



UNIVERSITY of  
TASMANIA



IMAS  
INSTITUTE FOR MARINE & ANTARCTIC STUDIES

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA**

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## Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Wednesday 13 September 2017

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### Tasmanian advanced manufacturer orders serve of world-leading lobster research

A Tasmanian firm with a world-class pedigree in the mariculture sector is partnering with the University of Tasmania to commercialise ground-breaking research into rock lobster production.

Despite the high value of rock lobsters, until now the long and complex life cycle has made it impossible to produce the species in a commercially scalable hatchery.

The world-first research at the University of Tasmania's Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) - supported by the ARC Research Hub for Commercial Development of Rock Lobster Culture Systems - stands ready to change that.

Now, PFG Group Pty Ltd (PFG) – a Tasmanian advanced manufacturer, whose operation includes the manufacture of high-end mariculture facilities and equipment - has invested in a University spin-out company to secure the Australian licencing rights to the research.

University Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Brigid Heywood said: "It is emblematic for us that a Tasmanian firm, led by a University alumnus (PFG CEO Michael Sylvester) has agreed to help us realise what has been 15 plus years in the making.

"We are passionate about the role of research and innovation in providing a platform for economic renewal and the creation of entirely new economic sectors. This is a very fine example of that in action.

"This partnership paves the way for Tasmania to become the birthplace of a global industry for rock lobster aquaculture."

In the next two years, scientists working at IMAS Taroona will complete the final two years' work of the Australian Research Council-backed hub, focusing on the optimisation of technology that will underpin commercial production. PFG's commitment includes the construction in Tasmania of the world's first commercial scale hatchery.

Mr Sylvester said the partnership would lead to further opportunities for its existing portfolio of world-class products and services, while opening entirely new export markets.

"This arrangement brings together Government, academia and industry in partnership that will create direct employment within Tasmania, and allows us to export our intellectual property to the world," he said.

“We already have significant technical capacity in the field and this research platform allows us to leverage that capacity in new and exciting ways.”

PFG anticipates the first commercial production will start at the new hatchery facility within four years.

#### AVAILABLE CONTENT

Video grabs are available of (in order):

- Professor Brigid Heywood (University of Tasmania Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research))
- Michael Sylvester (CEO, PFG),
- Associate Professor Greg Smith (Director, ARC Research Hub for Commercial Development of Rock Lobster Culture Systems)
- James Cretan (Chair, PFG)

<https://cloudstor.aarnet.edu.au/plus/index.php/s/ld8y7ldnDvEnEeH>

A 15-second sound grab with Michael Sylvester can be downloaded here:

<https://cloudstor.aarnet.edu.au/plus/index.php/s/ejbTuXOBiWBCQQ>

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