

# Who we are

## Our purpose

The vision of the Department of Environment and Science (DES) is for the environment, science and voices of our young people to enrich the lives of Queenslanders now and into the future. We work with First Nations peoples, communities, stakeholders and government to achieve a better environmental, economic and social future for Queensland. We do this by:

- safeguarding and managing Queensland's natural, cultural and heritage values
- protecting the environment and reducing the impacts of environmental harm
- promoting the development of, and engagement with, science and heritage
- engaging youth to contribute to Queensland's economic, civic and cultural life.

DES contributes to Queensland's economic prosperity by enabling sustainable development, supporting the science sector, and promoting nature-based tourism. We enrich Queensland's community life by engaging, celebrating and listening to young Queenslanders, protecting significant heritage places and providing opportunities for the community to connect with our stunning natural environment.

The department was established in December 2017 under the *Public Service Act 2008*, Part 2, Division 2 – Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 3) of 12 December 2017.

### Machinery-of-government changes

As a result of machinery-of-government changes on 12 November 2020, some functions left the department while Youth Engagement joined the department.

### Incoming divisions or functions

The following table outlines those divisions or functions that joined the department due to machinery-of-government changes on 12 November 2020, and the related annual reports where the financial statements can be located for part of the 2020–21 reporting period.

Joined the department	Date of transfer	Related annual report <sup>*</sup>
Youth Engagement	12 November 2020	Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs

*\*Financial statements for the period 1 July – 12 November 2020 can be found in the related annual report.*

### Outgoing divisions or functions

The following table outlines those divisions or functions that left the department due to machinery-of-government changes on 12 November 2020, and the related annual reports where the non-financial performance information and financial statements can be located for part of the 2020–21 reporting period.

Left the department	Date of transfer	Related annual report <sup>*</sup>
Arts Queensland	12 November 2020	Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy
Corporate Administration Agency	12 November 2020	Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy

*\*Financial statements for the period 12 November 2020 – 30 June 2021 can be found in the related department's annual report.*

*# Non-financial performance information for the 2020–21 reporting period can be found in the related annual report.*

## Our contribution

In 2020–21, our work directly contributed to the government's objectives for the community — *Unite and Recover* by:

### Protecting the environment

- Reducing Queensland's contribution to climate change with decarbonisation and adaptation programs.
- Improving water quality under the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program and delivering Reef joint field management services with the Australian Government.
- Moving towards a zero-waste society, where waste is avoided, reused and recycled as much as possible.
- Preventing and managing impacts on the environment through strong regulation.
- Leading efforts to conserve Queensland's heritage and biodiversity, including threatened species recovery.
- Maintaining and enhancing our protected areas, informed by the rights, knowledge and experiences of First Nations peoples.

### Supporting jobs and growing our regions

- Supporting job creation in the conservation sector and nature-based and cultural tourism including delivering fee waivers for tourism operators on protected areas.
- Stimulating environmental markets and land restoration employment opportunities.
- Promoting activities leading to increased jobs in waste management and resource recycling.
- Improving the translation of science and research into job creation.

### Safeguarding our health

- Ensuring clean and healthy air, land and water through effective regulation.
- Supporting science research and technologies that improve public health.
- Improving health and wellbeing by connecting the community with nature.

### Investing in skills

- Supporting STEM education in Queensland.
- Enabling Queensland's youth to help shape government policies, programs and services.
- Supporting Queensland's businesses to increase energy and water efficiency and decrease waste disposed to landfill.

## Our values

The department's work is underpinned by government-wide values:

	<b>Customers first</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know your customer</li><li>• Deliver what matters</li><li>• Make decisions with empathy</li></ul>
	<b>Ideas into action</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenge the norm and suggest solutions</li><li>• Encourage and embrace new ideas</li><li>• Walk across boundaries</li></ul>
	<b>Unleash potential</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expect greatness</li><li>• Lead and set clear expectations</li><li>• Seek, provide and act on feedback</li></ul>
	<b>Be courageous</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Own your actions, successes and mistakes</li><li>• Take calculated risks</li><li>• Act with transparency</li></ul>
	<b>Empower people</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lead, empower and trust</li><li>• Play to everyone's strengths</li><li>• Develop yourself and those around you</li></ul>

## Our operating environment

The context of the department's activities in 2020–21 was dynamic and without precedent. It included:

- reprioritising people and resources to support the COVID-19 health response and economic recovery
- adjusting the department's strategic direction in response to machinery-of-government changes and the new term of government
- seeking to improve environmental outcomes through the opportunities provided by the Samuels Review of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwth)*
- responding to increased global attention and momentum for action on climate change
- providing flexible regulatory arrangements in response to COVID-19, for efficient and effective service delivery and environmental protection
- developing COVID-safe plans so visitors can safely enjoy Queensland's protected areas
- adapting to more intense and extreme weather events, including longer fire seasons, in order to better protect the community and environmental biodiversity.

## Our leadership team

**Jamie Merrick**  
**Director-General**

Consistent with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, Jamie is accountable to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Youth Affairs for the efficient, effective and financially responsible performance of DES, including delivery of the government's commitments and priorities.

