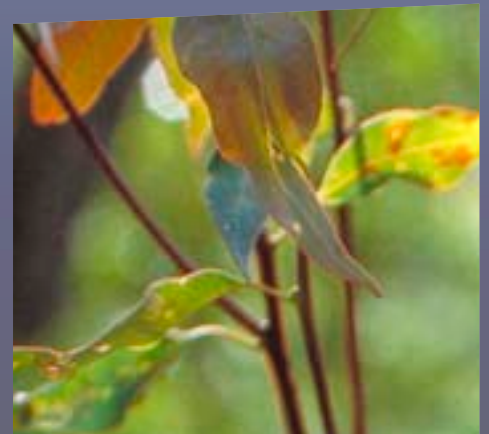


Annual Report  
2009–2010

Department of Environment and Resource Management



Tomorrow's Queensland:  
strong, green, smart, healthy and fair

**Toward**   
Tomorrow's Queensland

 **Queensland**  
Government

## Purpose of the report

This annual report details the financial and non-financial performance of the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010. It highlights the work, achievements, activities and strategic initiatives of the department, and satisfies the requirements of Queensland's *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.

## Your feedback

The annual report is an important document representing communication and accountability. The department values comments and welcomes feedback from readers. To provide feedback, please complete the electronic survey available at <[www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)>.

This publication can be accessed and downloaded from our website. Alternatively, hard copies of this publication can be obtained by emailing <[strategicreporting@derm.qld.gov.au](mailto:strategicreporting@derm.qld.gov.au)>.

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Published September 2010

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15 September 2010

The Honourable Stephen Robertson MP  
Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy  
and Minister for Trade  
Level 17, 61 Mary Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

The Honourable Kate Jones MP  
Minister for Climate Change and  
Sustainability  
Level 17, 160 Ann Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Ministers

I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the Department of Environment and Resource Management for the period ending 30 June 2010.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*, and
- the detailed requirements set out in the Annual Reporting Guidelines for Queensland Government Agencies.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be accessed at <[www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)>.

Yours sincerely

John Bradley  
Director-General  
Department of Environment and Resource Management

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# Our year at a glance – 2009–2010 highlights

## Improving service delivery

The department has successfully integrated its regional service delivery and introduced a *one-stop-shop* for environmental and resource management customer services. Benefits to clients include:

- The delivery of more coordinated responses, with a range of issues able to be resolved through one contact point
- Improved access to departmental services
- Increased proportion of DERM services and information available electronically

Concentration by DERM on its core business with the Shared Service Agency continuing to deliver essential cost effective corporate services, page 76

## Reforming legislation

The department is reforming and simplifying its legislation to ensure that it is robust, contemporary and minimises red tape for clients. Initiatives include:

- *Valuation of Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2010*, page 35
- *Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2009*, page 38
- Review of *Aboriginal Land Act and Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991*, page 37
- Review of *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*, page 37
- Review of *Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003*, page 37
- Stock route network management, page 56

## Preparing Queensland for climate change

The department has been working with government, business, industry and the community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help them prepare for the impacts of climate change. This includes:

- Leading cross agency initiatives to achieve the Green 2020 target to cut Queenslanders carbon footprint by one third, page 16
- Leading implementation of *ClimateQ: toward a greener Queensland*, page 16
- Undertaking cutting edge climate science research, page 20

## Managing and protecting the environment

The department continues to manage, protect and conserve Queensland's environment. Key achievements include:

- Protecting the Great Barrier Reef and Moreton Bay, pages 48 and 25
- Protecting the State's endangered koalas and wombats, pages 23 and 27
- Increasing Indigenous involvement in environmental protection, page 36
- Developing community and industry partnerships, pages 51–56
- Monitoring industry performance and enforcing environmental legislation, page 25
- Delbessie agreement for rural leasehold land, page 40

## Managing and protecting natural resources

The department continues to manage Queensland's natural resources to meet the current and future needs of the State. This includes:

- Preserving Queensland's wild rivers, page 47
- Developing future-focused water resource plans, page 44
- Advances in securing water supplies, page 45
- Recognising Indigenous land rights, page 36
- Native title determinations, page 35
- Doubling the availability of crucial resource management information, page 42
- Protecting regrowth vegetation, page 38

## Preserving Queensland's cultural heritage

The department has taken a leap forward to:

- Protect and conserve Queensland's built cultural heritage through the release of a 10 year Queensland Heritage Strategy, page 30
- Establish five new cultural heritage bodies, page 37

## Integrating and improving our governance

The department has developed as an integrated, cohesive and effective agency. Key achievements include:

- Cross-division business strategy groups
- New policies and procedures
- Integrated systems and processes



## Message from the Director-General

The Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) plays a vital role in delivering a greener, more sustainable future for Queensland, through the protection of the State's precious environment and natural resources.

The department's 5 600 employees in 89 offices, administer 64 pieces of legislation and are responsible for the management of eight million hectares of land in over 270 national parks. They are also tasked with conserving and managing the State's environment and natural resources for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

Through their efforts DERM has delivered results through a large number of major achievements in its first full year of operation in key areas of climate change, environment, land and water.

DERM is continuing to develop and implement new environmental programs and initiatives aimed at helping to cut the carbon footprint of Queenslanders by one-third.

The department's ClimateSmart Living and the ClimateSmart Home Service have been very successful in reducing electricity use in Queensland households.

