

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Tenders called for \$6 million research facility

Tenders will tomorrow be called to build the most technologically advanced and extensive large fish experimental aquaculture facility in the Southern Hemisphere.

The \$6 million Experimental Aquaculture Facility will be built by the University of Tasmania at its Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies' Taroona campus.

University Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Paddy Nixon described the initiative as a significant boost for the aquaculture sector, demonstrating confidence in the future of the industry.

The facility, specialising in researching all aspects of atlantic salmon production, is expected to be fully operational by mid-2015. It will include a series of new tanks, monitoring equipment, laboratory space, and associated building and earthworks.

Research at the centre will focus on fish health, more effective use of marine resources in fish feeds, climate change effects and food security. It will provide the ability to work on large salmon under controlled conditions up to harvest, which is unique in Australia.

“This is another clear example where the University of Tasmania is building upon of the depth and wealth in our fisheries and aquaculture research capacity,” Professor Nixon said.

“It continues a very proud track record at the University of working in partnership with Government and industry.

“We do this in areas which create value for industry, but also contribute to the State and national economy through direct investment and industry growth.

“Initially this project offers construction jobs and, once operational, there will be on-going roles in research and technical support, funded through the increasingly valuable atlantic salmon industry.”

A separate but related facility is being developed at the same time to assist the oyster industry.

The facility will be jointly-funded by the Australian Government Department of Industry, the University of Tasmania, the State Government, the Seafood Cooperative Research Centre, Huon Aquaculture and Skretting, an international aquaculture seafood company.

The project represented a new phase of expansion at the Taroona campus. It is possible more phases would follow if industry partners extend their support or new partners emerge.

Professor Nixon said tenders would be advertised tomorrow and likely awarded by early December with construction planned to begin in January.

The Taroona campus already houses research and support staff working on state, national and international projects.

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