

PLASTIC FREE NOOSA



2019 REPORT



**BOOMERANG
ALLIANCE**



with funding from Queensland Government,
Noosa Council and Tourism Noosa

FOREWORD

TOBY HUTCHEON, BOOMERANG ALLIANCE

In the 22 months to December 2019, Plastic Free Noosa has attracted over 200 member businesses and events who have eliminated or replaced over 4 million single use plastic items. The project has demonstrated that a community can make a difference.

At the end of 2019, Boomerang Alliance handed over the project to Tourism Noosa.

We would like to thank all those businesses and events who have taken up the plastic-free challenge. Please keep up the good work.

We would like to acknowledge those organisations who have helped us make this such a community success story, our partners:

Noosa Council, Tourism Noosa, Surfrider Foundation Sunshine Coast, Boomerang Bags Noosa, Zero Emissions Noosa, Noosa Community Biosphere Association, Sunshine Coast Environment Council, IN Noosa Magazine, Noosa FM, Take 3 for the Sea Sunshine Coast.



ABOUT PLASTIC FREE NOOSA

Plastic Free Noosa is a project to reduce Noosa's plastic footprint. The project was initiated by The Boomerang Alliance in 2017, as part of the 'Plastic Free Places' program, which focuses on achieving wide-scale change away from plastic pollution.

From 2017 to 2019, the Plastic Free Noosa project has been managed by Boomerang Alliance and funded by the Qld State Government, with additional funding in 2019 from Tourism Noosa and Noosa Council.

One of our main project goals was to reduce the use of identified single-use plastic packaging used by our member food retailers, markets and events by 50%. We targeted six single-use plastic items which are common and problematic in the litter stream. These items are; water bottles, food ware (cups, cutlery, plates etc.), straws, coffee cups/lids, takeaway containers and plastic bags.

To achieve this, we utilised direct engagement with businesses, events and markets to assist them to eliminate single-use plastic items, replacing them with reusable or 100% compostable items. We also encouraged individuals to take up a plastic-free lifestyle.

ACTIVITIES & OUTCOMES

1 MEMBER ENGAGEMENT & OUTCOMES

The program has continued a focus on quality engagement with the food retail and events sectors, which has been received very positively and is acting as a catalyst for members to not only switch away from single-use plastic, but to think about waste reduction more broadly.

Our members now understand the issues of single-use plastics, and know what alternative practices and products to choose that suits their needs. Importantly, they have the tools to continue to improve their practices. Many food retail members have not only eliminated plastics but have started initiatives such as implementing reusable systems, offering discounts for BYO, displaying educational signage and only offering items on request.

This also acts as a medium for positive messaging to the community, which is enhanced by social media marketing by members to promote their own good actions.



Events and markets were a significant component of the project activities in 2019. Since the first 'Plastic Free' event in Noosa (Noosa Food and Wine Festival 2018) paved the way by introducing a commercial composting stream, many major events in Noosa have followed.

In 2019, through a partnership with Tourism Noosa, we worked with five major events and a number of smaller events, all who achieved a significant reduction in plastic usage and waste diverted from landfill than in previous years.



“

Plastic free Noosa helped make the switch so easy, we wondered why we'd never done it before. We were surprised at how great the new compostable products were. Our customers love it, they're really supportive and we've had so much positive feedback.

BOMBETTA, NOOSA HEADS

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI's for the program are the number of food retailers, markets and events who sign up as a member, and the amount of identified plastic items removed from use by our members.

We obtain ordering data from our members and their suppliers. Because we audit member practices upon commencement of the program, we are able to record what plastic items they were using prior to joining.

When an item is eliminated, we can calculate previous ordering quantities of each eliminated item from the data provided. This system allows for robust data reporting.

Plastic items eliminated by events and markets are harder to quantify, as food vendors participate in the program but often do not join as a member. Therefore, plastics eliminated from events are under-reported in our figures. We are, however, often able to obtain figures on waste diverted from landfill.

