

Our performance

This section highlights the department's achievements against the objectives outlined in the *DES Strategic Plan 2020–24 (amended January 2021)*:

- Lead climate change action
- Protect the Great Barrier Reef
- Conserve Queensland's protected areas and biodiversity
- Strengthen our partnerships with First Nations peoples
- Protect the health of the environment and our communities
- Strengthen and harness Queensland's scientific excellence
- Engage with Queensland's youth

Lead climate change action

The Queensland Government is dedicated to strong action on climate change and remains committed to its targets: reducing emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030 and achieving zero net emissions by 2050. Delivering on these targets will make an important contribution to global action on climate change and help attract new investment, industry development and sustainable job creation across the Queensland economy.

In 2020–21, the government committed to delivering a Queensland Climate Action Plan 2020–2030 (QCAP). DES has led collaborative work across the Queensland Government to develop the plan. The QCAP will build on the achievements of the past three years under the Queensland Climate Transition Strategy and Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy. Both strategies have helped position Queensland's communities, industries and economy to succeed in the global shift to zero net emissions and as the impacts of climate change are felt more deeply.

Outcome indicators

Contribution towards the government's target of:

- 30% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions by 2030
- zero net emissions by 2050

Key activities in 2020–21

We led development and implementation of whole of government strategies to address the risks and impacts of climate change and ensure the long-term viability of our economy, communities and industries. This year we:

- delivered a draft QCAP, a whole of government strategy to generate clean jobs, reduce emissions and support decision-making in line with a zero net emissions economy
- provided resources and training to local governments to strengthen their knowledge and skills to manage climate change risks through the Queensland Climate Resilient Councils program (QCRC), delivered with the Local Government Association of Queensland
- enhanced the Queensland Future Climate Dashboard with more information to support

climate adaptation by authorities, industries and communities

- continued to deliver the Queensland Climate Ready program with Griffith University to increase climate risk readiness in government departments.

We helped deliver key climate transition strategies to support Queensland farmers and land managers restore and protect our natural environment. This year we:

- contracted 18 carbon farming projects, through the Land Restoration Fund's first investment round, which will deliver almost 1.8 million tonnes of reduced or avoided carbon emissions
- expanded the Drought and Climate Adaptation Program beyond its adaptation focus to help the agriculture sector identify actions that reduce emissions.

We supported collaboration and knowledge sharing across government, business, research and community sectors on climate action. This year we:

- provided grants to local governments through the QCRC program to promote regional engagement on managing climate risk, building local resilience and identifying opportunities in a low carbon economy
- released climate risk management tools to help Queensland households and small businesses plan for climate change
- continued to deliver the highly successful ecoBiz program with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland, helping small to medium businesses reduce their waste, water and energy bills through resource efficiency and sustainability actions
- supported the Barcaldine Renewable Energy and Industrial Hub to commence its stage 2 feasibility study
- delivered climate science information that strengthens decision-making across sectors, including downscaled climate projections on an interactive website, and around 3,000 seasonal condition reports per month for landholders via the FORAGE website
- completed the Decarbonising Great Barrier Reef Islands Program Whole-of-Island Community Pilot project, developed with the Palm Island, Masig Island, Magnetic Island and Great Keppel Island communities.

Protect the Great Barrier Reef

The Great Barrier Reef is an internationally treasured natural wonder and an Australian icon with tourism and recreation values. It also has special significance to First Nations peoples, who have lived within the Reef's catchments for thousands of years and have a continuing connection to land and sea country.

The Reef is facing significant threats, including climate change, and sediment and nutrient run-off. These are taking a measurable toll on the condition of the Reef and the health of its ecosystems.

Queensland is actively tackling these challenges. This includes action to reduce emissions that contribute to global climate change, reducing sediment and nutrient run-off under the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan, and implementing the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan and Field Management Program with the Australian Government.

Outcome indicators

Contributions towards the government's targets of:

- 60% reduction in anthropogenic end-of-catchment dissolved inorganic nitrogen loads
- 25% reduction in anthropogenic end-of-catchment sediment loads

Key activities in 2020–21

We led work to help achieve the 2025 water quality targets in the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan 2017–22. This year we:

- supported the development of the Reef Credit Scheme, which offers landholders the opportunity to generate and sell 'reef credits' by reducing nutrient or sediment run-off from their land
- commenced new Reef protection regulations for grazing in the Burdekin and banana growing in the Wet Tropics, and for new cropping and horticulture activities in all Reef catchments to reduce water pollution flowing to the Reef
- released a new FORAGE report on long-term carrying capacity, which provides a guide on the number of livestock an area of land can carry over decades without running down the property's land condition
- developed an Environmentally Relevant Activity standard for new cropping and horticulture activities in the Reef catchments enabling low risk growers to make a simplified application for an environmental authority
- recognised the Freshcare environmental program for banana cultivation as a program that is consistent with the Reef protection regulations
- started an independent review of land management practice targets to better align them with the finer scale water quality targets across catchments
- worked with the agricultural sector to increase voluntary adoption of improved farm

management practices and help landholders reduce pollutant run-off

- installed 32 near-real time nitrate sensors to inform land managers about nitrogen losses occurring from individual storm events
- contracted the planting of over 1,700 hectares of trees in Reef catchments by Land Restoration Fund projects
- formed a specialist Reef Compliance and Regulation team and developed a risk-based compliance and enforcement strategy for implementing Reef protection regulations
- finalised guidance materials to implement the new Reef water quality standard
- published aquaculture model conditions to support sustainable aquaculture development adjacent to the Reef.

We led the implementation of the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program, the government's program of actions to improve the quality of water flowing from Reef catchments into the Reef lagoon. This year we:

- continued funding CANEGROWERS' Smartcane Best Management Practice program with 75 additional cane growing businesses managing over 17,000 hectares becoming accredited—633 businesses managing 142,246 hectares have now been accredited
- supported over 160 graziers managing 1.1 million hectares to develop land management action plans to improve poor or degraded land, through the Grazing

Resilience and Sustainable Solutions (GRASS) program

- continued funding the Australian Banana Growers' Council Best Management Practice program—benchmarked growers now include 22 new growers managing approximately 700 additional hectares
- continued to support sugarcane growers in four regions improve their nutrient management planning—these projects have helped more than 620 growers managing 70,000 hectares reduce their nitrogen use by nearly 800 tonnes
- released the Reef Water Quality Report Card 2019, which showed encouraging progress towards the pollutant reduction targets, particularly at regional and catchment levels
- implemented the Urban Water Stewardship Framework, helping 14 councils in the Reef catchments evaluate their urban water management practices
- completed gully remediation works at Strathalbyn Station, resulting in an average 90% reduction in suspended sediment run-off, or more than 4,600 tonnes of sediment per year
- continued funding Growcom's Hort360 Great Barrier Reef project with 84 additional growers being benchmarked
- engaged 281 banana and sugarcane growers managing 38,513 hectares in the Wet Tropics Major Integrated Project to test tools and approaches to reduce pollution flowing into local waterways
- engaged 91% of large grazing properties covering over one million hectares in the Burdekin Major Integrated Project—*Landholders Driving Change*—22 gullies were remediated with around 6,000 tonnes less sediment per year entering the Reef.

