



# Media Release

## Senator Alan Eggleston

### Liberal Senator for Western Australia

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## Institute of Northern Development – a vision for the North

**4<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

The future of Australia lies in the North, and a visionary Northern Australia Institute could see this become a reality, according to WA Liberal Senator Alan Eggleston.

During a Senate Estimates hearing last week, Senator Eggleston proposed the new institute after revealing a need for a focused commitment from the Government to further develop Northern Australia.

Members of CSIRO present at the hearing revealed the considerably low investment in northern research by its organisation – only four per cent of its staff is based in northern research locations in Rockhampton, Townsville, Atherton, Cairns, Darwin and Alice Springs

“While I recognise the investment the CSIRO is putting into the northern part of the eastern states in areas such as agricultural development and tourism, there is a real need to invest in research for development projects right across the North.”

Senator Eggleston noted CSIRO’s existing relationships with WA universities, including Curtin University, the University of Western Australia and Murdoch University, but pointed out their lack of presence in the northern half of the State.

“An Institute of Northern Australia would focus government research funding on major development projects to help determine their viability, infrastructure requirements etc; at present there is no centralized department that provides this service,” the Senator said.

Senator Eggleston said the institute would benefit both future and existing development projects, such as the Ord River Stage 2 development.

The Senator said he was surprised to learn that, despite their longstanding relationship with the Ord community and the project, CSIRO had no staff based in the Ord region.

“This Institute, with a budget to match its diverse programs and needs, could be truly visionary,” he said.

**Ends**