



MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

University, CSIRO join forces to promote Tasmania as centre of research excellence

Research outcomes in Tasmania are to be enhanced with the signing today (**Friday 24 August**) of a new agreement between the University of Tasmania and CSIRO.

Current and future collaborations between the two institutions will be formalised in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to be co-signed by the Vice-Chancellor of UTAS, Professor Peter Rathjen, and the Chief Executive of CSIRO, Dr Megan Clark.

“The MoU signals a commitment by both parties to expanding Tasmania’s research capability, initially in the fields of marine and Antarctic studies, information and communication technologies, and forestry, with other areas to be added in future as appropriate,” Professor Rathjen said today.

“CSIRO and UTAS will in some instances work jointly to attract new researchers to Tasmania while facilities and infrastructure will be developed collaboratively where possible.”

Dr Clark said Tasmania offered unique opportunities for joint research of benefit to Tasmania, Australia, and the world.

“Through this MoU we will tackle complex research challenges, share facilities, attract talented students and scientists, and cement our profile as leading researchers,” Dr Clark said.

“Together we are investigating changes to ecosystems in fast-warming waters off eastern Tasmania, the transport of carbon dioxide to the sub-Antarctic depths, and testing mapping and monitoring strategies for marine reserve management.

“We plan to take advantage of Tasmania’s early access to widespread broadband by establishing a real-time sensor network across the state’s catchments, waterways,

and aquaculture and agriculture farms, providing a step-change in environmental management.

“The technology applied to these tasks ranges from the tiniest biotag giving an oyster’s view of the world, to new facilities for experimental aquaculture, and the deployment of ocean moorings in some of the world’s harshest ocean environments.”

Prof Rathjen said that a physical manifestation of the close relationship between the two institutions could be found at Salamanca, where the new home of UTAS’ Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies is taking shape next door to CSIRO.

“We are keen to explore the potential of the waterfront co-location as a focal point for collaboration to encourage recognition of Tasmania as a national centre of research excellence.”

Collaborations between UTAS and CSIRO include the jointly funded Quantitative Marine Science program, in which PhD students are supervised by researchers from both institutions and have access to the marine research facilities of both.

CSIRO is also a major partner in the ambitious SenseT data sensor network project being driven by UTAS.

In addition to Prof Rathjen and Dr Clark, other speakers at today’s MoU signing include the Deputy Premier, Bryan Green.

UTAS and the State government recently signed a new partnership agreement which included among its core priorities the encouragement of greater research collaboration between the university and government agencies.

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