



Australian Government  
Australian Research Council

## **MEDIA LEAD**

### ***Linkage Projects Round Two*** **For funding commencing in 2010**

## **Tasmania**

**Tasmania will receive \$1,425,000 for 2 Linkage Projects.**

The University of Tasmania will receive \$290,000 over four years for the following project:

***Halophytes for high-saline agriculture: optimising performance and understanding physiology (LP100200456)***

The recent drought has shaved up to one per cent of Australia's economic growth and resulted in losses of over \$6 billion in crop and livestock production.

At the same time, very large volumes of water with impaired chemical quality are generated by industry and municipal water treatment processes. To be used for conventional crop irrigation, this water needs to be desalinated, at a very high cost.

An economically viable alternative is to use (naturally salt tolerant) halophytes as an 'alternative cash crop' species.

This project will investigate the suitability and optimise the performance of selected halophytes for a variety of soil types and environmental conditions.

The project will also provide deep insights in the cellular and ionic mechanisms underlying salinity tolerance in halophytes, filling a fundamental gap in our knowledge and enabling breeding of salt- and drought-tolerant crops.

#### **Media contacts**

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