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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

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Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water
Jonathon Duniam, Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries
Roger Jaensch, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Ken Wyatt, Minister for Indigenous Australians

Historic agreement for cultural and commercial abalone fishing

The Tasmanian and Australian governments acknowledge that sea country is central to the identity of Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

Today, a historic agreement was signed at a ceremony on Aboriginal land at Murrayfield, on Bruny Island, that will enable the Land and Sea Aboriginal Corporation Tasmania (LSACT), with investment from the national Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC), to fish the 40 state-owned abalone units.

These abalone units have been tendered annually by the Government since 2008 but will now form part of the Aboriginal fishery and can be fished state-wide.

Tasmanian Primary Industries and Water Minister Guy Barnett said that associated fisheries rules will still apply, but the agreement means Tasmanian Aboriginal people will have long-term access to the abalone fishery to develop cultural and commercial fishing activities that have a local, national and international benefit.

“At a local level, this agreement will create nine full-time equivalent direct and indirect jobs enabling Tasmanian Aboriginal people to gain skills and experience that will provide new pathways for career, culture and business development, including meeting the demand for indigenous produced abalone.”

Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries Jonno Duniam said the Australian Government is committed to continuing to pursue closer, meaningful engagement with Aboriginal fishers into the future.

“The history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fishing in Australia is rich, and the signing of the abalone agreement will allow for this long and proud tradition of Aboriginal fishing to continue well

into the future.”

Tasmanian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Roger Jaensch said that the Tasmanian Liberal Government is continuing to deliver on the Government’s commitment to reset the relationship with Tasmanian Aboriginal people, and to deliver better social and economic outcomes for them and their families.

“This agreement recognises that the cultural harvesting of natural products is essential to maintaining and reviving cultural practices for Tasmanian Aboriginal people, while also delivering economic opportunities and training in areas like seafood processing, tourism and hospitality.”

Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM, said that this is a great example of Government empowering Indigenous Australians through new economic pathways.

“This is the type of economic opportunity that Indigenous Australians can, and are making the most of, as part of greater partnerships in land and sea management. Tasmania is one of the world’s largest abalone resources and providing additional access for Indigenous Australians in this industry is a great opportunity.”

Sustainable management of Tasmania’s fisheries is important and the Living Marine Resources Management Act is currently under review.

Submissions on the discussion paper released in February are open until the end of March. More detail is at www.nre.tas.gov.au/act-review