The Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport's primary responsibility is to involve the community in the Territory's nature, cultures and sporting activities.

Key functional responsibilities include:

- conserving for posterity the Territory's parks and reserves, historic buildings and permanent museums, archives, Northern Territory Library and art gallery collections;
- protecting heritage sites and objects, and threatened wildlife;
- creating commercial, educational, sporting and recreational opportunities through the use of natural resources, artistic and creative enterprises and Government-owned facilities such as the Araluen Cultural Precinct, Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory, libraries, heritage buildings, botanic gardens, the parks estate and sporting facilities;
- supporting community involvement in the environment, heritage, sport and recreation, arts and screen sector industries, by providing information, grants and in-kind financial assistance;
- assessing and advising Government on environment issues arising from proposed land uses and predicting and mitigating threats created by climate change, floods, wildfires, invasive species, resource degradation and nuisance wildlife;
- facilitating and regulating the sustainable use of natural resources including water, native vegetation and wildlife; and