*ClimateQ*, the Queensland Government's new climate change strategy is also being delivered with great results. This strategy includes a raft of new initiatives such as helping landholders to improve their water use efficiency, and the design of the ClimateSmart Business Service, to help small to medium sized businesses reduce their energy, carbon emissions and business costs.

DERM managed the inaugural Premier's ClimateSmart Sustainability Awards. These awards showcased how sustainability and managing climate change have become part of everyday life for individuals, communities and businesses.

The department is committed to protecting Queensland's unique wildlife, including halting the serious decline of south-east Queensland's koala populations. Through the Koala Response Strategy it is funding a range of koala habitat protection and rehabilitation activities and the Koala Disease Research Grant program.

The department also introduced the *Great Barrier Reef Protection Amendment Act 2009* as the first initiative to come out of the \$50 million, five year Great Barrier Reef Water Quality Protection Plan. Initiatives to be delivered under this plan will manage pollutant run off and improve water quality on the Great Barrier Reef. This will help it become more resilient and able to cope with the stresses of a changing climate.

In addition DERM also introduced new regrowth laws to protect high-value regrowth vegetation including those alongside waterways in Great Barrier Reef catchments. These new laws focus on responsible land management so landholders don't need a clearing permit, but must make sure that any clearing complies with the new regrowth vegetation code. The department has partnered with AgForward and the Queensland Farmers' Federation to deliver a \$2 million industry assistance program to help landowners adapt to the new regrowth laws.

A new direction for waste and resource management was introduced through the release of the Queensland Waste Strategy. The reforms and actions in this strategy will encourage Queenslanders to avoid waste, and to recycle and responsibly dispose of any left-over waste.

In far north Queensland the department continued to expand the Wild River Rangers program. There are now a total of 30 Wild River Rangers across the Cape York Peninsula and the Gulf of Carpentaria who are working with local Indigenous communities and natural resource management groups. In addition, the department was instrumental in the Wenlock Wild River declaration on Cape York. This declaration has preserved one of Queensland's iconic wild rivers for both present and future generations. It is a major milestone in the wild rivers program.

DERM continues to deliver on an ambitious agenda to increase national park areas by 50 per cent by 2020. In 2009-2010 the department was able to secure an extra 160 000 hectares of national park lands.

In June 2010 the department also released the North Stradbroke Island Vision for public discussion. Under this vision 80 per cent of the island will become national park land by 2027. The vision will also phase out mining on the island and recognise long overdue native title for the Quandamooka people.

The department also completed four great walks– the Carnarvon Great Walk, the Cooloola Great Walk, the Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail Great Walk and the Conondale Great Walk. A technical feasibility study was also completed for a proposed great walk from the Daintree River to the tip of Cape York.

DERM has also been finalising a single process planning framework for water resources so that strategic and operational elements can be developed and in parallel, thereby ensuring stakeholders can provide ongoing input. It also started work on the development of a statewide urban water policy framework.

Through the Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative, a drain replacement and rehabilitation works program, the department is helping landholders to save an estimated 5 861 megalitres of discharge from the Great Artesian Basin.

The Condamine and Balonne Resource Operations Plan, including the Lower Balonne area, was also released in March 2010. This operations plan will implement the area's water resource plan, giving greater certainty to water users and the environment by defining water allocations and establishing water trading rules and monitoring arrangements.

DERM also commenced the most significant valuation reforms in over 65 years. In 2009-2010 DERM introduced a new valuation objection process. Next financial year it will use "site-value" methodology for non-rural land instead of the historical unimproved valuation of land and appoint a Valuer-General.

In September 2009 DERM renewed the first Queensland rural leasehold land under the Delbessie Agreement. This agreement covers about half of Queensland and applies to about 1800 rural leases. Under the agreement, the lease is managed for the long-term sustainable production and protection of environmental values.

The department also worked alongside national, state and local agencies to respond to emergencies, natural and other disasters. These included the grounding of the Shen Neng One and other vessels on the Great Barrier Reef, the destructive impact of Cyclone Ului on the central Queensland coast, as well as widespread flooding which affected large areas of regional

Queensland, and a severe bushfire season which saw over 550 fires rage in Queensland national parks and on State land.

At the end of 2009, approximately 1 100 departmental employees also relocated from various tenancies within Brisbane to a new five-green-star rated facility at 400 George Street. This new building provides energy efficient lighting and work stations are equipped with a green switch that eliminates power wastage. The building's air conditioning system alone is expected to save 700 000 litres of water every year compared to other buildings of a similar size. The department has also committed to relocating staff in Cairns and Maroochydore to new green-star rated facilities. Meanwhile staff located at DERM's Indooroopilly Science Centre will soon relocate to the new state-of-the-art Boggo Road Ecosciences Precinct at Dutton Park.

In 2010-2011 the department has been allocated a budget of \$965.5 million to build on its considerable successes over the past 12 months.

This strong investment will allow the department to continue to secure new areas for national parks, expand the total area of nature refuges, help Queenslanders to save energy and reduce waste, strengthen the role of the Environmental Regulator to strike a balance between economic development and sustainable environmental management, lead koala conservation measures, protect water supplies and progress government initiatives on Cape York.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Executive Management Group and all staff of the department for their contribution during a significant year in Queensland's environmental and resource management.

John Bradley  
Director-General