

# MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

DATE: MONDAY 7 MAY 2012

ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## New book on managing Tasmanian landscapes

A book launched tomorrow (**Tuesday, May 8**) emphasises the importance of the social sciences in tracking the state of the environment.

University of Tasmania Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen has commended the efforts of a group of ecologists, agricultural scientists and social scientists from the University who worked together with environmental managers on a four-year project.

“The book, *Landscape Logic: Integrating Science for Landscape Management*, describes the collaboration between five universities, six catchment management organisations, CSIRO and four state and federal environment agencies.

“This partnership was formed to examine environmental change in Tasmania and northern Victoria and where possible detect the impact of past environmental programs.

“Eighteen of the 42 researchers who contributed to the book are from the University of Tasmania, including our recent Australia Day Honours recipient Professor Peter Davies AM,” Professor Rathjen said. (The other researchers involved are from Charles Sturt University).

Research leader Professor Ted Lefroy from the Centre for Environment at the University said that the research was prompted by a series of national audits of Australia’s environmental programs.

“Despite major investments into environmental repair and management over the last 20 years, these audits reported that they could find little evidence of improvement in the condition of waterways, soils and native vegetation.

“An important insight was in understanding how people learn about their immediate environment, how social norms can determine what is and what is not acceptable behaviour, and how they are established and passed on. Knowing what needs to be done in a technical sense often turns out to be the simplest part of the challenge,” Professor Lefroy said.

“The Landscape Logic project confronted the question of establishing cause using multiple lines of evidence to accommodate uncertainty and strengthen inferred relationships between large scale patterns and local processes.

“Patterns of environmental change can be detected from aerial photographs and satellite images. However it was interviews and surveys of long-time residents and workshops with landholders that enabled the research group to piece together changes at local scale to suggest when and how observed changes had occurred,” Prof Lefroy said.

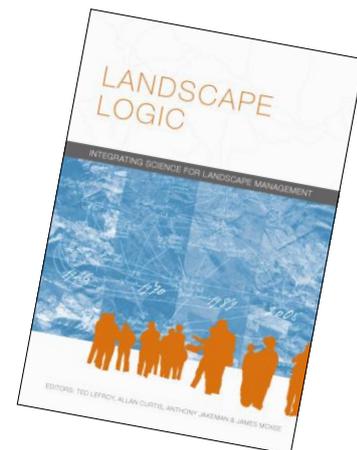
“The findings provide valuable lessons for environmental managers and policy makers.”

Landscape Logic was one of seven multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary research hubs funded by the Australian Government’s \$47.3m Commonwealth Environment Research Facilities program.

For more information about the book visit <http://www.utas.edu.au>

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**Details of book launch:**

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Tasmania, Professor Peter Rathjen, will launch *Landscape Logic* at an event hosted by NRM North at 1pm tomorrow (Tuesday, May 8) at Josef Chromy Wines, 370 Rielba Road, Rielba.