

## Top scientists to lead new biodiversity and climate science hubs

**The Australian Government recently announced the successful organisations to lead research hubs under a new \$142.5 million National Environmental Science Programme.**



Credit: Carl Davies/CSIRO

The programme will assist decision-makers to understand, manage and conserve Australia's environment by funding world-class biodiversity and climate science.

This research will ensure decisions about managing Australia's biodiversity and environmental resources are made on the best available information.

The National Environmental Science Programme is a competitive merit-based programme with six research hubs.

Subject to successful contract negotiations, the following research hubs are being created to conduct this important research:

1. the Earth Systems Hub will further our understanding of the drivers of Australia's climate with funding of \$23.9 million through the CSIRO, led by Dr Helen Cleugh.
2. the Marine Biodiversity Hub will research Australian oceans and marine environments including temperate coastal water quality and marine species, with funding of \$23.88 million through the University of Tasmania, led by Professor Nic Bax.
3. the Northern Australia Environmental Resources Hub will support the sustainable development of our northern landscapes with funding of \$23.88 million through Charles Darwin University, led by Professor Michael Douglas.

4. the Threatened Species Recovery Hub will support the management of threats and improving recovery of threatened species with funding of \$29.98 million through the University of Queensland, led by Professor Hugh Possingham.
5. the Tropical Water Quality Hub will research coastal water quality and coastal management focused on the Great Barrier Reef and other tropical waters with funding of \$31.98 million through the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre, led by Professor Hurriyet Babacan.
6. the Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub will support environmental quality in urban areas with funding of \$8.88 million through the University of Melbourne, led by Professor Peter Rayner.

The hub leaders are recognised international scholars, who come with teams of high calibre researchers from across Australia's research institutions. The research partners all have impressive track records of delivering practical science that has informed the direction of environmental science across many decades.

The proposed six years of funding under the National Environmental Science Programme will provide certainty to researchers so that science programmes can be planned and completed in a way which ensures flexibility and alignment with current environmental policy needs.

Source: Greg Hunt MP, Federal Minister for the Environment

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