

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Devil forum in Hobart**

### **TRANSLOCATION OF WILD DEVILS ON AGENDA FOR FACIAL TUMOUR DISEASE SCIENTIFIC FORUM**

The possibility of establishing wild Tasmanian devil populations on some offshore islands will be one of the management responses considered by a major scientific forum on the Facial Tumour Disease in Hobart this week.

Local, interstate and international wildlife and disease experts will be attending the three day forum being held at the University of Tasmania from today (Tuesday Feb 22).

Forum convenor and University of Tasmania Professor of Wildlife Biology Hamish McCallum said the workshop was an important step in not only looking at the progress so far but also identifying the next steps in the established program.

“For example we have already seen the establishment of captive insurance populations but we now need to evaluate if we need build on that insurance population,” Professor McCallum said.

“Do we need to take the opportunity and establish wild populations of devils more locally in areas that may offer some protection from the disease?”

“Can we consider some of Tasmania’s offshore islands to establish wild populations, with animals sourced from areas of the State where there is no evidence of disease?”

Professor McCallum said although careful consideration needs to be taken of other species already on Tasmania’s offshore island, it is one option that will be discussed by the range of experts at the forum.

“There is a great deal of outstanding research being undertaken into the Facial Tumour Disease by a wide range of institutions ranging from Department of Primary Industries and Water researchers, to Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, University of Tasmania, Murdoch University, University of Queensland, the CSIRO and Sydney University.

“This forum will bring these many experts as well as other wildlife and disease experts to help map the way forward. One thing that will be immediately apparent from the program is the range of expertise that has been brought together to solve this problem.

“But everyone attending has been invited because they have something to contribute in overcoming the Facial Tumour Disease threat.”

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