We provided leading edge science that informed government decisions to protect the Reef. This year we:

- continued to monitor sediment, nutrient and pesticide pollutant loads across Reef catchments
- analysed 16,653 water quality, soil, sediment and plant samples from Reef catchments, generating over 62,624 individual tests and analyses
- continued to develop and apply knowledge of gully and streambank management and rehabilitation in Reef catchments
- worked with the Traditional Custodians of East Trinity near Cairns, the Mandingalbay Yidinji people, to transition the East Trinity

Acid Sulfate Soil Remediation site to long-term remote monitoring

- applied digital soil mapping techniques and conventional soil surveys to develop soil erodibility maps of Reef catchments
- supported the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) in Townsville to improve our understanding of marine microbiota and the health of the Reef.

We led the implementation of the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan) with the Australian Government, and its five-year review. This year we:

- consulted the public on the draft updated Reef 2050 Plan, receiving 4,939 submissions
- reviewed the governance arrangements that support the Reef 2050 Plan to ensure they remain effective and contribute to the objectives of the plan
- involved experts and other stakeholders in Reef strategic planning, including the Reef 2050 Advisory Committee, Reef 2050 Independent Expert Panel, Reef Water Quality Independent Science Panel and Traditional Owners
- submitted an achievements addendum to the Great Barrier Reef State Party Report for consideration by the World Heritage Committee (in their meeting in mid-2021)
- took delivery of the new 24 metre patrol vessel *Reef Resilience*, expanding the Reef Joint Field Management Program's patrol response capability
- conducted 1,059 dedicated compliance patrols to deter illegal activity in the Reef, resulting in 77 infringement notices, 65 warning notices, 44 caution notices, 679 advisory letters and 75 court prosecutions
- delivered 1,256 Reef Health and Impact Surveys to assess the health of the Reef, including 479 crown-of-thorns starfish surveys
- conducted 273 bird surveys across 174 locations in the Reef to monitor seabird and shorebird populations and inform island management
- agreed with AIMS to work together to develop and deliver autonomous benthic monitoring equipment and methods over the next three years
- continued implementing the Raine Island Recovery Project, a five-year collaboration with BHP, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Wuthathi and Meriam Nation (Ugar, Mer, Erub) Traditional Owners, and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, with positive results for turtle recruitment

- delivered nine priority pest programs across Reef islands, such as mice eradication on North West Island, to enhance ecosystem resilience and protect island-dependent species, such as seabirds and turtles
- delivered a reef rehabilitation trial with tourism partners, Traditional Owners, research organisations and the Mars Foundation to restore around 200m² of reef habitat at Green Island, with 165 reef stars and 200 coral clips installed.

We continue to work with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to streamline the joint marine park permissions management system. Together, this year we:

- developed joint marine park policies and guidelines, for example to assist Reef restoration and adaptation
- reduced 'green tape' for routine low-risk tourism permits and research activities, making it easier and faster for clients to access the marine parks
- developed simpler permit conditions that are easier to implement.

Conserve Queensland's protected areas and biodiversity

The Queensland Government is dedicated to conserving our unique biodiversity and our important natural, heritage and cultural values. We are committed to protecting our ecosystems and values in partnership with First Nations peoples, the stewards of Country for many thousands of years. For First Nations peoples, Country and culture are indivisible.

Much of Queensland's economic strength depends on our natural assets. Our multi-billion-dollar tourism industry relies on our remarkable natural environment. The productivity of our agricultural sector, and much of the culture and heritage of our regional communities are underpinned by healthy ecosystems.

Despite its importance, the strength and resilience of our ecosystems are declining. The Queensland Government is committed to improving the management of biodiversity, threatened species and protected areas, and safeguarding our heritage and cultural values.

Outcome indicators

- Increased percentage of Queensland's land area that is protected
- Key natural, cultural and heritage values are maintained or improved
- Inclusion of culturally significant places in the Queensland Heritage Register

Key activities in 2020–21

We delivered policies and initiatives underpinned by science to protect Queensland's ecosystems and natural, cultural and heritage values. This year we:

- released *Queensland's Protected Area Strategy 2020–2030*, setting the strategic direction for growing and managing the state's terrestrial protected areas, both public and private
- released the *South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy 2020–2025*, and commenced implementing the actions in the Strategy including new koala habitat mapping and reforms to the planning framework to better protect koala habitat
- declared Queensland's first special wildlife reserve under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, protecting over 56,000 hectares of habitat for the endangered night parrot
- declared eight new nature refuges under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, adding 624 hectares to Queensland's protected areas
- increased the state's protected area estate by 33,621 hectares through the dedication and declaration of protected areas under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- commenced work on a new World Heritage Strategy for Queensland to align the management of Queensland's internationally recognised places with contemporary international approaches and the department's *Gurra Gurra Framework 2020–2026* to increase the involvement of First Nations peoples
- delivered 11 priority environmental projects under the Reef Assist program, creating around 130 regional jobs in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin and Mackay Whitsunday regions, in partnership with local governments, natural resource management organisations and First Nations peoples
- continued the Great Sandy Marine Park Zoning Plan review, commenced the Moreton Bay Marine Park Zoning Plan review and started work to develop a contemporary marine park zoning plan review process
- revised the statutory document —*Accepted development requirements for operational works completely or partly within a declared Fish Habitat Area*
- completed an independent expert scientific panel review of the Fraser Island Dingo Conservation and Risk Management Strategy implementation plan to ensure it continues to include best available science and management techniques
- assessed the extent, severity and impacts of the 2019–20 bushfires in Lamington, Main Range, Mt Barney, Cooloola, Noosa, Bulburin and Oakview National Parks, as part of the department's bushfire recovery program
- assessed the extent, severity and impacts of the 2020 bushfire on K'gari (Fraser Island) and Great Sandy National Park
- added 10 new state heritage places to the Queensland Heritage Register
- finalised the review of the Environmental Offsets Framework and published a

consultation and response report, which outlines 15 reform areas and describes how government will engage stakeholders to help implement these reforms

- registered a further nine Advanced Offsets, totalling 1,044 hectares of land to counterbalance future impacts on Queensland's threatened species and regional ecosystems
- helped landholders participate in offset delivery with a new online form that allows them to express their interest in offset delivery free of charge
- progressed projects to deliver environmental offsets from the Environmental Offsets Account
- contracted 18 projects through the Land Restoration Fund's first investment round that will result in more than 350,000 hectares of vegetation protected or restored and will protect from clearing or restore around 7,500 hectares of unregulated vegetation.

