



Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Monday 22 June 2015

Tasmania's lobster aquaculture research to help alleviate poverty in rural Malaysia

Scientists at the University of Tasmania's Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) have partnered with industry to undertake world-leading research in tropical and temperate rock lobster aquaculture, contributing to the successful opening of the world's first commercial lobster hatchery in Malaysia.

Malaysian-based company Ever Nexus Sdn Bhd recently purchased interests in the development of lobster aquaculture which were owned by the US restaurant company Darden. As a result, Darden Aquasciences Sdn Bhd changed its name to Nexus Aquasciences Sdn Bhd.

Nexus Aquasciences chairman Mr Bill Herzig said that research undertaken by the University of Tasmania has made it possible to develop lobster aquaculture in Malaysia.

The Malaysian commercial operations are located in the state of Sabah, Malaysia, and encompass a broodstock and lobster juvenile production facility in Kudat, and a lobster grow-out farm in Semporna. The multi-million dollar commercialisation project has strong support from the Malaysian Government.

Nexus Aquasciences managing director Dr Shah Faiez said that lobster farming in Malaysia will change lives.

"It will help individuals and families realise their true potential and provide support to local communities in Sabah to establish sustainable livelihoods," he said.

"An estimated 20,000 jobs will be created over a 15-year period. These will include contract growers, farm workers, technicians, engineers and scientists with Masters and PhD degrees."

Nexus Aquasciences continues as the international industry partner in the Australian Research Council Research Hub for Commercial Development of Rock Lobster Culture Systems.

The hub, based at the IMAS Taroona laboratories, undertakes research in partnership with The University of Auckland and University of the Sunshine Coast.

Research Hub Director, Associate Professor Stephen Battaglene, said that the pilot lobster hatchery in Malaysia is using highly sophisticated systems designed, built and tested by the University of Tasmania in collaboration with local industry partners JSA Consulting Engineering and the PFG Group.

“This achievement has emerged from more than 15 years of research led by the University of Tasmania,” he said.

“We are also exploring a number of options for growing lobsters in Australia including novel approaches like stock enhancement.”

Information released by:

Communications and Media Office, University of Tasmania

Phone: 61 3 6324 5019

Email: Lana.Best@utas.edu.au