



NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Saturday Science at Salamanca: free public talks to highlight plastic pollution

Coinciding with Saturday's Salamanca market, a series of free public talks about plastic pollution in the world's oceans will begin this weekend at the IMAS building opposite Salamanca Place.

The talks will be provided each Saturday as part of the new exhibition *Vanishing Point Unseen*, which highlights the impact of microplastic pollution on the world's oceans.

The exhibition is the result of a collaboration between scientists and artists and features works in a range of media, including painting, photography, jewellery, woodwork, printmaking and sculpture.

The first talk this weekend (**10am Saturday 7 October**) by CSIRO researcher Dr Denise Hardesty, is *"Our coast, our plastic, our problem, our solutions"*.

Dr. Hardesty is a research scientist with CSIRO Oceans and Atmosphere who leads a portfolio of marine debris projects that have helped achieve global recognition of Australia's role in cutting-edge marine debris research. She was part of CSIRO's marine debris team which won the 2016 Eureka Prize for Environmental Research.

Talks in future weeks include:

- 10am Saturday 14 October Matt Dell - South West Marine Debris Clean Up
- 10am Saturday 21 October Angela Hansen - Is that bird eating plastic or is it playing with it?
- 10am Saturday 28 October Senator Peter Whish-Wilson - From surfing to a Senate enquiry
- 10am Saturday 4 November Lauren Roman - Is plastic ingestion a threat to Tasmanian seabirds?

The Vanishing Point collaboration was established by wildlife artist Katherine Cooper, who said the aim of the exhibition is to engage viewers through visual beauty and simplicity, leading them through a deeper story to raise awareness of the dangers of plastic in our marine environment.

While plastic pollution on our beaches is obvious, microplastics in the ocean are often invisible, and marine systems and food chains are increasingly being invaded by micro-beads from personal care products, micro-fibres in synthetic clothing, and tiny fragments derived from the breakdown of larger debris.

The team behind *Vanishing Point Unseen* includes scientists Dr Heidi Auman, Dr Frederique Olivier and Associate Professor Patti Virtue, and artists Sophie Carnell, Di Masters, Toby Muir Wilson, Peter Walsh, Gerhard Mausz and Katherine Cooper.

Vanishing Point Unseen opens on Friday 6 October and runs until 25 November, and can be viewed 9am-5pm Monday to Friday in the IMAS Exhibition Space, 20 Castray Esplanade, Hobart.

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