



MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE INSTITUTE FOR MARINE AND ANTARCTIC STUDIES

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Do seismic surveys affect marine life? New dedicated research to investigate impact on scallops and lobster

Researchers from the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) at the University of Tasmania have begun a new study to understand how seismic surveys may affect marine life, in particular scallops and rock lobster.

IMAS scientist Dr Jayson Semmens is leading a team of researchers in a study that aims to thoroughly assess the potential impact of stimuli generated from the intense low-frequency sound source used in seismic surveys.

Increased survey activity in some areas has led to some concern over the impact on marine life.

“There have been very few dedicated studies on the effects of marine seismic surveys on invertebrates, and consequently there is no robust scientific evidence to draw any conclusion on – good or bad,” Dr Semmens said.

The research team, which includes Associate Professor Robert McCauley from Curtin University, who is an expert on measuring the effect of man-made noise on marine animals, will focus on two types of invertebrates – adult commercial scallops and adult southern rock lobster.

“These are two key Australian fisheries species and the results from our research should provide new information to fisheries and petroleum regulators to make informed decisions on the timing and manner in which seismic surveys are performed,” Dr Semmens said.

The research is being funded by the Australian Government’s Fisheries Research Development Corporation (FRDC Project Number 2012/008) and is further supported by Origin Energy and the CarbonNet Project, Department of Primary Industries, Victoria.

To arrange interviews with Dr Semmens please contact **Sam East, Communications, Outreach and Marketing Manager, IMAS**, (03) 6226 6683 or 0418 299 470.

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