DATA- PLASTIC FREE NOOSA 1 FEB 2018 - 31 DEC 2019 (from all members)

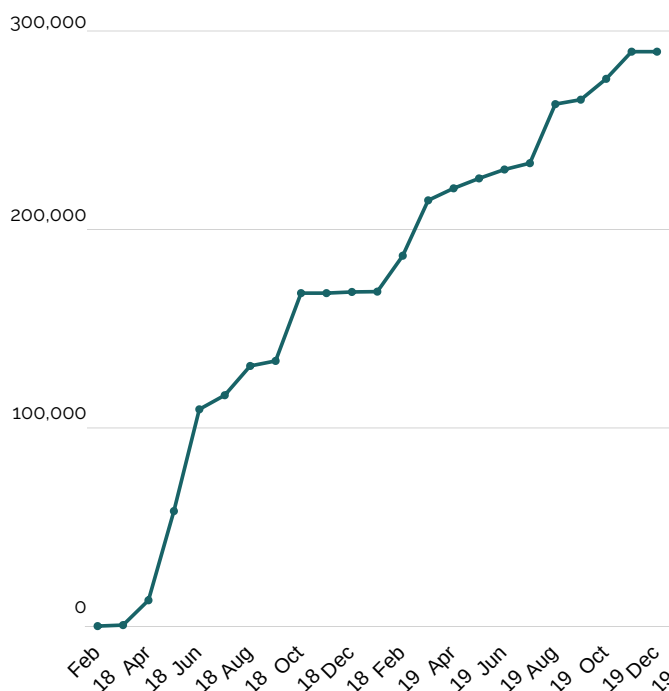


*Plastic Free Champions are members that have eliminated all of our key plastic items (straws, coffee cups & lids, takeaway containers & lids, food ware (cutlery, plates, cups etc), water bottles & bags).

NO. OF ITEMS ELIMINATED BY CATEGORY

ITEM	NUMBER ELIMINATED
Water bottles	53,943
Straws	1,428,380
Coffee cups	407,036
Coffee cup lids	390,993
T/A containers & lids	325,270
Cold Cups & lids	1,149,393
Plates/bowls & lids	69,457
Cutlery	355,694
Bags (thicker)	133,900
TOTAL	4,314,066

NO. OF ITEMS ELIMINATED MONTH-BY-MONTH



2 EVENTS PROGRAM

Through a strategic partnership with Tourism Noosa, our program was involved in over ten events in 2019. We have featured three Noosa events below, with information provided by Tourism Noosa. We also assisted with the production of Tourism Noosa's new sustainable events guidelines.

Figures on items eliminated are also reported in overall data totals on page 3.

NOOSA FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

Through our arrangements with Tourism Noosa, Noosa's showcase event was successfully run as 'plastic-free' this year. In 2018 the event became the first in the region to introduce a commercial composting stream, sending 0.48 tonnes of material for composting. In 2019, this was increased to 1.3 tonnes.

Diversion from Landfill 2018 = 47.5%

Diversion from Landfill 2019 = 53% + 419 x refundable containers.

NOOSA FESTIVAL OF SURFING

Held over 10 days, we successfully worked with many vendors to go plastic-free. Plastic water bottles were banned at the event, and the addition of water refill stations and reusable bottles saw a saving of 9475 plastic bottles (water usage converted to 600ml water bottles). 1.125 tonnes of of compostable food and packaging waste was sent for composting.

Diversion from Landfill 2019 = 42%, plus 9475 refundable containers.

NOOSA TRIATHLON (IRONMAN)

One of the biggest triathlons in the world, this event successfully eliminated 180,000 plastic cups used by competitors in 2018, and 190,000 cups in 2019. The cups were replaced by compostable cups which, along with other compostable packaging and food waste, was commercially composted (diversion from landfill results pending).



1.3 TONNES

of compostable food and packaging waste used at the Noosa F&W Festival 2019 that was sent for composting.

9417 BOTTLES

plastic bottles of water saved from being sold at the Noosa Festival of Surfing 2019.

190 000 CUPS

compostable cups that were composted at the Noosa Tri 2019, instead of the same amount of plastic cups (which were used in previous years and landfilled).

