

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



UTAS grads to recount environmental adventure at lecture

In August 2012 an international team of six women - social scientists, professional sea-kayakers and marine science students from Sam Ratulangi University, Manado - paddled the 320 kilometres-length of the Sangihe Archipelago in northern Indonesia.

Dr Duika Burges Watson and Dr Johanna Wadsley were part of the team. Both are graduates of the University of Tasmania and they will discuss their experiences at a free public lecture at UTAS on **Tuesday 8 January 2013** titled: *Hugging the Coast: An Exploration of Liminal Living in the Sangihe Archipelago, Sulawesi, Indonesia*.

Visiting remote island communities, they investigated the state of seaweed farming in the region.

At present, most Indonesian farmed seaweed ends up as an invisible ingredient in Western processed food and health products, but its carbon capture potential renders seaweed an increasingly important 'climate smart' agricultural product across the Coral Triangle - the 'Amazon of the Seas'.

Despite living at the heart of this global 'hotspot' of marine biodiversity and resource wealth, the archipelago's communities are in a state of flux, the *Hugging the Coast* expeditioners found.

Standards of living are declining in many locations, as the effects of patchy marine resources management become more apparent, along with the impact of climate change.

Nevertheless, many communities are working towards new, sustainable futures for themselves, futures in which they can remain on the island, and in the villages.

Supported by an extensive collection of digital photographs and audio-visual materials, Dr Burges Watson and Dr Wadsley will present preliminary findings of *Hugging the Coast*, discuss their experience of conducting social science research by sea-kayak, and how earthquakes, being mistaken for terrorists and the meaningless of privacy in island culture, makes for a rich fieldwork environment.

Hugging the Coast is the recipient of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) 2012 Neville Shulman Challenge Award.

Event details:

Who: UTAS alumni Dr Duika Burges Watson and Dr Johanna Wadsley.

What: Free public lecture - *Hugging the Coast: An Exploration of Liminal Living in the Sangihe Archipelago, Sulawesi, Indonesia.*

When: Tuesday 8 January 2013, 1-2.30pm.

Where: Dechaineaux Theatre, Centre for the Arts, Hunter Street, Hobart.

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Information released by:

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