

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## **Sharing ocean research and data across the Tasman**

As our cricketers prepare to battle it out at Bellerive in the second Test, many of the leading scientists from Australia and New Zealand have gathered in Hobart to develop ongoing collaborative research opportunities in marine observation and data management.

The New Zealand-Australia Symposium in Ocean Observing and Data Management - which will be held today and tomorrow (5 and 6 December 2011) at the University of Tasmania's Sandy Bay Campus – aims to develop collaborative research opportunities for possible inclusion in a bilateral work program, which will benefit both countries and their regional partners. It is being organised by New Zealand's National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA), and the Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS), which UTAS leads on behalf of the Australian marine and climate science community.

The Director of IMOS, Mr Tim Moltmann, said Australia is now taking a much more national, collaborative approach to marine observing and data management.

"This is paying big dividends for marine and climate science in our own country, and it just makes good sense to reach out to our near neighbours," Mr Moltmann said.

"We're absolutely delighted that a very senior group of science leaders from New Zealand have been willing to travel to Hobart with the aim of figuring out how we can do this together, on a bigger, regional scale.

"So many of the problems we are studying are common across countries, and in the ocean, we're all connected."

The background to the symposium dates back to a meeting between the Australian and New Zealand Governments in February 2010. Among the issues discussed was the possibility of greater country to country cooperation on marine research and observation. The symposium is a major step toward achieving that goal.

Ms Charlotte Severne, Chief Scientist from NIWA, said that a trans-Tasman arrangement on marine observation will greatly enhance the ability of New Zealand to make marine observations, manage databases and undertake economic, environmental, and climate change research.

"This strategic initiative will provide us with a working platform for our common areas of interest, such as the Tasman Sea, Pacific Ocean and the Southern Ocean," she said.

"Additionally, it will assist our Countries to better understand and monitor natural variability and changes in the marine environment in the Asia-Pacific region."

IMOS is a fully-integrated, national system, observing at ocean-basin and regional scales. IMOS facilities, operated by 10 different institutions within the National Innovation System, deploy equipment and deliver data streams for use by the entire Australian marine and climate science community and its international collaborators. IMOS is supported by the

Australian Government through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy and the Super Science Initiative.

NIWA is a Crown Research Institute which conducts leading environmental science to enable the sustainable management of natural resources for New Zealand and the planet.

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