

## Media Release

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### Smart focus on Great Barrier Reef

The search for solutions to save the Great Barrier Reef from climate change received a major boost today. Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, Director of The University of Queensland's Centre for Marine Studies, was today awarded the \$1.25 million Premier's Smart State Fellowship by Premier Anna Bligh.

The Fellowship will enable Professor Hoegh-Guldberg to conduct vital new research into how the Great Barrier Reef might withstand the devastating impacts of climate change.

The Great Barrier Reef Foundation has also committed \$1.45 million to support Professor Hoegh-Guldberg's work.

Great Barrier Reef Foundation Managing Director Mrs Judy Stewart said Professor Hoegh-Guldberg's appointment demonstrated the importance and urgency of addressing the impact of climate change on the Great Barrier Reef.

"It has only been ten years since Professor Hoegh-Guldberg first showed the many negative impacts of climate change on coral reef ecosystems. This is very new science and there is a lot we don't know," she said.

"We do know that if we do nothing, the Reef could be unrecognizable in just 30 years time with much of its beauty and biodiversity lost forever."

Mrs Stewart said today's announcement was a very positive step forward in tackling the issue.

"We cannot underestimate the magnitude of the threat to the Great Barrier Reef nor the response required to address it, but it is not too late," she said.

"Improving our knowledge through good science is the key. Professor Hoegh-Guldberg's appointment correctly places the emphasis on finding strong, science-based solutions to preserve the Reef."

A core element of the Fellowship research program will see collaboration between scientists, research organisations, government and industry representatives.

"The Great Barrier Reef generates more than \$6 billion annually and its ecological value is immeasurable. Saving the Reef is everyone's business and I am very pleased to see the willingness of so many to support Professor Hoegh-Guldberg in this vital undertaking," Mrs Stewart said.

**ENDS**

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Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg



GREAT BARRIER REEF  
FOUNDATION

*Working to protect and preserve the Great Barrier Reef*

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*The Great Barrier Reef Foundation is Australia's only independent fundraiser for coral reef research. Working in partnership with business, government and philanthropy, the Foundation's purpose is to find and fund solutions to sustain the Great Barrier Reef.*