whom the following areas were important:

- Residential / built
- Natural
- Farming, forestry

More likely to support local business
Relationships of trust

Photo: Bettina Walter
Common frames of reference

Photo: Erik Johansson
Extraordinary volunteers

Photo: Bettina Walter
Next steps?

~ Re-test, targeting difficult groups
~ Implementation design
~ Sense making
~ Action design
THANK YOU!

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