

## MARS AUSTRALIA AND JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY SIGN COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT TO SUPPORT REEF RESTORATION & TROPICAL ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH

**7 January 2019:** Mars Australia signed an agreement with James Cook University (JCU) today to partner on a variety of tropical research projects. These include coral reef restoration opportunities for the Great Barrier Reef, cocoa pollination and next-generation productivity techniques to assist small farming communities based in the Tropics.

The Agreement is the first of its kind for Mars in Australia and will see project teams from both organisations co-locate and collaborate both at JCU's state-of-the-art research facilities at their Cairns campus, and in Mars' research sites and other locations across Indonesia.

A key priority for collaboration is further research on reef restoration, and the opportunity to trial a coral reef restoration technique in the Great Barrier Reef which Mars has pioneered over the last decade off the coast of Sulawesi, Indonesia.

Developed in partnership with local communities and marine scientists, the Mars Assisted Reef Restoration System (MARRS) is a simple, effective and scalable way to rebuild a coral reef, using sand-coated steel structures known as 'Spiders' to provide a stable base for the coral fragments to regrow. To date, the MARRS program has rebuilt more than three hectares of reef in Indonesia, making it one of the largest coral reef restoration programs in the world. The success of the program has meant a similar opportunity now exists to explore coral reef restoration in Australia.

Family Board Director of Mars, Incorporated and Vice President – Sustainable Solutions, Frank Mars, said: "As part of our Sustainable in a Generation Plan, Mars is focused on minimising our impact on the planet and making a difference to people throughout our total value chain. One of the ways we are doing this is by working with the communities where we operate to develop innovative ways to ensure community farming is a sustainable and respected livelihood around the world.

"In JCU, Mars will be partnering with the world's leading University based in the Tropics. I am excited about what this collaboration could mean for many of the communities that we work with around the world, in particular Australia's iconic Great Barrier Reef."

JCU Vice Chancellor, Professor Sandra Harding, said: "JCU's mission is to build a brighter future for the Tropics worldwide, through graduates and research that make a difference. This agreement signals the beginning of a partnership that we hope will grow to encompass our many areas of common interest, including sustainable tropical agriculture and coral reef restoration."

"The Tropical zone is home to more than half of the world's children and by 2050 more than half the world's total population will live here. We're excited to work with Mars on projects that will benefit Tropics people and environments."

The partnership with JCU further builds on Mars' network of higher education partners around the world, including University of California Davis and the University of Reading in the UK.

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To learn more about our Sustainable in a Generation Program, please see our website [here](#).

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