

UQ Communications  
Ph: 61 7 3365 3367  
Fax: 61 7 3365 1488  
E-mail: [communications@uq.edu.au](mailto:communications@uq.edu.au)

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **International scholarship shores up coral reefs' future**

18 July 2007

A new scholarship initiative at The University of Queensland's [Australasian Centre of Excellence](#) will help protect coral reefs around South-East Asia and the Pacific for future generations.

The Centre of Excellence, which is based at The University of Queensland's [Centre for Marine Studies](#), this month welcomes 12 scholarship winners from Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Fiji, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines to study sustainable reef management.

Chair of the Australasian Centre of Excellence, Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg said coral reefs were integral to the survival to at least 100 million people, particularly in South-East Asia and the Pacific Islands, by providing food and employment.

As reefs were under threat, so were many communities in countries around the region, he said, reinforcing the need for proper education on reef management.

Professor Hoegh-Guldberg said the scholarship program, which is part of a global initiative aimed at developing solutions to the problems facing the world's reefs, would assist the South-East Asian and Pacific Islander participants to develop skills that they could take back to their countries.

"Despite their importance, reefs face threats from a range of sources – many of which can be addressed through management of reef systems," Professor Hoegh-Guldberg said.

"The problem, however, is that most of these countries do not have the resources to train the next generation of reef scientists and managers.

"This event is important in that it brings together young scientists, coral reef managers and students to train with young Australians to better understand coral reefs and hence prepare to meet the challenges of tomorrow."

The Australasian Centre of Excellence is one of four international Centres in a worldwide partnership for the Coral Reef Targeted Research Program (CRTR).

The partnership incorporates UQ, the Global Environment Facility, World Bank,

United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and approximately 40 research institutes and other third parties around the world.

The CRTR Program is a leading international coral reef research initiative that provides a coordinated approach to credible, factual and scientifically proven knowledge for improved coral reef management.

During the scholarship program, participants will learn about tropical marine invertebrates, marine ecology and coastal resource management and include topics such as climate change and the health of coral reefs.

Participants will study in UQ's world-class teaching facilities, and will be given the opportunity to spend time at the University's premier research stations in [Moreton Bay](#) and the [Great Barrier Reef](#) as well as form networks with marine experts.

The scholarship participants will be officially welcomed at a cocktail event on July 24, held at the University of Queensland Art Museum in the James and Mary Emelia Mayne Centre, University Drive, St Lucia, from 5-7pm. All media are welcome to attend.

**Media: Professor Hoegh-Guldberg (07 3365 1156/ 07 3365 4333), Melanie King at the Centre for Marine Studies (07 3346 9942) or Tegan Taylor at UQ Communications (07 3365 2339)**

Looking for an expert? Contact details for more than 1500 UQ academics and researchers who can provide media with expert comment are available online at [www.uq.edu.au/uqexperts](http://www.uq.edu.au/uqexperts).

The print version, *UQ Experts Directory*, is available free to media. Call 07 3365 2339 or email [communications@uq.edu.au](mailto:communications@uq.edu.au)

This news release is provided as an information service to the media. If you do not wish to receive further releases, please reply and indicate "unsubscribe" in the subject heading.

**The University of Queensland, Brisbane Australia**