

Who we are

Our vision and purpose

The vision of the Department of Environment and Science (DES) is to ensure one of the world's most diverse natural environments is maintained for the health and prosperity of current and future generations. We aim to be effective leaders and partners in managing, protecting and restoring Queensland's natural environment and heritage.

We do this by:

- using leading scientific, behavioural and data insights to improve decision-making and actions
- strengthening our partnerships with First Nations peoples, local government, community and Industry stakeholders
- embedding First Nations' knowledge and leadership in our systems, policies and programs through the Gurra Gurra Framework
- promoting and supporting good governance and the ethical conduct of all employees
- ensuring the safety and wellbeing of staff and creating an inclusive working environment
- delivering efficient and agile services supported by best-in-class Corporate Services
- respecting, protecting and promoting human rights in all that we do.

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.

Our strategic risks and opportunities

We will manage our strategic risks to:

- set heritage policy and legislation to protect state heritage
- deliver waste and resource recovery outcomes
- lead effective climate change action
- recognise and respect First Nations' peoples' knowledge and culture in our work
- provide flexible regulatory arrangements for efficient and effective service delivery
- manage more intense and longer fire seasons to protect the community and biodiversity

- communicate clearly, effectively and in a timely manner.

We will embrace opportunities to:

- effectively partner with First Nations peoples to better steward Country and culture and deliver economic, social and cultural impact for all Queenslanders
- provide stewardship for future generations through early engagement in the environment, science and heritage
- transform our customer experience and the way we do business through new digital technologies and leading edge science and social science
- build partnerships beyond traditional boundaries—global, government and community—to deliver best practice solutions to complex problems
- promote the voices of young people across government to deliver better outcomes and help recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our operating environment

The context of the department's activities in 2021–22 included:

- continuing to refine and improve the department's operating model and ways of working
- capitalising on global attention and momentum for action on climate change and protection of the Great Barrier Reef
- continuing to provide flexible regulatory arrangements in response to COVID-19, for efficient and effective service delivery and environmental protection
- adapting to and recovering from more intense and extreme weather events, including unprecedented flooding in many parts of Queensland.

Our values

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

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

Our services and contribution

Our department's services are grouped into high level service areas which are used to communicate the broad types of services delivered by DES. Each service areas' programs and projects contribute to the achievement of the department's strategic objectives identified in the *DES Strategic Plan 2021–25*.

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.

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.

Science

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

Youth Engagement

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

Heritage Protection Services

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

These service areas are assessed through measures as outlined in the performance tables of the Our Performance section of the annual report.

The achievement of the department's strategic objectives in turn contribute to the achievement of the Queensland Government's objectives for the community — *Unite and Recover*.

Department objectives	Contributing department service areas	Queensland Government's Objectives for the Community
Conserve and restore Queensland's unique biodiversity, heritage and protected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services • Heritage Protection Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding our health • Supporting jobs • Growing our regions • Backing our frontline services • Protecting the environment
Enable job creation, growth of new industries and environmental markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services • Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services • Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting jobs • Backing small business • Growing our regions • Backing our frontline services • Protecting the environment
Protect World Heritage areas including the Great Barrier Reef	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services • Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding our health • Supporting jobs • Backing small business • Investing in skills • Backing our frontline services • Protecting the environment
Empower Queensland's youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Engagement • Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in skills
Strengthen and harness Queensland's scientific excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding our health • Supporting jobs • Investing in skills • Protecting the environment
Deliver a world class environmental, heritage and biodiscovery regulatory system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services • Heritage Protection Services • Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding our health • Supporting jobs • Backing small business • Investing in skills • Backing our frontline services • Protecting the environment

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, waste management facilities, and agriculture. 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 areas, and leading the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program. Ben is also responsible 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 for the *Gene Technology (Queensland) Act 2016* and the *Biodiscovery Act (2004)*. Mark is also responsible for administration of the Gene Technology and Biodiscovery legislation, the development of international research alliances and partnerships and 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, governance and physical resources. Susan is also responsible for the ongoing delivery of Youth Engagement services.

Hugh Possingham **Queensland Chief Scientist**

Hugh provides high-level strategic advice to the Queensland Government on the role of science, research and innovation in meeting the state's 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

