

# Introducing the Independent Science Panel

The Fitzroy Partnership Science Panel is made up of independent specialists with extensive experience and expertise. Together they provide independent review and rigorous scientific advice to deliver effective outcomes for partners and the community. The Independent Science Panel is supported by a Science Leader and Science Coordinator.

The role of the Independent Scientific Panel is to provide independent, comprehensive, unbiased scientific advice to the Fitzroy Partnership for River Health. This will ensure that the Partnership's monitoring and reporting activities are robust, practical, cost-effective and meet contemporary scientific standards. The Independent Science Panel will review Partnership activities and reports, identify linkages to relevant research activities and guide effective science communications.

## Dr Eva Abal - Chair of Science Panel

Dr Eva Abal is a leader in integrated science strategy and a knowledge integrator/broker. Currently, the CEO of the International RiverFoundation, a non-for-profit organisation that champions integrated river basin management for the restoration, protection and resilience of the world's rivers, Eva's professional career spans a total of over 30 years as Science Director with Healthy Waterways Partnership (whole-of-government, -industry and -community); Chief Scientific Officer with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (connecting business to research in solutions); and Sustainable Water Program Director of the University of Queensland's Global Change Institute. Eva's deep passion and commitment in communicating science to managers are evidenced in her being invited by the Asian Development Bank to be one of the authors of the Asian Water Development Outlook 2011 and 2016, that charts progress towards water security in Asia and the Pacific.



## Dr Sue Vink

Dr Sue Vink is a Principal Research Fellow with the Sustainable Minerals Institute at the University of Queensland. Her expertise is in freshwater and marine biogeochemistry, including water quality impacts of mine discharge on aquatic ecosystem structure and function. Her recent research has included understanding mine site water and salt dynamics to facilitate water re-use; ecotoxicology of salts on macroinvertebrates in the Fitzroy; hydrological processes controlling salt fluxes in ephemeral stream systems; impacts of mine discharge on microbial community structure, function and ecological processes; and applications of isotopic and geochemical tracers in natural and mining systems to determine water balances, sources, mixing and biogeochemical processes.



## Dr Roger Shaw

Dr Roger Shaw is an independent scientist who chairs the Independent Science Panel of the Great Barrier Reef Water Quality Improvement Plan. He was formerly the founding CEO for the CRC for Coastal Zone Estuary and Waterway Management, which ran an active research program in central Queensland. Roger has been a member of various committees related to land and water management and water quality monitoring. Roger's expertise is in landscape soil and water processes, soil salinity and sodicity, and irrigation water quality guidelines. His focus is synthesis of science and adaptive management of natural resources.



## Dr John Platten

Dr John Platten is an independent consultant with a long history of expertise in water quality and aquatic ecology in central Queensland. Dr Platten was previously a Principal Scientist for the Department of Environment and Resource Management. His areas of expertise include water quality guidelines and objectives for waterways, identifying high ecological value aquatic habitats, environmental flows for estuaries, mapping wetlands and the relationships between fishery catch rates and river flows. He worked to establish the environmental values and water quality objectives for the Fitzroy Basin and Mackay Whitsunday regions, as well as producing biodiversity planning assessments and the provision of expert advice on water quality and biodiversity issues in central Queensland.



## Dr Barbara Robson

Dr Barbara Robson is a Principal Research Scientist with the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS). Barbara's expertise is in modelling coastal water quality and ecosystem processes to understand and predict the impacts of human activities and catchment management. Barbara has a long history of research in the Great Barrier Reef and Fitzroy Estuary and was a key contributor to the planning and development of the eReefs marine models. She has a particular interest in improving best practices in model development and evaluation. Barbara is a Fellow of the International Environmental Modelling Society and the Peter Cullen Trust, an Associate Editor of the journals, Limnology and Oceanography Letters and Environmental Modelling and Software, and a member of the Queensland Water Modelling Network External Engagement Program Management Committee.



## Assoc Prof Helen Stratton

A/Prof Helen Stratton is currently Discipline Head, Bioscience in the School of Environment and Science, Griffith University. Helen is also the Program Director for both Medical Science and Biomedical Science, with over 300 students enrolled in the programs. Helen was previously the Executive Manager of the Smart Water Research Centre, (August 2014 – October 2016). She has over 25 years' experience in water and wastewater research developing a comprehensive understanding of the technical, social and economic issues that the industry faces. She has worked extensively as a consultant to the water industry and has developed strong collaborative relationships throughout Australia and internationally. Helen has an international profile, publishing over 80 refereed articles in internationally peer reviewed journals, reports and conference papers. She has been a passionate volunteer for the Australian Water Association (AWA) since 1998, with being elected to roles such as the QLD Branch president (2004-2006) and was an AWA Director for 10 years. This dedication has resulted in her being awarded the AWA Queensland Branch Distinguished Service Award in 2015 and Life Membership in 2016.



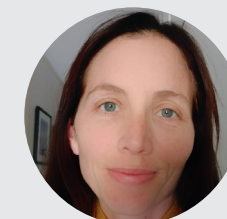
## Dr Nicole Flint

Dr Nicole Flint is a Research Fellow at CQUniversity's North Rockhampton Campus and leads CQUni's Aquatic Ecology and Ecotoxicology research cluster. Nicole's areas of research include aquatic ecosystem management and assessment, monitoring program development and innovation, and the human and economic dimensions of environmental change. She has developed a range of ecological indicators for Central Queensland waterways including Gladstone Harbour and the Fitzroy Basin. Nicole was the Science Coordinator for the Fitzroy Partnership for River Health from 2013 and became a member of the Science Panel in 2019. Before commencing at CQUniversity in 2011, Nicole was employed in the Australian Public Service for five years in fisheries and marine environmental management positions. She is passionate about working in multi-stakeholder teams to improve the outlook for regional Australia's rivers and coasts.



## Catherine Jones - Science Leader

Catherine Jones is a Chemistry Academic and Senior Research Officer in the School of Health, Medical and Applied Sciences at CQUniversity. She has worked for CQUniversity since 2011 on ecosystem health and water management research projects. She teaches into the university's Environmental Chemistry and Analytical Science units. Catherine was a critical researcher on the CQUniversity team who developed the Ecosystem Health Index for the Fitzroy Basin Report Card. Her expertise is in analytical chemistry, particularly chemical analysis of water and sediments, including metal speciation and potential bioavailability. She has extensive experience with managing and analysing large water quality datasets. In 2020, Catherine commenced a Science Panel technical support role, as Science Leader.



For more information on the Fitzroy Partnership for River Health, please contact Executive Officer Dr. Leigh Stitz  
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