

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## Carbon farming project awarded \$500,000

A UTAS team has been awarded a \$500,000 grant to develop a carbon farming initiative for the grazing industry.

The team, headed by the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture's Dr Kerry Bridle, will investigate ways to increase soil carbon storage in Tasmanian grazing systems as part of the Commonwealth Government's Clean Energy Future program run by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

The project team also includes Associate Professor Mark Hovenden from the UTAS School of Plant Science, James McKee from NRM North, Kathleen Broderick from NRM South and Jonathan Duddles of Greening Australia.

"There's a lot of potential for improving the management of extensive grazing systems under native and semi-native pastures to increase soil carbon," Dr Bridle said today.

"What we'll be aiming to do is work with farmers to develop improved land management practices to deal with the issues of continued loss of productivity, soil erosion and degraded pastures. We will provide information on soil carbon under different management regimes, helping farmers to identify the best management option for their enterprise."

The project team hopes to increase pasture productivity, improve environmental management practices and boost carbon storage in soils by:

- Trialling different grazing management strategies on degraded hills to determine change in stored soil carbon over time.
- Showing how simple practical improvements to farm management practices can increase soil carbon and profitability.
- Working with farmers to generate knowledge and practical approaches to improve long-term sustainability.

The project will continue until May 2014 but interim findings will be communicated to graziers.

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