



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

## The future's looking greener with partnership

Greening Australia and the University of Tasmania today announced the renewal of their highly successful partnership that restores large scale degraded landscapes.

The partnership in the form of an MOU has been in operation for three years, and today's signing extends it for another three.

UTAS Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Rathjen, said the continuation of the MOU demonstrates the university's ongoing commitment to sustainable practices.

"It gives the university great pleasure to partner with Greening Australia and to continue what has been an extremely successful collaboration, resulting in the acquisition of more than \$5.4 million of grants to support ecological research and restoration so far- an impressive sum to support a very important cause."

Prof Rathjen said the positive outcomes of the partnership also extended into teaching and learning at the university, with five Greening Australia staff enrolling in UTAS courses as a result of the partnership, including an honours graduate.

"A number of innovative teaching collaborations have also been created, including projects with the School of Computing and Information Systems and Fine Arts students, showing the interdisciplinary opportunities the MOU has offered our students and academics.

"This has been an excellent opportunity for UTAS to support key sustainability activities while consolidating our goal to be a socially and environmentally responsible institution- we look forward to continuing to work with Greening Australia into the future."

Greening Australia Tasmania CEO Jonathan Duddles said the partnership had been highly successful at delivering large scale on-ground eco-system rehabilitation and restoration.

“The rehabilitation and research projects we have been working on are so large that they take a multi-disciplinary approach including science, law and business faculties to complete.

“In addition to Greening Australia and UTAS, landholders, the TGFA, The Tasmanian Land Conservancy and Bush Heritage have all been involved.

“A prime example of the scale of the projects being tackled is the Midlands Restoration Project.

“The first part of the project involves the trial restoration of 1000ha of degraded farmland to grassy woodlands in the Ross and Campbell Town area. Costing \$5M, the project is funded through a range of private and public sources,” Mr Duddles said.

He added that the Tasmanian Midlands is recognised as a national biodiversity hotspot and the restoration project will provide stepping stones and links for plants and animals to move across the landscape.

“The restoration projects will buffer and reconnect existing high quality grassy woodlands that are protected on private land in addition to proposed reserves under the Tasmanian Forestry Agreement. It will be so dramatic that in 20 years’ time, people driving along the Midland Highway will see a real difference in the landscape.

“Greening Australia staff and UTAS researchers will be working in partnership with landholders and the TFGA to make sure farm productivity is improved, future and traditional farming is enhanced and biodiversity improvements are measured,” Mr Duddles concluded.

UTAS’ Associate Professor Anthony Koutoulis, School of Plant Science, said the partnership is ideal because it provides solutions to large scale, real world problems that are beyond the capability of researchers to tackle alone.

“We are delighted that the MOU has been renewed for another three years. It has delivered long-term on ground projects that suit a state with a single university like UTAS.

“Because the research projects involve multiple stakeholders and disciplines such as business planning and law, in addition to science, we are able to work as teams across faculties.

“Best of all, the researchers are working on real world problems to provide solutions.” Mr Koutoulis said

Greening Australia will engage with forestry contractors and nurseries to undertake the work.

**Information Released by:**

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