We delivered projects to protect and recover threatened species and their habitats. This year we:

- undertook projects to protect and recover priority fauna species, such as the koala, northern hairy-nosed wombat, greater bilby, bridled nail-tail wallaby and Nangur skink
- continued predator control in Astrebla Downs National Park, with record numbers of endangered greater bilbies and high numbers of vulnerable kowari recorded
- continued predator control, weed management and supplementary feeding to protect the bridled nail-tail wallaby in Taunton National Park (Scientific), with the population size in the core habitat area at least four times that in 2012–13 when the management program and monitoring commenced
- delivered the Bushfire Recovery Project to protect and recover threatened species impacted by 2019–20 bushfires, with support from the Australian Government
- improved the Queensland threatened species list to align with the national list, including introducing standard conservation categories
- continued to implement the Marine Turtle Conservation Strategy including the Nest to Oceans grant program
- partnered with Healthy Land and Water to rehabilitate areas in, and adjacent to, Main Range National Park impacted by the 2019 bushfires
- recorded 333 marine animal strandings, including 11 high priority marine strandings (includes dugongs, Australian snubfin and Australian humpback dolphin) in the Reef, 27 high priority strandings in the Moreton Bay Marine Park, and 20 high priority strandings in the Great Sandy Marine Park
- purchased two coastal properties to protect and restore the most significant loggerhead and flatback turtle nesting and rookery sites in eastern Australia
- completed scientific monitoring and assessment of estuarine crocodile numbers and population trends
- removed 53 problem estuarine crocodiles that posed a danger to people or livestock, while conserving the species in the wild
- conducted applied research of estuarine crocodile population dynamics using DNA samples collected in the field
- analysed cassowary vehicle-strike hotspots with the CSIRO, to inform road and land managers and reduce the rate of vehicle strikes in built-up areas and rescued and rehabilitated six sick, injured or abandoned cassowaries at the Garners Beach Cassowary Rehabilitation Centre. Five were released into the wild and one passed away. Three more birds were subject to in-situ recovery plans
- partnered with the Queensland Trust for Nature to establish seven projects on council and private land under the Koala Habitat Restoration Partnerships Program for the restoration of more than 100 hectares of koala habitat
- partnered with Australia Zoo, RSPCA Qld and Currumbin Wildlife Hospital to treat and rehabilitate sick, injured and orphaned wildlife across South East Queensland
- continued the management of eight properties acquired by the Queensland Government for the restoration of koala habitat in preparation for their transition to long-term conservation tenure
- engaged Griffith University to undertake a comprehensive review of contemporary knowledge and policy related to the use of translocation as a management intervention for wildlife conservation and management in Queensland
- conducted seasonal compliance and educational activities under the Save the Water Program to manage safe separation distances between boats and marine mammals
- effectively regulated the take, use and keep of wildlife through a targeted program of proactive and reactive compliance and education activities
- undertook assessment and compliance activities in relation to activities impacting

koala habitat areas outside koala priority areas against the new state code for Development in South East Queensland Koala Habitat Areas

- completed a major refurbishment of the Moggill Koala Rehabilitation Centre to support its role as a specialised state-of-the-art facility for the rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned koalas
- granted approximately 10,300 protected animal and plant authorities to support research, education and sustainable management of wildlife.

We improved the management of protected areas through engaging and collaborating with key stakeholders. This year we:

- delivered 38 capital works projects to enhance visitor access and better manage our parks and forests
- planned the redevelopment of the Castle Rock camping area at Girraween National Park
- increased the use of social media and other digital channels to support visitor safety and compliance during the COVID-19 pandemic
- installed automatic number-plate recognition technology at key entry points to Bribie Island and Cooloola recreation areas to monitor and manage vehicle access
- introduced designated camping zones on Teewah beach in the Cooloola recreation area to better manage environmental risk and assist maintenance
- conducted water compliance patrols in the Great Sandy and Moreton Bay marine parks, with Queensland Boating and Fisheries, First Nations peoples and volunteers, issuing 212 warnings and 88 infringement notices
- removed 147 ghost crab pots from Moreton Bay Marine Park, reducing the risk of marine wildlife entanglements
- increased joint compliance operations in the Great Sandy National Park with Queensland Police Service and Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol, completing 10 patrols
- trained over 120 Queensland police officers to be authorised officers under nature conservation statutes, including the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, *Forestry Act 1959*, *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006* and *Marine Parks Act 2004*.

We protected, celebrated and promoted Queensland's unique and diverse heritage, ensuring our places of state heritage value remain for present and future generations. This year we:

- gazetted the Raine Island National Park (Scientific) management statement, co-designed with the Wuthathi people and Meriam Nation people, to protect the park's natural, cultural and shared history values
- assessed 15 community nominations for places of state-level heritage significance, such as the Eagles Nest Camp in Toowoomba, a depression-era itinerant men's camp, entered in the Queensland Heritage Register in March 2021
- continued work to protect Queensland's identified heritage assets, such as the Broadway Hotel and Lamb House, in partnership with local government
- managed changes to Queensland heritage places through assessment of heritage exemptions and provision of technical advice on development applications
- oversaw early stage works on the Newstead House conservation project
- invested in the delivery of heritage conservation projects across Queensland through Community Sustainability Action grants
- provided advice on the heritage impacts of major infrastructure projects, such as Cross River Rail, new QPAC theatre and Queen's Wharf development
- provided input on planning instruments to ensure the conservation of heritage places.

