

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Survey seeks answers on perceptions of seal-fisheries interactions in Tasmania

Tasmanians are being surveyed about their perceptions of seals, especially with regard to seal-fisheries interactions, as part of an IMAS research project aimed at creating a better understanding of the relationship between seals and fisheries in the State.

The survey is being conducted by IMAS Honours student Cloe Cummings, under the supervision of seal specialist Dr Mary-Anne Lea and fisheries interaction expert Dr Jeremy Lyle.

Ms Cummings said seal interactions are a complex issue and the survey would help to identify any gaps between perceptions and knowledge regarding seal populations and interactions with Tasmanians.

“Interactions between seals and fisheries present significant management challenges all around the world, not just in Tasmania, where seal habitat overlaps with fishing zones.

“We’re interested in understanding both the extent of current interactions as well as people’s perceptions of seals more broadly.

“Our target groups for the survey are recreational and commercial fishers, environmental and resource managers, tourism operators who regularly interact with seals, conservationists, and the general public.

“We encourage all interested Tasmanians to take part in the survey, which aims to gauge perceptions of seals in the broader community and experiences of seal-fisheries interactions,” she said.

The focus of this survey is on perceptions of interactions between seals and wild catch fisheries, as interactions with aquaculture are already well studied in the State.

Participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous, and the results will be made publicly available after the conclusion of the survey.

The survey can be completed at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/seals_fisheries_tasmania

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