

Environmental projects honoured in State awards

Council scoops two Local Government NSW Excellence in the Environment Awards

Tweed Shire Council has won two Local Government NSW, Excellence in the Environment Awards for its Biodiversity and Habitat Management Development Control Plan and Tackling Mosquitoes Together project. The Awards recognise outstanding achievements by local government in managing and protecting the environment.

Council was the division winner as well as the overall category winner for its recently adopted *Biodiversity and Habitat Management Development Control Plan*. The Plan addresses the complex interaction between the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 by providing clear guidance on the types of habitat that should be retained and the management of ongoing impacts associated with development.

Tweed Shire Council's Senior Policy Officer – Biodiversity, Mark Kingston said in taking a transparent and practical approach to this issue, the Plan facilitates more efficient and effective development planning that is responsive to the community aspirations and the unique environment of the Tweed.

"We are very humbled to be recognised in this way and I'd like to thank all the teams in Council that worked on this plan and supported it, as it's a very important step in the right direction to ensuring we are protecting our internationally significant environment in the Tweed," Dr Kingston said.

Tweed Shire Council's project, *Tackling Mosquitoes Together* was the Overall Category Winner of the Environmental Health Management Award.

The project establishes a plan on what we need to do if a new mosquito species (like the Asian Tiger Mosquito that can spread Dengue fever) turned up in Northern NSW.

Tackling Mosquitoes Together mobilised all seven of NSW Northern River councils and the Local NSW Public Health Unit who worked together to establish an effective rapid response network, a two-day, house-to-house inspection trial and a citizen science survey. An education package was also developed and tested for impact.

Manager Building and Environmental Health, David McNicoll said, the Asian Tiger Mosquito could easily adapt to our climate and is known to carry Dengue fever.

"Climate change will increase environmental threats such as heat stress, food poisoning and mosquito-borne disease in the Northern Rivers of NSW," Mr McNicholl said.

"This project has strengthened regional partnerships which will be long lasting and have an application across a number of other key regional environmental health challenges."

Building Resilience to Climate Change is a partnership between LGNSW and the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) that aims to address identified climate change risks and vulnerabilities facing NSW councils.

Tracking Mosquitoes Together was a successful 2016 third round grant applicant, funded by the Climate Change Fund.

Read more about Tackling Mosquitoes Together at www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/NuisanceInsects and about Council's Biodiversity projects at www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/Biodiversity

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