We supported nature-based tourism and recreational opportunities so visitors can participate in a variety of activities and learn about conservation. This year we:

- issued 295,204 camping permits and 201,375 vehicle access permits for Queensland national parks and forests
- completed more than 250 projects that provided new and upgraded visitor facilities and infrastructure in our national parks
- opened a new ecotourism facility, in partnership with O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat, at the Green Mountain section of Lamington National Park
- completed significant milestones of the Cooloola Great Walk ecotourism project, including referral under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- partnered with the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport, completing significant

milestones of the Wangetti Trail ecotourism project between Port Douglas and Palm Cove, including construction of the new Mowbray River pedestrian bridge, and engaged contractors for the design and construction of the southern section of the trail

- updated the Ecotourism Best Practice Guidelines and Implementation Framework to align with current legislation, give greater emphasis on Traditional Owner engagement, and add new Queensland and Australian-focussed case studies
- issued 2,415 protected area authorities for a variety of tourism, research organised events, apiary and marine park activities
- supported the tourism industry by providing fee relief to tourism operators as part of the Queensland Government COVID-19 Immediate Industry Recovery Package
- launched a new immersive education room at David Fleay Wildlife Park on the Gold Coast to enhance conservation education programs for school children
- launched upgraded displays and educational messaging at the Daisy Hill Koala Centre to promote the South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy and other important wildlife and threatened species programs
- launched a new 'Naturally Queensland' e-newsletter with monthly distribution to over 115,000 subscribers promoting World Heritage Areas, popular parks, hidden gems, park rangers and on-park experiences
- provided inspiring and educational social media content about national parks via Facebook and Instagram, with 2.5 million people reached, 190 published posts and more than 195,000 combined followers
- developed a new Queensland National Parks photography guideline for state and regional tourism organisations to promote visitor safety in social media
- delivered the 'Think Outside' marketing campaign promoting the mental and physical health benefits of spending time in nature, with Queensland Health, National Parks Association of Queensland and Nature Play Qld
- completed upgrades to the Forts Junction Hub on Magnetic Island providing improved pedestrian safety, vehicle parking and bus stops, park information and entry statement, interpretive display and toilets at the entry to the popular Forts Walk.
- commenced work on a reef trails project to improve access to the Great Barrier Reef with new public moorings and anchoring

locations in the Whitsunday and Townsville areas

- completed a multi-use trail network on Curtis Island and significant sections of a new multi-day Ngaro Walking Trail from Tongue Point to Whitehaven Beach on Whitsunday Island.

Strengthen our partnerships with First Nations peoples

Our vision is to walk forward together, from two paths to one, in a partnership founded on respect, trust and First Nations peoples' vision for country and people. This vision also affirms our genuine recognition of and respect for First Nations' knowledge and the significant contribution that this makes to the department's strategic objectives.

We work in genuine partnerships with First Nations peoples to safeguard ecological and cultural values across Queensland. We acknowledge and respect First Nations peoples' lived experiences, knowledge, skills and expertise, and incorporate First Nations' perspectives into the policies, programs and systems that guide land and sea management.

We are committed to ensuring the cultural capability of staff across the department to enable the strengthening of partnerships and conservation outcomes and establishing the department as a better practice agency in its work with First Nations peoples.

The department is committed to progressing self-determination by recognising First Nations' rights and interests. The [Gurra Gurra Framework 2020–2026](#) prioritises and accelerates this commitment.

Outcome indicators

- Increased number of co-stewardship agreements
- Increased employment of First Nations peoples in DES
- Increased procurement from First Nations' owned businesses

Key activities in 2020–21

We partnered with First Nations peoples to hold people and Country at the centre of what we do and the decisions we make in better managing and conserving Queensland's parks, forests and ecosystems. This year we:

- jointly managed 28 national parks with Traditional Owner land trusts encompassing 2.17 million hectares
- commenced recruitment to 50 new ranger positions as part of the commitment to double the number of Indigenous land and sea rangers over the next three years and delivered two Indigenous Ranger Leadership programs for First Nations rangers
- allocated grants to 19 First Nations organisations (representing 24 communities) for more than 100 existing Indigenous land and sea rangers across Queensland
- delivered the 2020 round of Looking After Country grants across 12 First Nations communities
- continued negotiations on three land tenure dealings for the transfer of over 600,000 hectares to Aboriginal ownership and the dedication of national parks and nature refuges, under the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program
- delivered workshops and meetings with Traditional Owners as part of various ecotourism projects across the state and executed a 30-year lease with Traditional Owners over part of East Trinity Reserve to support ecocultural tourism
- delivered a variety of successful youth engagement activities by rangers, including classroom presentations with new culturally appropriate resources
- partnered with the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport to execute a cultural heritage management agreement with the Traditional Owners, as part of the Wangetti Trail ecotourism project
- contracted six Land Restoration Fund projects that will deliver co-benefits for First Nations communities, including savanna burning on Country with input from Traditional Owners
- secured the passage of the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation (Indigenous Joint Management – Moreton Island) Amendment Bill 2020 to facilitate formal joint management of Mulgumpin (Moreton Island) by the state and the Quandamooka people
- executed memoranda of understanding with representatives of Traditional Owners to cooperatively manage traditional lands in the department's northern national park estate
- continued negotiations with Traditional Owner groups on an Indigenous land use agreement for Littleton National Park

- worked with First Nations groups across Queensland to manage fire in protected areas, including Cape York Peninsula, Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) and Mulgumpin (Moreton Island)
- worked with nine First Nations groups to manage sea Country in the Reef under Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements
- delivered island and marine field activities with First Nations groups, including 424 person-days working together onboard Reef joint field management vessels
- developed a management plan for Currawinya National Park in south west Queensland with the Budjiti First Nations people
- held a high-level forum with First Nations peoples whose traditional Country overlaps the Great Sandy Marine Park to discuss aspirations for marine park management
- launched *Respecting Country – a sustainable waste strategy for First Nation communities* to guide the development of regional waste management plans, with a focus on innovation and local job creation
- assessed the impacts of the 2020 bushfire on K’gari (Fraser Island) with the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation
- assisted Kullilli Bulloo River Aboriginal Corporation to support the Lake Eyre Basin Traditional Owner Alliance as a functioning independent body
- surveyed significant fauna species on Orchid Creek Station, Cape York Peninsula with the Kaanju Traditional Owner Negotiation Committee.

