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Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Public Forum to discuss how nature is responding to climate change

Shifts in regional and global climate and the way they are impacting Earth's biodiversity will be the focus of a free public forum in Hobart at 8pm on Tuesday 9 February, leading into a major international conference next week, *Species on the Move*.

Marine species in eastern Australia, wild and farmed animals in the Arctic, and migratory birds in the Southern Ocean are all exhibiting signs of change.

Conference organiser, IMAS Associate Professor Gretta Pecl, said the Public Forum would provide a fascinating insight into the emerging field of science which is researching the impact of climate change on species around the world.

"We're tracking animals, birds, fish and mammals to identify how and where species will move with climate change, the impact of these changes in our environment, and how to sustainably manage natural resources such as commercial fish populations in the face of such changes."

In a 90-minute panel discussion the Public Forum will hear from scientists about studies into the changing distribution of species, the impact these changes are having, and conservation options.

Speakers include:

- Professor Will Steffen, The Australian National University, researcher and member of Australia's Climate Council;
- Professor Camille Parmesan, Marine biologist, University of Texas at Austin and Plymouth University;
- Associate Professor Gretta Pecl, Chair of Redmap and ARC Future Fellow at IMAS;
- Professor Stephen Williams, Centre for Tropical Biodiversity & Climate Change, James Cook University and Director of the National NCCARF Adaptation Network for Natural Ecosystems;
- Dr Tero Mustonen, Traditional knowledge and Arctic biodiversity advocate with Snowchange Cooperative.

While about half of all studied species have changed their distributions in response to recent climate change, scientists are starting to see negative impacts for the most vulnerable species (those occurring solely in sensitive systems or those that have already been highly impacted by stressors like pollution and habitat loss).

The status of species and the direction for scientists engaged in their study is also the basis for the *Species on the Move* conference in Hobart from February 9 to 12, which has attracted 250 scientists from 40 countries around the world.

Entry to the Public Forum at Hobart's Grand Chancellor Hotel is free and registrations to attend can be made at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/species-on-the-move-tickets-20403131315>

More information: <http://www.speciesonthemove.com/>

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