**Karen Hussey**  
**Deputy Director-General, Environmental Policy and Programs**

Karen leads the development and coordination of policy, strategy and legislation relating to the environment and conservation. Karen oversees the delivery of strategic programs such as protection of the Great Barrier Reef, waste management and resource recovery, and the Land Restoration Fund. Karen also leads policy and programs in areas such as heritage, climate change, environmental offsets, biodiversity, koala conservation and State of Environment reporting.

**Rob Lawrence**  
**Deputy Director-General, Environmental Services and Regulation**

Rob leads the department's regulatory program and is responsible for administering and enforcing a range of legislation that manages the impact of human activity on the environment. The regulatory program involves assessing and permitting a range of activities, spanning mining to sewage treatment plants and waste management facilities. Rob is also responsible for managing environmental risks through a proactive compliance and enforcement program. This includes 24/7 issues-reporting and incident response, and strong litigation capabilities to prevent and respond to serious environmental harm.

**Ben Klaassen**  
**Deputy Director-General, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships**

Ben leads the management of Queensland's parks and forests, including partnerships with First Nations peoples to protect cultural values, support sustainable use and provide nature-based recreation and ecotourism opportunities. Ben is responsible for protecting threatened species, managing interactions between people and protected species, managing selected World Heritage sites, and leading the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program. Ben also has responsibility for the delivery of the Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program, in partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

**Mark Jacobs**  
**Deputy Director-General, Science and Technology**

Mark leads the provision of scientific and technical advice and services to government agencies on environmental, natural resource and climate matters. This advice underpins agency decision-making and legislative responsibilities. Mark is responsible for managing the department's investment in the science sector in collaboration with the Queensland Chief Scientist.

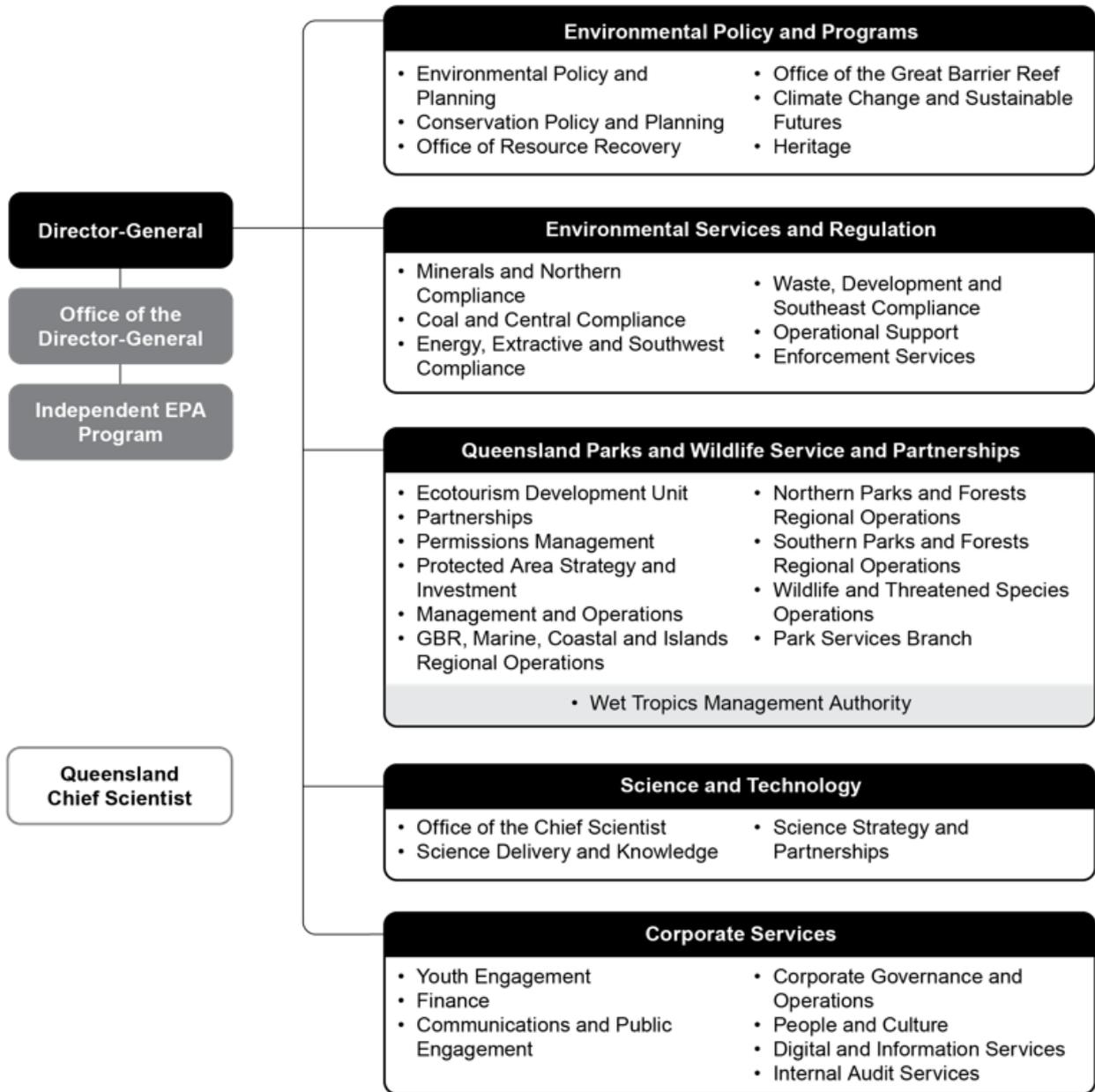
**Susan Chrisp**  
**Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services**