Together with the Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation (QYAC), this year we:

- delivered a management plan for Naree Budjong Djara National Park and Conservation Park, Myora Conservation Park, Main Beach Conservation Park and Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) Recreation Area
- commenced a review of the Mulgumpin (Moreton Island) Management Plan
- started implementing the Mulgumpin (Moreton Island) Indigenous Management Agreement, including in-principle agreed joint management arrangements over the island’s protected areas
- enacted the name Gheebulum Coonungai (Moreton Island) National Park to reflect the strong cultural significance of the land to Quandamooka people

- supported QYAC to continue leading the development of a World Heritage tentative list submission for Quandamooka Country
- funded QYAC to implement the Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) Townships Fire Management Strategies
- managed Quandamooka Sea Country in Moreton Bay, delivering on commitments in the memorandum of understanding.

We worked to embed First Nations knowledge and leadership in our policies, programs and systems to enrich conservation of land and sea Country and guide management of protected areas. This year we:

- continued to embed the principles and values of the department’s *Gurra Gurra Framework 2020–2026* for working with First Nations peoples and communities
- developed cultural protocol videos with Kuuku Ya’u Kanthanampu Aboriginal Corporation and Lama Lama Aboriginal Corporation to enhance the cultural awareness of departmental rangers working in sea Country, with more videos in development
- developed a draft Indigenous Partnerships Strategy for the Reef Joint Field Management Program to guide future collaboration opportunities with First Nations groups.

We increased policy and program co-design with First Nations peoples to strengthen partnerships, empower First Nations leadership and work together to define mutual benefits in delivering the department’s business. This year we:

- started to co-design the first world heritage strategy for Queensland with First Nations representatives of the world heritage areas and other experts, to guide engagement with First Nations peoples on world heritage matters
- commenced the co-design and development of an agreement making framework, to guide the drafting of agreements to co-steward the protected area estate with First Nations peoples
- prepared the draft Traditional Knowledge in Biodiscovery Code of Practice and draft Guidelines, working closely with First Nations partners and the Minister’s Traditional Knowledge Roundtable, and invited input on the drafts from all First Nations peoples
- established the Queensland River Management Framework, a collaborative approach to integrating First Nations peoples’

traditional knowledge, science, stories and connection to Country in the department's scientific understanding of managing rivers.

We supported opportunities for First Nations peoples through employment partnerships and improved procurement opportunities for First Nations peoples and businesses. This year we:

- continued implementing the Northern Parks and Forests Indigenous Employment and Development Strategy 2019–2022
- provided 114 days employment for Wuthathi and Meriam Nation (Ugar, Mer, Erub) rangers and cultural advisors working on Country on the Raine Island Recovery Project
- used four fee-for-service agreements with First Nations groups to deliver works on Country in the Reef
- progressed work placement arrangements with Darumbal and Gidarjil Rangers to increase the number and involvement of Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers in the department, with three Gidarjil and two Darumbal Rangers rotating through placements in the Reef Joint Field Management Program.

Protect the health of the environment and our communities

Our department continues to regulate environmentally relevant activities and promote a strategic approach to waste management and resource recovery in Queensland. We deliver consistent and transparent regulations that target industry-specific strategies and facilitate sustainable development in Queensland. We maintain Queensland's high environmental standards by actively monitoring and managing environmental risks, with robust assessment, compliance, investigation and enforcement programs. We also provide timely and comprehensive environmental information to state and local stakeholders and ensure the rehabilitation of environmental impacts.

Outcome indicators

- Increased public access to a wider range of online compliance and enforcement data
- Reduction in overall risk to the environment
- Reduction in waste sent to landfill and increased recycling rates

Key activities in 2020–21

We delivered initiatives under Queensland's *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy*, progressing towards its 2050 targets for reduced waste and increased resource recovery and recycling. The strategy is a key part of Queensland's transition towards a circular economy and zero-waste society, where generation of waste is avoided and waste materials are seen as resources to be reused.

This year we:

- introduced legislation to ban the supply of single-use plastic items, such as straws, stirrers, plates, bowls and cutlery, and polystyrene takeaway food containers and cups from 1 September 2021
- launched a grants program for food rescue organisations to increase the amount of food they currently divert from landfill
- commenced a trial with three local governments collecting and processing food waste and other organic material
- continued administering Queensland's waste levy, which encourages waste avoidance and recycling, and provides funding for resource recovery initiatives
- commenced work with regional councils to develop regional waste management and infrastructure plans to help identify critical waste infrastructure needs
- launched *Keeping Queensland Clean: the Litter and Illegal Dumping Plan* to reduce the incidence and impact of litter and illegal dumping in Queensland
- started developing action plans for textile waste and e-waste, key elements of Queensland's waste strategy
- continued to implement the Local Government Illegal Dumping Partnership

Program involving 27 councils, with over 9,000 reports made to the councils and over 820 infringement notices issued

- undertook waste management and waste levy compliance activities, with inspections of the top 70% waste levy contributors and over 160 inspections of alleged unlicensed waste operators
- implemented the Local Government Levy Ready Grant Program (Round 2) to assist small landfill sites meet their waste levy obligations
- continued administering the Regional Recycling Transport Assistance Package, helping regional communities divert resources from landfill, increase recycling and reduce the environmental and social impacts of waste.

We worked with industry, communities and stakeholders to manage impacts on the environment, including updated regulatory standards, compliance activities and programs to encourage sustainable behaviours. This year we:

- worked with natural resource management groups, local councils and river improvement trusts to deliver 145 environmental recovery projects funded under the 2019 monsoon trough disaster recovery package, including streambank repair, coastal restoration, and weed and pest management
- incorporated behavioural and social sciences into environmental policy challenges, such as providing insights on food waste collection, redesigning the annual waste survey and helping to develop public interest evaluation guidelines for mining

- supported the Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN) to update field sensors that monitor the long-term health of various ecosystems, including soil wetness, biodiversity and vegetation cover
- continued to transition existing site-specific mines into the progressive rehabilitation and closure plan framework, with 77 transition notices issued and 130 pre-lodgement engagements in 2020–21
- continued the prosecution against former executive officers of Linc Energy Limited for allegedly failing to ensure the company complied with Queensland’s environmental laws
- continued to engage the community and monitor land impacted by underground coal gasification by-products
- launched the Public Register Portal, making it easier and quicker to access the department’s administration and enforcement activities, part of the Queensland Government’s commitment to transparency and availability of information
- published the department’s Annual Strategic Compliance Priorities 2020–21
- continued to deliver the Odour Abatement Taskforce to tackle odour issues in the Ipswich Area, including the implementation of Envirosuite, a new air flow technology that uses wind data to predict the likely path of odour
- ensured the satisfactory rehabilitation of land on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) that is returning to the custody of Traditional Owners
- supported environmental authority holders during COVID-19 with more flexible, risk-based compliance approaches and payment plans offered to companies facing financial hardship.

