

# 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 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

Eva campaigns for resilience of the world's rivers ensuring rivers for future generations as well as giving rivers a voice. In 2022, Eva transitioned from her role as immediate past CEO of the International RiverFoundation, a non-for-profit organisation that champions integrated river basin management for resilience of the world's rivers, to being the current Strategic Adviser for River Resilience. Eva has worked in the water and environment field for over 30 years. In various roles, Eva has demonstrated skills in leading and managing large-scale transdisciplinary programs towards a path to impact. Eva is experienced in establishing and maintaining collaborative networks, partnerships and strategic alliance initiatives to create an impact. Eva's passion for communicating science to managers is evidenced by her being invited by the Asian Development Bank to be one of the authors of the Asian Water Development Outlook 2011 & 2016, that charts progress in water security in Asia and the Pacific.



## 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 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 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.

## Assoc Prof Nicole Flint

A/Prof Nicole Flint is a Principal Research Fellow at CQUniversity's North Rockhampton Campus. Her research focuses on 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 a key researcher on the team who developed the Ecosystem Health Index for the Report Card in 2012, and was the Science Leader for the Fitzroy Partnership for River Health from 2013-19. Before commencing at CQUniversity in 2011, Nicole worked in the Australian Public Service in fisheries and marine environmental management positions. She has postgraduate qualifications in both aquatic biology and economics. Nicole is committed to working in multi-stakeholder teams to improve the outlook for regional Australia's rivers and coasts in a time of global change.



## Catherine Jones - Science Coordinator

Catherine Jones (Cassie) is a Lecturer in Chemistry within the College of Science and Sustainability and a researcher within the Coastal Marine Ecosystem Research Centre, at CQUniversity, Rockhampton.



Her research areas include multivariate data analysis; metal speciation and potential bioavailability; and water and sediment quality of Great Barrier Reef catchments. More broadly, she has interests in land rehabilitation and the application of analytical chemistry techniques during environmental monitoring and management. Cassie was part of the CQUniversity team who developed the freshwater Ecosystem Health Index for the Fitzroy Basin Report Card. She has experience with managing and analysing large water quality datasets. Her recent and currently funded research projects include Analysis of 10-years of Fitzroy Basin water monitoring data and a Technical review of Dee River water quality baseline condition and trigger values. Since 2019, Cassie has been supporting the Science Panel and FPRH team in a technical role as their Science and Analysis Coordinator.

For more information contact:

Executive Officer

Dr Leigh Stitz

[Leigh.Stitz@riverhealth.org.au](mailto:Leigh.Stitz@riverhealth.org.au)

[www.riverhealth.org.au](http://www.riverhealth.org.au)

**fitzroy**  
partnership  
for river health

