

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## **Economists encouraged to look to the sea**

Economists with an interest in marine resources are wanted to join a network to strengthen research in fisheries economics.

The developers of the new Australian Fisheries Economics Network (FishEcon) hope it will contribute to the improved management of marine resources around Australia.

Head of the School of Economics & Finance at the University of Tasmania, Sarah Jennings said FishEcon will allow fisheries economists, managers, scientists and postgraduate research students to share research ideas and results.

“Australia has the world’s third largest fishing zone and has jurisdiction over a substantial portion of the world’s marine environment and resources,” Dr Jennings said.

Commercial fisheries make a significant contribution to the Australian economy. Recent calculations by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE) put the gross value of production in wild fisheries and aquaculture nationally at an estimated \$2.19 billion.

“Recreational fishing is a very popular activity for many Australians and yet the value of this sector to the national economy is largely unknown.” Dr Jennings said.

“Quite apart from the direct use we make of fisheries resources, the condition of the marine environment is pivotal to maintaining sustainable and healthy biological and human systems.

“Fisheries economics offers a means to explore alternative ways of managing fisheries that balance the competing demands placed upon them.”

“Pressures on our marine resources brought about by population growth and climate change will make sound economic research even more important in the future.

“FishEcon will strengthen research in this area by highlighting and supporting practitioners working in the field of fisheries economics.”

The FishEcon website will be launched today in Adelaide as part of the annual conference of the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society.

The website can be viewed at: [www.fishecon.org](http://www.fishecon.org)

FishEcon is a key part of a Fisheries Research and Development Corporation project aimed at developing expertise in fisheries economics. Partners in the project include

the University of Tasmania, the University of Adelaide, the Queensland University of Technology and the CSIRO.

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