

Message from the Director-General

I'm pleased to present the Department of Environment and Science annual report for 2021–2022.

As a department we are responsible for a complex and diverse portfolio covering environment, science, and youth engagement—all of which are vital to shaping a strong, successful future for our state.

Our work is focussed on best serving the community and delivering better environmental outcomes. From policies and programs to research and partnerships, we are helping support the health, wellbeing, and way of life that Queenslanders cherish, and contributing to our continued economic prosperity.

Throughout the reporting period, we delivered a range of important initiatives to support our key objectives: conserve and restore our unique biodiversity, heritage and protected areas; protect our World Heritage areas including the Great Barrier Reef; enable job creation and the growth of new industries and environmental markets; empower Queensland's youth; strengthen and harness scientific excellence; and deliver a world-class environmental, heritage and biodiscovery system.

During 2021–22, we progressed several strategic priorities including the:

- planning for a climate positive Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games
- Climate Action Plan implementation to support renewable energy and emissions reduction targets
- Land Restoration Fund second investment round
- ongoing Reef water quality improvement initiatives including strengthened protection regulations
- expansion of the real-time, fine-scale water quality monitoring network for Reef agricultural communities
- Queensland Organics Strategy
- Food Organics Garden Organics kerbside collection trials
- single-use plastics ban expansion
- expansion of the protected area estate
- partnerships with First Nations peoples to help care for Country through co-stewardship arrangements and joint management of protected areas
- ongoing management of wildlife and recovery of threatened species
- Enhanced Statewide Land and Tree Study technology and reporting
- ongoing investment in science and research infrastructure, capabilities, and talent
- Traditional Knowledge in Biodiscovery Code of Practice
- Engaging Queenslanders in science and citizen science
- Youth Week and Speak Out Series
- Successful delivery of the Safer Schoolies Initiative.

In response to the extreme weather events that impacted many parts of the state in early 2022, we mobilised a significant response effort to support impacted communities, industries, and our own operations. Many of our iconic national parks and marine areas in the Southeast and Great Sandy regions were also significantly affected. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships (QPWS&P) rangers worked tirelessly to coordinate the clean-up and recovery efforts, which included removing pontoons from Moreton Bay and K'gari (Fraser Island), together with the tidal flood debris that continued to wash ashore for many weeks after the initial event.

The state's ongoing health and economic recovery from COVID-19 remained a key focus. As a department, we continued to adapt to ensure continuity of essential services for Queenslanders, local governments and businesses we regulate across the state.

I would like to thank the department's dedicated employees for their continued commitment and the important work delivered each and every day to protect our environment and enrich the lives of Queenslanders, now and into the future.

Jamie Merrick