

Media release: 7 March 2025

## First Nations scientist appointed to AIMS Council

An accomplished First Nations marine scientist from Queensland has been appointed to the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) Council.

Dr Cass Hunter joins the Council for a five-year term commencing 16 March after being appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister for Environment and Water, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP.

AIMS Council Chair, Dr Beth Woods OAM, welcomed Dr Hunter to the position.

“Cass has been closely connected to AIMS as a First Nations advisor to the AIMS Council since April last year and she contributes that perspective, as well as a strong science background, to our Council discussions,” she said.

Dr Hunter has a PhD in quantitative marine science and more than 20 years’ experience leading collaborative approaches in design, planning, and decision-making with First Nations communities.

“Cass’ experience as a First Nations woman working with First Nations people is respected throughout the marine science community, as is her ability to apply scientific research to real-world settings,” Dr Woods said.

“Her experience will be invaluable in guiding AIMS towards more inclusive and innovative research practices.

“We look forward to working closely with her to ensure that the voices and knowledge of First Nations communities continue to be at the forefront of our efforts to provide the research knowledge that enables the protection and sustainable use of Australia’s marine ecosystems.”

Dr Hunter, a descendant of the Kuku Yalanji (Far North Queensland) and Maluiligal (Torres Strait) nation, has worked for CSIRO as an Indigenous system researcher and currently works for NAILSMA as an Enterprise Impact Manager.

Her other appointments include: the Australian Government’s Indigenous Advisory Committee; the Biodiversity Assessment Expert Reference Group - Nature Repair Scheme; the North Marine Parks Advisory Committee; the Reef 2050 Independent Expert Panel and the Reef Traditional Owner Taskforce. She also chairs the Great Barrier Reef Foundation Traditional Owner Healthy Water Technical Working Group.

Dr Hunter succeeds Dr Erika Techera, who retires following the end of her five-year term on the AIMS Council.

Dr Woods thanked Dr Techera for her valuable contribution to AIMS during her membership of the Council, particularly her advice relating to national and international marine environmental governance and environmental law.

-ENDS-

---

### Media contact:

**TOWNSVILLE** (Headquarters)  
PMB No.3,  
Townsville MC, QLD 4810  
T: +61 7 4753 4444  
E: reception@aims.gov.au

**DARWIN**  
PO Box 41775,  
Casuarina, NT 0811  
T: +61 8 8920 9240  
E: reception@aims.gov.au

**PERTH** Indian Ocean Marine Research Centre  
The University of Western Australia, M096  
35 Stirling Highway, Crawley WA 6009  
T: +61 8 6369 4000  
E: WAadmin@aims.gov.au

Jo Manning, Media Officer: [media@aims.gov.au](mailto:media@aims.gov.au); +61 456196845

### More about the Australian Institute of Marine Science:

The Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) is Australia's tropical marine research agency. In existence for half a century, it plays a pivotal role in providing large-scale, long-term and world-class research that helps governments, industry and the wider community to make informed decisions about the management of Australia's marine estate. AIMS science leads to healthier marine ecosystems; economic, social and environmental benefits for all Australians; and protection of coral reefs from climate change. More here: <https://www.aims.gov.au/>

**TOWNSVILLE** (Headquarters)  
PMB No.3,  
Townsville MC, QLD 4810  
T: +61 7 4753 4444  
E: [reception@aims.gov.au](mailto:reception@aims.gov.au)

**DARWIN**  
PO Box 41775,  
Casuarina, NT 0811  
T: +61 8 8920 9240  
E: [reception@aims.gov.au](mailto:reception@aims.gov.au)

**PERTH** Indian Ocean Marine Research Centre  
The University of Western Australia, M096  
35 Stirling Highway, Crawley WA 6009  
T: +61 8 6369 4000  
E: [WAadmin@aims.gov.au](mailto:WAadmin@aims.gov.au)