3 PROMOTION

Facebook followers	1221	Instagram posts	228
Instagram followers	2234	Website hits	20810

Plastic Free Noosa removes 1.4 million items

BETWEEN February and November 2018, participants in the 'Plastic Free Noosa' (PFN) program have eliminated 1.4 million single use plastic items from use within the Noosa council area.

Run by the Boomerang Alliance to promote a community-led switch away from single use, takeaway plastics, the PFN project directly engages with cafés, food outlets, events and markets, and assists them to reduce plastics through avoiding their use or replacing items with reusable or 100% compostable alternatives.

Project Manager with PFN Kellie Lindsay said that the key to the success of the program was through direct engagement with the 141

members.

"We work closely with businesses, as well as council, tourism groups, suppliers, manufacturers, composters and waste operators to deliver real solutions to those businesses," Kellie said.

"It isn't enough to just ask them to remove plastic, we provide them options on what they can change to, discuss viable business models for them, give resources and direct contacts to suppliers and clarify mislabeling and misconceptions about products."

PFN has shown that by working together the community can significantly change their plastic habits. The free program requires

businesses to work towards eliminating six key plastic items, selected strategically due to their impact on the environment as well as a readily available alternative.

"We have found that all our members are keen to do the right thing and reduce plastics, and many businesses have already removed one or more items from their business before signing up," Kellie said.

A huge win for the initiative was having the recent Noosa Triathalon come on board.

"The triathlon not only replaced 180,000 plastic cups for competitors, they also composted them, and will turn them into nutrient-rich soil that closes the loop and can be used by our farms and gardens."



Noosa Mayor Tony Wellington with QLD Minister for State MP Sandy Bolton at Aromas Noosa where the

NEWS

WOMEN WILD ABOUT WASTE

Sustainable events in Oman quickly became a new tradition in mid-October when the 2014 Abdullah bin Zayed Wildlife Festival, held at Hailat National Park, was held.

It was the fourth Zero-Waste event that they achieved a 5-star distinction.

In fact, this trailblazing event has another first: Started in 2012, it was the first female adventure race in Australia.

Joan and Kim are passionate about empowering women, particularly those who care for the natural environment. This includes taking care of the places they cherish and Hailat National Park was the perfect location for their next adventure (see page 10).

more than happy to do that way," competitor Rebecca Cull said.

It was not even the start of the day's treacherous trail and Kim's sustainability journey. They have been encouraging participants to bring their own cups to reduce their plastic footprint.

To further reduce their impact, they utilize reusable tea balls (see page 10) and have eliminated the use of single-use plastic water bottles. The waterproof bags (eliminating the need for coats) and continuous work for alternatives ways to be green.

"Working with each engaged participant people at a sustainable event, makes our job really easy," says Press-Nelson Cull says.

and.

A new waste event is one that diverts all of its waste from landfill and is not a recycling event. The Nimes and Plastic Free Nimes, the event and purpose were able to be achieved, and the event was maintained and any nonrecyclable waste created by the event was either recycled or incinerated.

This included taking containers, measuring each by heating single-use items, such as coffee cups, and recycling the small amount of plastic created by the coffee to be done.

These initiatives were fully supported by the competitors.

It was important to be becoming more sustainable now and I definitely think that's the way to go. There is no one used to have hundreds and hundreds of plastic cups, and you can carry your own water. I am

"They are taking the lead and deserve all the credit for this event. We are simply facilitating the conversation and leading a hand where we can." —Nimes

As part of our enhanced Sustainable Procurement, we are required to follow stricter conditions for their environment. We are required to follow the WRI Women's event this year surpassed all expectations and we will be doing it.

It was important to see 100 competitors and their support for this event. It was important to be a beautiful social place, to spread each other and engage in sustainable competition.

It was important to see great and a light impact.

An aerial photograph showing a campsite with several tents and people gathered around a central area, possibly a fire pit or a clearing. The camp is situated in a wooded area with many trees.



Pictures: Isabela Rany



PLASTIC-FREE

Globally, 95 per cent of all plastic packaging is used once and then wasted, often as litter, with two thirds of marine debris found along the coastline actually plastic. A walk along the beach will reveal what looks like: small, broken shells settled along the high-tide line are often actually tiny pieces of plastics that have come ashore.

