

Outcomes and resolutions from the 'National Drought-Science Forum', Brisbane, April 15-16, 2003

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The recently held National Drought-Science Forum was attended by leading scientists from those institutions currently engaged in drought-science research in Australia. Scientists from the Commonwealth Bureau of Meteorology, Commonwealth Scientific Industrial and Research Organisation (CSIRO), Qld Department of Primary Industries, Bureau of Rural Sciences, Qld Department of Natural Resources and Mines, The University of Southern Queensland, The University of Queensland, Monash University, James Cook University, and the Australian Institute of Marine Science discussed a wide range of issues concerning systems modelling, systems management and intervention, climate change, climate variability and climate forecasting, and plant and animal breeding and management for drought.

An important aspect of the Forum was to distil-out some key resolutions to take forward to follow-up national meetings such as 'DroughtCom' and to provide input directly to appropriate Federal and State Governments and their agencies.

Some of the major resolutions from the Forum were:

1. The need to get a national drought R&D effort organised and focused, especially to

- **Increase** the overall national effort
- **Integrate** the wide-ranging capabilities that currently exist in State and Federal agencies and universities. This could be achieved by jointly undertaking national projects,

2. Jointly define, propose and **establish institutional arrangements** for durable R&D and dissemination. As a follow-up to the 'National Drought-Science Forum', the concept of a 'drought CRC' has now been developed),

3. Urgently increase the integration/validation of Coupled Ocean-Atmosphere Circulation Models with biophysical models (e.g. crop and pasture models, other systems...),

4. Clarify the understanding of climate-change knowledge. This should include output of clear statements of patterns and trends that are already occurring and clear statements of likely future trends and implications for industry and the environment,

5. Progress the integration of climate systems with landscape systems, especially at 'catchment scales',

6. Improve predictability of climate at a range of timescales,

7. Move quickly to capture the key strategic opportunities emerging in R&D re crop adaptation (e.g. improving genetic modelling of crops and other elements of the food and fibre chain) to drought,

8. Computerise historical data.