



TAFI Media Release



TASMANIAN AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES INSTITUTE
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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Fishing for science

A new project by the Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute (TAFI) aims to explain to Tasmanians exactly what climate change means to them.

TAFI, a joint venture between the University of Tasmania and Department of Primary Industries and Water, has been awarded a Tasmanian Community Fund grant to implement the Coastal Climate Change Range Extension Database and MAPPING Project (REDMAP).

REDMAP, an interactive website, encourages the public to report sightings of marine species, which may be moving due to warming waters along the coastline.

TAFI marine biologist and REDMAP designer Dr Gretta Pecl said the project is specific to Tasmanian waters and aims to engage and inform the community.

“Recent research and anecdotal evidence has indicated particular marine species are shifting their ranges further south along the Tasmanian coast, with some species being ‘newcomers’ to our waters from Victoria and New South Wales,” she said.

“While there may be many reasons for habitat shifts, it is suspected that the effects of climate change, in particular rising sea temperatures, are creating the greatest impact.”

REDMAP will incorporate an extensive marine species database and interactive website aimed at linking fishing, science and education in a unique way.

It will use the knowledge and experience of fishers and divers to create a network of keen observers that can help identify how the waters they enjoy are changing, in particular the marine species they catch or observe.

This information will be immediately available to the public through the website, and also available for use in teaching in our primary and high schools about local changes occurring as a function of climate change.

The educational resources for teachers to download will be fact sheets and lesson plans on climate change and the marine environment, ecological changes occurring in Tasmanian waters, and information on local research projects into the impacts of climate change.

TAFI director Professor Colin Buxton, said the project is exciting because it is based on the principles of 'citizen science'. It extended research beyond the realms of the laboratory and its success will depend entirely on the data collected and provided by the Tasmanian community.

He said that REDMAP gives the community the opportunity to actually contribute data that can be used to address the challenges of climate change.

“It will be the locals fishing, boating, diving and enjoying the Tasmanian coast that will provide the data, and anybody will be able to log-on to REDMAP and see the information for themselves” he said.

Interested members of the community including divers, recreational and commercial fishers and schools are invited to contact the REDMAP team for further information on (03) 6227 7262.



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