From plastic water bottles to chip packets and even those little tags that seal our bread bags, it's easy to forget their impact on the environment once we pop these things into those magical bins that take away all our rubbish.

A community-based movement is already underway, working to tackle this plastic problem. Plastic Free Noosa is a whole-of-community project initiated by The Boomerang Alliance as part of their

test sites for the Plastic Free program because our community has already shown a commitment to the environment.

The ambitious Plastic Free Noosa team-of-two are aiming to reduce the amount of single-use plastic packaging used in Noosa by 50% with a deadline of November 2018. One half of the dynamic duo, Chad Buxton, says once single-use plastics are created, they exist forever.

"They can break down to smaller pieces and wash up on the shore or sit for hundreds of years in the local dump," he explains.

Through Plastic Free Noosa, Chad is busy teaming up with local restaurants, cafes, major events and markets to eliminate the use of six priority plastic items: single-use water bottles, disposable coffee cups, straws, plastic bags, foodware such as plastic forks and takeaway containers such as polystyrene.

Queensland, and Noosa in particular, is known around the world for its pristine natural environment, yet Queensland has been cited as the most littered state in Australia. Jolene Ogle meets the locals on a mission to change that!



Plastic Free Noosa champions Clandestino Roastery @ Belmondos

"The response has been overwhelmingly positive," he says. "We work with businesses because it can lead to a bigger impact on the community. If we can work with the businesses themselves, what we're achieving is a community where



PLASTIC FREE
AS EASY
AS **1-2-3**



How has becoming a member of Plastic Free Noosa (PFN) changed how you run your business?

It really makes us look carefully at the products we use at Noosa Boathouse and how they affect the environment. Being a business right on the river, we have a responsibility to ensure we care for the natural environment and its inhabitants that we're so lucky to be surrounded by.

When Chad approached us about becoming a member of PFN, we had

Since launching in February 2018, **Plastic Free Noosa** has eliminated more than two million single use plastic items from use. **Christina** chats to **Noosa Boathouse** to find out more about what it's like to be a Plastic Free Champion.

and replacing them with paper. Since becoming a member, we have replaced all softdrink plastic bottles in our fish & chips takeaway with cans as this was our biggest area for improvement. We don't use plastic bags, only paper; our disposable cutlery is made from bamboo and takeaway containers are cardboard.

What would you say to other businesses who haven't joined?

Being a business in Noosa, we are so lucky to operate in a Biosphere Reserve



MAKING A CHANGE: The team at Clandestino Roasters made the switch to get rid of single-use plastic items as part of the Plastic Free community initiative.

Noosa cafes brew a plastic free future

[illegible]

PLASTIC FREE
NOOSA

THE NATURAL ALTERNATIVE IS CLEAR

Renewable plant-based raw materials

Our compostable bioplastic products are made from renewable resources. Our products offer business and consumers a more sustainable and environmentally friendly alternative to conventional plastic products made from fossil fuels.

The current generation of bioplastics are produced using abundant, rapidly renewable and cost-effective plant resources. The next generation will utilize non-agricultural feedstocks such as algae, bacteria, carbon dioxide and methane gas, further reducing the environmental impact of these materials.

Reduce your carbon footprint

When thinking about reducing the environmental impact of single-use disposable packaging, it's important to recognize that the most significant benefits will be achieved at the very beginning of the production process by using naturally biodegradable raw materials. By contrast, substituting higher-PLA bioplastics, which are up to 20% less greenhouse gas intensive compared to the production of conventional plastic, even if it ends up in a landfill, still includes significant greenhouse gas emissions from the entire sustainable system.

What's the difference between bioplastic and plastic with a biodegradable additive?

Bioplastic is a sustainable alternative to plastic, with natural origins and biodegradable properties. It is made from renewable resources and is designed to be biodegradable. Bioplastic is a sustainable alternative to plastic, with natural origins and biodegradable properties. It is made from renewable resources and is designed to be biodegradable.