We delivered an improved regulatory framework to reduce environmental harm, and actively monitored and managed environmental risks. This year we:

- amended the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* to enhance rehabilitation outcomes in the resources industry, including improvements to the residual risk framework
- established a Better Rehabilitation team to conduct precursory works to support the planned appointment of a Rehabilitation Commissioner for the resources industry
- gave full legislative effect to the government’s transshipping policy by clearly prescribing transshipping as a regulated activity and

- requiring the refusal of environmental authority applications in parts of the Great Barrier Reef
- finalised waterway environmental values and water quality objectives for the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin and eastern Cape York, to assist consistent planning, development and licencing and support the Basin Plan
- continued developing water quality guidelines for toxicants, with scientific benchmarks for the effects of a range of chemicals on aquatic ecosystems
- expanded the monitoring of smoke impact from bushfires and other sources in Queensland through the installation of particle monitoring equipment at all existing air monitoring stations
- finalised a code of practice for managing algal blooms in the Mareeba-Dimbulah water supply scheme with Sunwater, enabling irrigators to access water while protecting environmental values
- commenced a scientific study, in partnership with industry, of Moreton Bay sands, to inform future regulation of sand resources
- hosted the Minister’s Environment Roundtable in September 2020, and in May 2021 in Cairns, to discuss current activities and emerging issues with representatives of Queensland’s regional conservation groups and other environment organisations.

We prepared for, and managed, bushfire events on estates managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to protect lives and minimise impacts on property and ecosystems. This year we:

- completed 438 prescribed burns totalling 669,330 hectares and undertook bushfire risk reduction treatments totalling 1,753 hectares in Protection Zones
- achieved our annual target of treating more than 22% of protection zones by prescribed burning and other fuel management treatments (including mowing, slashing and mulching)
- bolstered Queensland’s bushfire preparedness and fire management capabilities with the Enhanced Fire Management Project, establishing the state’s first dedicated fire management team in South East Queensland and the roll-out of 30 new light attack vehicles and three medium attack trucks
- responded to a significant bushfire on K’gari (Fraser Island) in 2020 alongside

- Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, the Butchulla people and the community continued the department's commitment to, and involvement in, the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and review of the K'gari (Fraser Island) bushfire by the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management.

Strengthen and harness Queensland's scientific excellence

The application of scientific knowledge is the cornerstone of productivity growth, human health, environmental sustainability and the overall wellbeing of Queenslanders. With sustained investment over recent decades, Queensland boasts some of the best scientific research organisations in the world, across universities, medical research institutes and government agencies. During 2020, the Queensland research sector was a key partner in the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to play an important role in the economic recovery from 2021 onwards.

DES has stewardship of Queensland's science sector, including the development of strategy with the Queensland Chief Scientist, promotion of collaborative opportunities and engagement of the Queensland community in science. The department also hosts one of the state's largest group of environmental and natural resource scientists. Our science programs monitor, inform and report on the implementation of policies and programs in areas such as water resources, water and air quality, landscapes and soils, terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, climate adaptation, and coastal and wetland environments.

Outcome indicators

- Increased national and international science collaboration and partnerships
- Greater participation in citizen science

Key activities in 2020–21

We provided leading-edge, rigorous science to underpin and support government decision-making. This year we:

- initiated the Queensland River Management Framework, including a classification scheme and management guideline, to enhance river management
- developed tools to allow end-users to make informed decisions about the suitability of soils and land for agriculture in Reef catchments
- applied digital soil mapping and conventional soil surveys to develop soil erodibility maps of catchments, including the Logan Albert and Burnett Mary
- supported the Land Restoration Fund by developing co-benefit standards, methods, measures and assessments
- analysed 32,961 samples at the Chemistry Centre, generating over 122,268 individual tests and analyses on water quality, soils, sediments and plants, including 26% for external customers
- funded three water modelling research projects examining climate adaptation of Queensland's inland waterholes, surface water availability and freshwater biodiversity in South East Queensland, and social dimensions in Reef water quality modelling
- led the Queensland Murray Darling Fish Movement Project to better understand fish behaviour in South West Queensland streams to support better decision making
- completed the successful release of rare native fish held in captivity during drought in the upper reach of the Condamine River as part of the Native Fish Recovery Strategy
- provided hydrologic modelling, data and advice on nine water security projects across Queensland to support government decision-making and assist management in the management of water supplies during the recent drought
- sent several high-tech rain gauges to participant land holders, to fill gaps in the Bureau of Meteorology network and test the viability of low-cost, self-built gauges
- completed the development of new SOURCE hydrological models for the Burdekin, Mary, Barron, Pioneer and Whitsundays and commenced the development model development for the South East Queensland, Fitzroy and Burnett catchments to support future water management decisions/Water Plan reviews
- implemented the statewide aerial survey program to monitor the abundance of harvest macropods.

We worked to maximise community engagement in science to increase student participation in STEM subjects and increase science literacy. This year we:

- started revising the *Engaging Queenslanders in Science* strategy to encourage Queenslanders to engage more in science and value its benefits
- delivered virtual and in-person workshops, presentations and events across Queensland as part of the Flying Scientist and the Partner Up Queensland programs
- encouraged Queenslanders to join citizen science projects, with 43 Queensland Citizen Science Grant recipients and the Australian Citizen Science Association
- delivered the Queensland Women in STEM Prize and awarded three outstanding women scientists, with Queensland Museum and the Office for Women
- hosted the Queensland Young Tall Poppy Science Awards to recognise the achievements of Queensland's scientific researchers and communicators
- increased the reach of science events and activities, with previous recipients of Engaging Science Grants
- profiled Queensland scientists online to celebrate National Science Week.

