

# CRC launch promises \$1 billion in benefits

AUSTRALIA IS EMBRACING a billion-dollar opportunity to position the minerals processing industry for the 21st century with the launch of the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Resource Processing in July 2003.

The CRC's research promises major benefits. These include improvements in current processes, breakthrough technologies and innovations, a new generation of metallurgists and a powerful market advantage for Australia as a 'green' processor of mineral resources.

All of these are linked to the CRC's primary goal of progressively eliminating waste and emissions in the minerals cycle, a goal that is estimated to potentially deliver \$1 billion-plus in value for the investment in the CRC of \$90 million to 2010. That investment will combine initial federal funding of \$18.8 million over the next seven years with projected industry funding of about \$20 million, plus 'in kind' contributions from the participants.

In addition, the projected economic and environmental benefits could spread globally as the industry adopts the CRC's practical advances.

Independent consultant Dr Joe Herbertson harnessed the support of 14 organisations over two years to develop the Perth-based CRC, which will also operate in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

The active involvement and funding support of major industry players, including Alcoa, was crucial to the development of the new CRC.

The proposal grew from the Sustainable Resource Processing Project initiated in 2001, which defined what sustainable development meant for the industry.

The project's consensus was that the future lay in developing more efficient, environmentally benign ways to process resources. The challenge demanded a fresh approach – one that united experts across disciplines in the quest for the best solutions.

The CRC ties in with Alcoa's sustainability goals, says Dr Greg Power, Alcoa's Technology Manager, Sustainable Processing. Alcoa's expectations sound deceptively simple: 'What we are after is smarter ways to supply the world's needs for these materials that will dramatically reduce the impacts on the environment.'

**Kay Ansell**



Members of Global Research Alliance in India, January 2003.

## Super Science Alliance

A SCIENTIFIC 'super alliance', formed to tackle some of the world's most serious problems, has met to discuss water.

The Global Research Alliance (GRA), which comprises eight leading international science and technology institutions – including Australia's CSIRO – said it was committed to helping achieve the United Nations' Millennium Development' goals of halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015.

The GRA – which collectively employs over 50 000 scientists – discussed six thematic areas to promote key conditions for achieving the UN goals, including: strategic analysis, policy and planning; integrated water resources

management; groundwater management; urban water infrastructure development; drinking water; and water treatment technologies and sanitation.

The group considers addressing the water problems in isolation to be unsustainable, and is calling for the integration of the water cycle into any possible solutions.

Members of the Alliance are: CSIR India, The Danish Technological Institute, the Fraunhofer Gesellschaft in Germany, SIRIM Berhad in Malaysia, TNO in the Netherlands, VTT in Finland, CSIRO, the US's Battelle Memorial Institute and CSIR South Africa.

The GRA Technology Fusion Workshop on Water was held in Sydney in April 2003.

[www.research-alliance.net](http://www.research-alliance.net)

## Government and business talk climate change

POLICIES to address the challenges of climate change are being developed through the Government-Business Climate Change Dialogue.

The Minister for Environment and Heritage, Dr David Kemp, and Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources, Mr Ian Macfarlane, announced that the Government was looking at developing broad policy directions on climate change in coming months, and would take into account the consultative process.

The Climate Change Dialogue

comprises five working groups covering key business areas; including energy and resources, and agriculture. These groups have presented their reports, which detail preferred policies to accomplish greenhouse gas abatement.

Areas of consensus between the working groups included dealing with climate change as a global problem and using research, development and demonstration (RD & D) to achieve emissions reduction goals.

[www.greenhouse.gov.au](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au)



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