



MEDIA RELEASE

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New S-E Australian Climate Initiative website launched

A new website launched today carries comprehensive information on the operations, research projects and aims of the \$7 million South Eastern Australian Climate Initiative (SEACI).

The site was inaugurated by Dr Wendy Craik, Chief Executive of the Murray-Darling Basin Commission (MDBC). The MDBC is the managing agency for SEACI which was launched early in 2006.

The other partners are: the Australian Greenhouse Office within the Department of the Environment and Water Resources; Australia’s Managing Climate Variability program; the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment; CSIRO; and the Bureau of Meteorology.

“The new site will help stakeholders and members of the public to understand how climate change is affecting the south-eastern part of our continent”, Dr Craik said. “It will also create more awareness of how the SEACI investment will help us tackle these important issues by providing us with better knowledge of the causes and impacts of climate change and climate variability.”

The new website includes an overview of the initiative as well as fact sheets, background papers, reports and other documents on various aspects of its operations and future plans.

Dr Craik said it is important for SEACI to communicate its activities broadly as climate change and variability will impact on all members of the community.

She noted the Bureau of Meteorology has stated that Australia and the globe are experiencing rapid climate change. Since the middle of the 20th century, Australian temperatures have, on average, risen by about 1°C with an increase in the frequency of heatwaves and a decrease in the numbers of frosts and cold days.

Rainfall patterns have also changed — the northwest has seen an increase in rainfall over the last 50 years, while much of eastern Australia and the far southwest have experienced a decline.

“The MDBC is proud to be collaborating with the Bureau, CSIRO and the other agencies in SEACI. This new website will be an important communications vehicle as we improve our understanding of what is happening and what needs to be done,” Dr Craik said.

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