Susan is responsible for DES' corporate capabilities and governance frameworks that enable the department to meet its strategic objectives. Susan's role develops and implements best practice policies, programs and systems to manage the department's financial, digital, human, information and physical resources. Susan is also responsible for the ongoing delivery of Youth Engagement services.

**Hugh Possingham**  
**Queensland Chief Scientist**

Hugh leads science policy development and provides strategic advice to the Queensland Government on the role of science, research and innovation in meeting the state's economic challenges. The Queensland Chief Scientist is a whole of government position that advises on maximising opportunities from the government's investment in research and development. Hugh advocates for science across Queensland and works to ensure young Queenslanders are inspired to consider a career in science. As the role of Queensland Chief Scientist is part time, Hugh continues as Professor of Mathematics and Conservation Science at the University of Queensland.

# Our structure



## Our services

Our department's services are grouped in high level service areas, which are used to communicate the broad types of services delivered by DES. Each service area has a defined objective. Programs and projects carried out within each service area contribute to the achievement of the department's strategic objectives identified in the *DES Strategic Plan 2020–24 (amended January 2021)*. These strategic objectives in turn contribute to the achievement of the Queensland Government's objectives for the community — *Unite and Recover*. Our department delivers its services through five service areas:

### Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services

Service area objective: Develop, apply and monitor the strategic direction, standards and regulations that guide the operations and activities of businesses, individuals, and state and local governments. Invest strategically to deliver priority environmental outcomes.

Work carried out under this service area includes preventing and managing impacts to the environment through strong regulation. We are working towards becoming a zero-waste society, where waste is avoided, reused and recycled to the greatest possible extent. We work to stimulate environmental markets and land restoration employment opportunities. This enables our department to support the Queensland Government in achieving its objectives — *Protecting the Environment; Safeguarding our health; Supporting jobs and Growing our Regions*. This service area also contributes to the achievement of the department's strategic objectives — *Conserve Queensland's protected areas and biodiversity, Lead climate change action; Protect the Great Barrier Reef*.

### Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services

Service area objective: Expand, manage and conserve protected areas, marine parks, fish and wildlife habitats, forests and recreation areas. Partner with First Nations peoples to co-steward and manage protected areas. Facilitate sustainable recreational opportunities, nature-based tourism and ecotourism. Strengthen biodiversity and threatened species outcomes.

Work carried out under this service area comprises protecting the diversity and integrity of Queensland's ecosystems, and preserving or enhancing the conservation status of native species. We also manage recreation areas and state forest resources and facilitate sustainable recreational opportunities, nature-based tourism and ecotourism. We are committed to enhancing and maintaining our protected areas together with First Nations partners. These programs support the Queensland Government in achieving its objectives — *Protecting the environment, Supporting jobs, and Growing our regions*. It also supports the Queensland Government's commitments to reframe its relationship with First Nations peoples, and Tracks to Treaty which is the journey to create a new future between First Nations and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. This service area also contributes to the achievement of the department's strategic objectives — *Conserve Queensland's protected areas and biodiversity and Strengthen our partnerships with First Nations peoples*.

### Science

Service area objective: Provide data and scientific knowledge, information and advice to protect our natural environment. Support science and research partnerships in Queensland.

Work carried out under this service area supports the Queensland Government objectives — *Protecting the environment; Safeguarding our health; Supporting Jobs; Growing our Regions; and Investing in Skills*. We do this by providing trusted scientific knowledge, information and advice to support government priorities. We inform Queensland's science strategy and promote science in the state, including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. This service area also contributes to the achievement of the department's strategic objectives — *Strengthen and harness Queensland's scientific excellence, Conserve Queensland's protected areas and biodiversity, and Engage with Queensland's youth*.

### Youth Engagement

Service area objective: Support young Queenslanders to look to the future and see limitless possibilities, thrive, and help shape our future state.

Work carried out under this service area enables Queensland's youth to contribute to shaping government policies, programs and services.

These experiences build skills and experience with our youth and therefore supports the Queensland Government objective – *Investing in skills*. This service area also contributes to the achievement of the department’s strategic objective – *Engage with Queensland’s youth*.

### **Heritage Protection Services**

Service area objective: Protect, promote and ensure Queensland's cultural and built heritage is conserved and enjoyed.

Work carried out under this service area, strives to protect the state’s historical cultural heritage and promote it for present and future generations, in line with the Queensland Heritage Strategy. By leading efforts to conserve Queensland’s heritage, we support the Queensland Government’s objective — *Protecting the Environment*. This service area also contributes to the achievement of the department’s strategic objective — *Conserve Queensland’s protected areas and biodiversity*.