
THE WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CENTRE **BILL SWALLOW***

Background

The University of Canterbury and Lincoln University are establishing a Water Resource Management Centre. The Centre is the outcome of consultation with Environment Canterbury, the Canterbury Development Corporation, the Canterbury Water Cluster (i.e. the major bodies involved in water resource management and research in the region), and the Department of Labour. Water

resource management has been cited as a key area for regional initiatives in the "Regional Statement of Tertiary Education Needs, Gaps and Priorities in Canterbury 2008-2010" and was a principal economy-wide concern in the Food and Beverage Taskforce Report 2006 and the environmental sustainability goal of the Government's 2008 Economic Transformation Agenda. The project aligns with recent government initiatives, including the Proposed

National Policy Statement for Fresh Water Management, the National Environmental Standards, the Ministry of Research Science and Technology and Foundation for Research Science and Technology research strategies for resource management and sustainability, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry for the Environment sustainable development 'Programme of Action' for water.

Our Vision

The two Universities see the Centre as being the focal point for improving knowledge-driven water resource management in New Zealand. The Centre will be the critical link in providing improved teaching and associated research in water resources. It will serve the unique and ever increasing demands in Canterbury for improved water resource management, and as a national centre of educational excellence. The Centre will facilitate the education sector's key role, alongside existing water organisations, in improving skills, knowledge, and awareness in the water sector. It will also encourage strong co-operation between the two universities to effect institutional change leading to better education outcomes for the country.

Key Outcomes

- Establish a Water Resource Management Centre between the two universities to serve as a catalyst for water action between teaching, research, regulatory, public interest, and water user organizations.
- Appoint a joint Chair of Water Resource Management between the two universities to provide integrated leadership and coordinate the disparate university resources existing in this area and identify current teaching and research gaps.

- Contribute to the Canterbury Water Cluster and the Department of Labour's Canterbury Regional Skills Strategy.
- Work within the sector to identify specific skills needed in developing capability
- Engage in community education
- Develop undergraduate career pathways, professional training and viable postgraduate education in water management studies
- Enhance and coordinate scholarships in this area.

Progress

Considerable progress has been made since planning for the new Centre began in late 2008. This includes forming an Advisory Board for the Centre with representation from local authorities, Crown Research Institutes, industry, farming and central government. An establishment committee has also been created, along with joint working groups in both Universities, to help ascertain current water resource teaching courses and identify gaps. The same audit process is also being carried out in the research area. External stakeholder liaison has been a key priority over the last few months as has the appointment of the new professorial chair to lead the Centre. More information on the Centre may be obtained from our website <http://waterresource.ac.nz/index.shtml>

*Bill Swallow PhD, has over 30 years of experience in science and science management particularly in the field of environmental health. He was a General Manager at the Crown Research Institute ESR from 1992 until 2004. Currently he is project manager of the joint Canterbury/Lincoln initiative to develop a Water Resource Management Centre. He is also an Adjunct Professor and Entrepreneur-in-Residence at Canterbury University.