We worked to strengthen the science base in Queensland and improve the translation of research into real-world benefits for Queenslanders. This year we:

- continued to support National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) facilities in Queensland under the Research and Infrastructure Co-investment Fund, for critical partnerships and joint ventures
- supported collaboration with Chinese Academy of Sciences researchers in priority areas, including agricultural biotechnology and food safety, medical research and environmental sciences
- coordinated whole of government input to the national Gene Technology Regulator, keeping Queenslanders safe whilst enabling world-leading genetic research
- commissioned *A New Chapter*, a ground-breaking report from CSIRO's Data61 group, on opportunities for science-based industry growth in Queensland
- supported the establishment of the Queensland Defence Science Alliance, for Queensland scientists to access defence-related funding and partner with industry

- explored a potential joint approach with all Queensland's universities to increase philanthropic investment in local research
- provided details of Queensland's research response to the COVID-19 pandemic on the Queensland Science website <https://science.des.qld.gov.au/research/queensland-research-responses-covid19>
- amended the *Biodiscovery Act 2004* to simplify approvals for research on native biological material with potential commercial outcomes and recognise the contribution of First Nations peoples' traditional knowledge to Queensland science.

We harnessed digital and disruptive technologies to deliver more information and improved services that are more efficient and easier to access. This year we:

- delivered an online strategic visualisation tool to profile the depth of Queensland's research and innovation locally and internationally
- delivered scientific information on priority species to government, industry and the community on the WildNet database, to help manage Queensland's biodiversity—in 2020 WildNet information was accessed more than 26 million times
- delivered over 140,000 maps and reports via the Maps Online service, providing easy access to topographic information for government, industry and the community
- supported and enhanced critical scientific computing infrastructure and applications so that our scientists can collect, store, analyse and deliver scientific information
- released the Queensland Environmental Science Data catalogue, enabling science datasets to be searched, linked and accessed across the agency and published externally.

Engage with Queensland's youth

The Queensland Government wants all young Queenslanders across the state to see limitless possibilities, realise their potential and help shape the future. The government is committed to ensuring young people have access to the services they need, regardless of their circumstances, and are supported to have healthy and active futures. This includes inspiring Queensland's youth to engage in science activities and STEM subjects and building a strong foundation for jobs of the future.

Young people are passionate, informed and invested in the future of this state. The more government can bring young people to the table and listen to their ideas, the stronger the state will be. The government is providing opportunities for young people to be heard and is working to strengthen their leadership skills and capacity to drive change.

Outcome indicators

- Contribute to the improved social, economic and civic participation of young people
- Increased inclusion of youth voices in shaping government policies, programs and services
- Greater promotion of STEM education

Key activities in 2020–21

We celebrated and engaged with young Queenslanders and listened to their voices to help shape government policies, programs and services so that young Queenslanders may reach their full potential. This year we:

- hosted Queensland Youth Week in April 2021, encouraging all Queenslanders to celebrate our state's young people and their achievements, with more than 115 events registered across the state during the week
- delivered three inaugural youth Speak Out events in Mossman, Brisbane and Rockhampton, inviting young people to share their ideas on challenges and opportunities relating to their local community, mental health, consent, youth engagement and the environment
- encouraged departments to extend their commitments to youth engagement and pursue opportunities to engage young Queenslanders by embedding the Queensland Youth Engagement Charter across government
- sought the views of the Queensland Youth Engagement Panel to help shape future government business, such as encouraging youth enrolment with the Queensland Electoral Commission, helping finalise the Youth Engagement Charter, and improving youth data collection with the Queensland Government Statistician.

We promoted safe and responsible behaviour by school leavers and supported Queensland communities over the schoolies holiday period so

young people may celebrate their achievements in a safe way. This year we:

- delivered the Safer Schoolies Gold Coast Response in partnership with Gold Coast City Council to safely manage the influx of thousands of young people on the Gold Coast
- provided the Safer Schoolies grants program, supporting regional responses to the Schoolies holiday period, volunteer support, education and accommodation outreach
- delivered the Safer Schoolies communication strategy, creating awareness about risks, safety, responsible behaviour and expectations.

We delivered initiatives to strengthen youth leadership and other capabilities to help young Queenslanders advocate for a strong future. This year we:

- delivered the 16th annual Queensland Indigenous Youth Leadership Program, supporting young First Nations Queenslanders to come together, develop leadership skills and build capacity to drive change in their local communities
- supported Queensland Parliamentary Services to deliver the Eric Deeral Indigenous Youth Parliament, providing an opportunity for young First Nations Queenslanders to experience Parliamentary debate and learn more about Parliamentary processes
- delivered the 25th annual Queensland Youth Parliament in partnership with YMCA

Brisbane and Queensland Parliamentary Services, providing a unique leadership and educational opportunity for young people to experience Parliament first-hand and participate in the development and passing of Youth Bills on topics of interest to young Queenslanders.

We encouraged participation and enrolment in STEM subjects so young people are equipped with relevant skills for future employment and encouraged to pursue STEM careers. This year we:

- delivered virtual and in-person workshops, presentations and events across Queensland as part of the Flying Scientist and the Partner Up Queensland programs, targeting school students, parents and early-career researchers
- promoted Queensland scientists and their research through awards and events such as National Science Week
- highlighted opportunities for young people to engage in science events and citizen science projects by working with Engaging Science Grant and Queensland Citizen Science Grant recipients.

Service standards

Protect the Great Barrier Reef

SDS service standards	Notes	2020–21 Target/Est	2020–21 Actual	Target met / not met
Service area: Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services				
Great Barrier Reef water quality improvement programs				
Queensland contributes to progress towards 2025 targets of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 per cent reduction in anthropogenic end-of-catchment dissolved inorganic nitrogen loads 25 per cent reduction in anthropogenic end-of-catchment loads of sediment 	1	≥2% ≥1%	Not yet available	
Percentage of sugarcane producers, within reef catchments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participating in the SmartCane Best Management Practice (BMP) program achieving accreditation in the SmartCane Best Management Practice (BMP) program 	2	56% 19%	55% 18%	Targets not met
Queensland Reef Water Quality Program funds distribution administration ratio	3	≤\$0.20	\$0.21	Target not met

Notes:

- This service standard is a whole of government measure of Queensland's contribution to the improvement of reef water quality. Performance for this service standard will be reported annually through the [Reef Water Quality Report Card](#). Due to a 12-month time lag, reporting on the load reductions for 2019–20 will be included in the Reef Water Quality Report Card 2020 scheduled for submission to the joint state and federal Environment Ministers in March 2022.
- This service standard measures the effectiveness of the SmartCane BMP as delivered by the Queensland Cane Growers Organisation Ltd (CANEGROWERS). The 2020–21 results are lower than expected due to a peak in re-accreditation demand from growers, who received 5-year accreditation in the early phases of the program, who undertook to have their accreditation renewed in 2021.
- This service standard measures the efficiency by which the Office of the Great Barrier Reef distributes and administers funding to industry, research, natural resource management and other organisations for activities, actions and strategies that contribute to the outcomes of the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan.

