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## New leader for Australia's largest water research partnership

**Dr Carol Couch has been appointed the new Director of the Water for a Healthy Country National Research Flagship by CSIRO. With an investment of more than \$80 million dollars a year, the Flagship is the largest research partnership focusing on water in Australia.**



Dr Carol Couch, Director of the national Water for a Healthy Country Flagship.

CSIRO Group Executive, Dr Andrew Johnson, said Dr Couch brings a unique range of attributes to the role, based on her 20 years' of science leadership in the USA and Australia.

'It is critical we find better ways to manage water both in Australia and overseas. Globally, the sustainable management of freshwater resources is recognised as one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century,' he said.

'Nearly a billion people lack access to reliable, clean water and three-quarters of the world's wastewater flows to the environment without treatment.

'Nationally, a drying climate in southern Australia, land-use changes across the continent, population growth, and extreme weather events, have placed unprecedented demands on our water assets.

'The Flagship has a significant research leadership role in supporting the nation in maximising the full value we derive from water.'

Dr Couch led the development of the first Water Plan for the State of Georgia in the USA. She also led the Georgia Drought Management Committee emergency response during the 2006-2009 regional drought.

She was lead scientist and advisor for aspects of water-quality investigations conducted by the US Geological Survey across multiple US States and led a team of scientists in the development of a national synthesis program for ecology for the US.

Dr Couch says that Australia's water challenges are 'many and varied. But the Flagship's integrated, multidisciplinary approach to research and a commitment to strengthening partnerships with government, industry and communities, places it in the strongest

position possible to provide timely, relevant and high-quality science for decision making'.

Dr Couch replaces Dr Bill Young, who is on secondment to a senior leadership role with the World Bank, South Asia Region Water Initiative based in New Delhi, India.

Source: CSIRO

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