

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Public forum on ocean acidification part of major international conference

Hobart will next month host a major international conference on the impact that high atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are having on the world's oceans.

The *Ocean in a High CO₂ World* symposium is held every four years and this will be the first to be held in the Southern Hemisphere.

As part of the conference, which is expected to attract around 350 delegates, a free public forum featuring world-leading experts will be held on **Wednesday, 4 May, at the Hotel Grand Chancellor from 7.30pm.**

To be moderated by CSIRO's Dr Alistair Hobday, the forum will discuss ocean acidification, the science and likely impacts, with speakers to include:

- Associate Professor Bärbel Hönlisch, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, New York;
- Assistant Professor Kristy J. Kroeker, University of California, Santa Cruz;
- Dr Richard Matear, CSIRO Oceans and Atmosphere;
- Dr Luke Brander Environmental Economist, University of Hong Kong.

The conference is being coordinated locally by CSIRO's Dr Andrew Lenton and Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) Associate Professor Catriona Hurd, with sponsors including IMAS, Antarctic Gateway Partnership, ACE CRC, CSIRO, the Australian Government and NASA.

Associate Professor Hurd said atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels are rising as a result of human activities, such as fossil fuel use, and are increasing the acidity of seawater.

"This process, known as ocean acidification, has been well observed over recent decades and will continue in the future as atmospheric CO₂ levels continue to rise.

"Ocean acidification has been identified as a significant risk likely to affect the entire marine ecosystem. These will impact on the important ecosystems services that marine environments provide such as fisheries, tourism, coastal protection and food security."

Impacts arising from both elevated global ocean temperatures and changing marine chemistry have been recorded in areas as diverse as the shellfish industry on the US coast at Oregon, the Arctic and Southern Oceans, and tropical reef systems.

Entry to the public forum is free but to ensure a seat bookings should be made at <http://www.events.utas.edu.au>

Conference