Conserve Queensland's protected areas and biodiversity

SDS service standards	Notes	2020–21 Target/Est	2020–21 Actual	Target met / not met
Service area: Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services				
National Parks				
Percentage of the scheduled Protection Zone fuel management treatment achieved on Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) managed estate to protect life and property	1	90%	109%	Target met
Area of the QPWS managed estate with fuel loads reduced by planned burning, to reduce fire risk to life and property and protect biodiversity		635,269 ha	669,330 ha	Target met

SDS service standards	Notes	2020–21 Target/Est	2020–21 Actual	Target met / not met
Number of overnight camper stays hosted on national parks and forests	2	1.4 million	1.6 million	Target met
Wildlife				
Median time taken to resolve declared problem crocodiles		≤7 business days	4 business days	Target met
Protecting environments and ecosystems				
Percentage of Queensland's land area that is protected		8.25%	8.26%	Target met
Cost per session for the Queensland wetland information system (<i>WetlandInfo</i>)		<\$1.50	\$0.60	Target met
Service Area: Heritage Protection Services				
Percentage of departmental heritage recommendations, for inclusion in or removal from the Heritage Register, accepted by the Queensland Heritage Council	3	90%	100%	Target met
Average cost per heritage register entry reviewed and updated	4	\$235	\$150	Target met

Notes:

1. Working within the opportunity of a comparatively wetter year, the hazard reduction treatment target for 2020–21 was exceeded. The target is based on completing a 90% fuel reduction treatment to a quarter of the managed estate.
2. Following the reopening of Queensland national parks and forests to campers after COVID-19 related closures, a significant increase in first-time campers was noted, with more people vacationing 'in their backyards'.
3. The Queensland Heritage Council accepted all departmental recommendations for the period.
4. The number of register reviews undertaken during the year was less than anticipated due to a focus on other priority heritage development applications and project delivery, resulting in a lower overall cost per heritage register entry.

Strengthen our partnerships with First Nations peoples

SDS service standard	Notes	2020–21 Target/Est	2020–21 Actual	Target met / not met
Service area: Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services				
National Parks				
Number of hectares of State land and national parks transferred to Traditional Owners in Cape York Peninsula	1	597,575 ha	0 ha	Target not met

Note:

1. Agreements with Traditional Owners were delayed as a result of the postponement of negotiating committee meetings, due to COVID-19 restrictions, impacting on the capacity to resolve complex tenure issues.

Protect the health of the environment and our communities

SDS service standards	Notes	2020–21 Target/Est	2020–21 Actual	Target met / not met
Service area: Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services				
Monitoring legislative and regulatory compliance relating to the impact of industrial or commercial activity on the environment				
Percentage of identified unlicensed operators who have become licensed or enforcement action taken within 60 days	1	70%	84%	Target met
Average cost per environmental public report resolution as a consequence of effective prioritisation of reports	2	\$2,000	\$1,461	Target met
Identifying, monitoring and taking action in relation to unlawful activity				
Proportion of monitored licensed operators returned to compliance with their environmental obligations	3	70%	82%	Target met
Median cost per formal investigation into serious non-compliance	4	\$3,000	\$1,182	Target met
Controlling and/or allowing actions that will impact on the State's environment				
Average cost per permit/licence assessed	5	\$6,500	\$5,828	Target met
Litigation				
Percentage of matters finalised with a conviction or a successful application	6	85%	94%	Target met
Percentage of briefs of evidence reviewed and decision made on whether charges can be laid, within 12 weeks of receipt	7	90%	100%	Target met

Notes:

1. The 2020–21 target/estimate was exceeded due to an increase in compliance priority given to unlicensed and non-compliance allegations.
2. The 2020–21 results is lower than the target/estimate, reflecting an increase in the number of reports received and ongoing business improvement of the department in service delivery.
3. The 2020–21 target/estimate was exceeded and reflects the ongoing effectiveness of the department in managing instances of non-compliance.
4. The 2020–21 result is lower than the 2020–21 target/estimate as a consequence of reduced travel costs attributed to a reduction in the median cost of formal investigations.
5. The 2020–21 result is lower than the target/estimate due to ongoing business process improvements made by the business centres.
6. The 2020–21 actual is higher than the target/estimate and reflects the ongoing effectiveness of the Litigation Unit's in finalising matters.
7. The 2020–21 actual is higher than the target/estimate reflecting the ongoing effectiveness of the Litigation Unit.

Strengthen and harness Queensland’s scientific excellence

SDS service standards	Notes	2020–21 Target/Est	2020–21 Actual	Target met / not met
Service Area: Science				
Percentage of customers from government agencies satisfied with the natural resource and environmental science services and information provided (overall satisfaction)		≥90%	93%	Target met
Percentage of laboratory tests completed and made available within agreed timeframes and quality specifications to support Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan and other government priorities	1	≥89%	82%	Target not met

Note:

- COVID-19 restrictions reduced the number of specialist staff able to work in the laboratory at any one time. In addition, a higher number than average wet season monitoring tests were received and conducted over the year.

Cross-government initiatives

During the reporting period, the department collaborated on the following inter-governmental agreements and whole of government initiatives:

- Bilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Queensland relating to environmental assessment under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- Bushfire species recovery program with the Australian Government
- Local Government Illegal Dumping Hotspot Grants and Local Government Illegal Dumping Partnerships Program, with local governments
- Development of the Australian Litter Measure (AusLM) unit of measure for litter in the environment
- Food organics and gardens organics collection trials, with four local government areas
- Offset land transfer from Powerlink to protect valuable mahogany glider habitat at Girringun National Park
- National waste export bans, with the Australian Government
- National product stewardships schemes for priority waste streams
- Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) Steering Committee
- National Waste Policy Action Plan
- Nest to Oceans turtle protection program
- Paddock to Reef Integrated Monitoring, Modelling and Reporting Program
- Queensland Reef Water Quality Program
- Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan
- Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan
- National Park expansion after the removal of illegal fishing huts from Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park
- Environmental monitoring and community engagement relating to land impacted by underground coal gasification by-products
- Queensland Eco Trails Program.