

## Media Release

### Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## Local river scientist appointed as international wetlands expert

Respected aquatic ecologist Professor Peter Davies AM has been appointed to the International Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the secretariat for the Convention on Wetlands, known as the Ramsar Treaty.

Professor Davies is one of just six regional experts globally to serve on the Panel from 2016 to 2018. He was nominated as the Oceania region representative with full support from its member countries (Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Marshall Islands and Kiribati).

The Panel ensures quality scientific evidence for wetland policy and management – with climate change as a key challenge facing coastal and inland wetlands.

“Arriving on the beach at Lake Pedder in November 1968 was a life changing experience for me. I have been passionate about freshwater environments since that moment,” said Professor Davies.

“Locally I’ve worked alongside fishermen and farmers, foresters, engineers and ecologists to build fish ladders, restore water to wetlands, track sources of pollutants, help save the endangered Lake Pedder Galaxias, and enthuse schoolchildren to protect urban streams and headwaters,” he said.

“I’m thrilled that a home-grown Tassie scientist can represent our region’s wetlands in a global forum at this critical time.”

**About Professor Peter Davies:** Professor Davies is currently the chief science advisor to the Murray Darling Basin Authority, focussed on managing environmental water in this complex river basin. He has a strong track record in wetland policy, management and applied research. For more than two decades, he was the science coordinator for the National River Health Program, then Chair of the Murray Darling Basin’s Sustainable Rivers Audit. In 2012, he was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia for his contribution to national water environmental science and policy.

Professor Davies has been associated with the University of Tasmania for more than 40 years and was inspired by former University Professors Peter Tyler and Sam Lake – early pioneers in the ecology of Australia’s lakes and rivers. He remains active at the University in the Centre for Environment, the School of Biological Sciences, researching the effects of

fire and climate change on aquatic habitats. He is also Scientist in Residence, in a voluntary capacity, at the Tasmanian College of the Arts working on art-science projects with MONA and Greening Australia. More information: <http://www.utas.edu.au/zoology/people/peter-davies>

**About the Ramsar Treaty:** Ramsar is the oldest global intergovernmental environmental treaty - signed in Ramsar, Iran in 1971. Its mission is the conservation and wise use of the world's wetlands within the context of sustainable development. Wetlands of conservation and cultural significance are formally listed under the treaty, with a range of consequences for signatory states ('Contracting Parties'). Australia has 65 Ramsar sites, all of which are wetlands of international importance, ten of which are in Tasmania. <http://www.ramsar.org/>

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