

APPOINTMENT BOOSTS BC's CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH AND LEADERSHIP

British Columbia's climate change leadership has been given a major boost with the appointment of Dr Thomas Pedersen as director of the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS), says University of Victoria President Dr. David Turpin.

"Tom has the drive and knowledge to ensure PICS's success in meeting its goals—harnessing the province's intellectual resources to identify innovative climate change solutions, seeking new opportunities for adaptation and mitigation, and supporting the establishment of a vibrant low-carbon BC economy. He will also be instrumental in forging strong links between PICS's four collaborating universities, and with senior decision-makers in government and industry."

Pedersen will move from his current position of dean of science at UVic, which he has held since 2003. His previous positions include director of the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences at UVic, and associate dean, research, for the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of British Columbia (UBC). He holds a degree in geology from UBC and a PhD in marine geochemistry from the University of Edinburgh.

BC Minister of State for Climate Action John Yap welcomes the appointment. "Dr. Pederson is a strong leader who will drive the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions to work in partnership with government, industry, and stakeholders to direct internationally renowned work on climate solutions," says Yap.

Dr. Howard Brunt, UVic's vice-president research, says Pedersen's in-depth knowledge of global climate history, earth sciences and marine geochemistry, along with his work as an exploration geologist and his global contacts, brings a wealth of experience to the newly formed PICS team.

"We are all delighted with Tom's appointment as the inaugural director of PICS. He was instrumental in the development of the proposal that ultimately led to the \$94.5-million investment from the province to establish PICS. He has the strong support of the research community across the province and beyond. I know that we are going to see great things coming out of PICS under his able leadership and I look forward to working with him over the coming years."

Pedersen says he is deeply honoured to have been chosen to lead PICS, which he describes as distinct from other climate change organizations due to its interdisciplinary nature.

"We are now seeing the climate changing at a rate unprecedented and unparalleled in history. Given the fierce urgency of now, and the exceptional commitment by the BC government in establishing PICS, we have an obligation to deliver. I will ensure that happens."

Pedersen's goals for PICS within the next 12 months include the establishment of a strategic research plan; strengthening the working relationship with the BC government; and engaging with Canadian industries, the public, NGOs and the media. His longer-term goals include positioning

PICS as the leading national research institute in the field of climate mitigation/adaptation and policy, with an international reputation for credibility and trustworthiness, and launching a new generation of scholars.

PICS is hosted and led by UVic in collaboration with UBC, Simon Fraser University and the University of Northern British Columbia.

Pedersen will assume his duties as PICS director on September 1.

A short biography of Pedersen is available on request.

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