

# Guy Barnett MP

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TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASE



Guy Barnett, Minister for Minister for Primary Industries and Water  
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## New projects funded under Abalone Industry Reinvestment Fund

The Tasmanian Government is continuing to tackle the long spined sea urchin (*Centrostephanus rodgersii*) that attacks our east coast reefs and threatens the commercial, recreational and indigenous fisheries that depend on them.

Seven new projects will be funded under the latest round of the Abalone Industry Reinvestment Fund (AIRF), including a long spined sea urchin cull and a short film to increase education about the pest species.

The Tasmanian Government committed \$5.1 million over five years to establish the AIRF in the 2018-19 Budget, and this latest round will help our sustainable seafood sector and support regional economies into the future.

The successful projects are:

- Understanding *Centrostephanus*: Age Growth and size of Maturity - Dr John Keane (IMAS);
- Babel Island 'take-all' research support - Dr John Keane (IMAS);
- Mapping Abalone Habitat impacted by *Centrostephanus* on the east coast of Tasmania - Dr Vanessa Lucieer (IMAS);
- Tasmanian Commercial Dive Industry - *Centrostephanus* industry short film Tasmanian Commercial Divers Association (TCDA);

- Effect of Temperature on Abalone Condition as a Function of Seasons, Location and rate of Change - Dr Craig Mundy (IMAS);
- Nutritional quality of kelp as a key driver of commercial abalone productivity - Dr Craig Mundy (IMAS);
- Babel Island Group (including Babel, Cat, Stonehouse Island) - Tasmanian Commercial Divers Association (TCDA).

The projects were selected following an expanded Expressions of Interest process and will help to increase the sustainability and productivity of our abalone fishery industry while also addressing the impacts of the long spined sea urchin.

The AIRF, working in partnership with commercial divers and urchin processors, has been very successful in addressing the impacts of the destructive urchins, with around 1000 tonnes now removed from the water since its inception.

The AIRF fund is administered by a committee consisting of members from the Tasmanian Abalone Council Limited, the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, and is advised by the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies of the University of Tasmania.

For a full list and more details of the projects, visit the DPIPWWE website: <https://dPIPWE.tas.gov.au/sea-fishing-aquaculture/commercial-fishing/abalone-fishery/abalone-industry-reinvestment-fund/2020-airf-funding-round> [www.dPIPWE.tas.gov.au/airf](http://www.dPIPWE.tas.gov.au/airf)

For more information on the AIRF and expressions of interest process visit: [www.dPIPWE.tas.gov.au/airf](http://www.dPIPWE.tas.gov.au/airf)