

AUSTRALIAN WEEDS RESEARCH CENTRE INTERIM ADVISORY BOARD

Communiqué

9 December 2008

The Interim Advisory Board for the Australian Weeds Research Centre has welcomed the news that the recent meeting of the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, on Friday 7 November 2008, resulted in agreement between jurisdictions to work together to establish a truly national centre to reduce the impact of weeds on productivity and the environment.

The Ministerial Council meeting, chaired by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon. Tony Burke MP agreed that nationally coordinated weeds research is vital in tackling one of Australia's most pressing natural resource management issues and it welcomed the establishment of the Centre.

The Australian Government has committed \$15 million for the first four years (2008-09 to 2011-12) to establish the Centre and is seeking commitment from jurisdictions, industry and researchers of a similar order to address Australia's most significant invasive plants through the establishment of the Centre.

Steps to establish the Centre

Minister Burke appointed an interim advisory Board (the Board) in July 2008 to oversee the establishment of the Centre. The Board brings together a range of experience and disciplines and will be chaired by the Hon. John Kerin, the outgoing Chair of the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Australian Weed Management. The other members of the interim advisory Board are Mr Ian Sauer; Ms Alexandra Gartmann; Ms Jeanette Gellard; Dr Yvonne Buckley; and Dr Glen Kile.

The Board has met a number of times to focus on the challenge of building on the work of the CRC which completed its term this year. The Board has developed a draft business case for the Centre which provided a basis for discussion at a workshop on with representatives from the State and Territories 3 November 2008. The Board was pleased with the discussion with the States and Territories and looks forward to working with all jurisdictions as the details for the Centre continue to be developed.

Another workshop was held on 8 December 2008 with representatives from the Rural Research and Development Corporations. A further workshop with universities and other relevant parties is anticipated early in the New Year.

The Board is pleased with the significant response to the 2008-09 research call for projects which closed on 24 October 2008. An appropriately qualified panel has been appointed to assess the applications and it is expected that successful applicants will be notified in the near future.

Further information on the Centre see:

<http://www.daff.gov.au/australianweedsresearchcentre>