



RIVERSYMPIOSIUM BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

2 September 2008

WATER NO LONGER THE 'CINDERELLA' OF CLIMATE CHANGE

An international water expert warned water can no longer remain the 'Cinderella' of Climate Change during the 11th International *Riversymposium* in Brisbane today.

World Water Council Director-General Dr Ger Bergkamp said Australia is leading the way in water management and has a great responsibility to make water part of the solution to climate change.

"Climate change is here and Australia has presented cutting edge best management practices including the Thiers Riverprize winning projects and results of increasing household water efficiency. Yet, Australia can continue to learn from others," Dr Bergkamp said.

"Look at South Africa. They reduced tree cover to knock down water consumption. That's something Australia can learn from," he said.

"Being pro-active on climate change, Australia cannot just focus on securing more water as the only answer to climate change."

Addressing the audience during the Dialogue on Water, Energy and Climate Change on day two of *Riversymposium*, Dr Bergkamp said the result of climate change is a high unpredictability of and uncertainty about the future of Australia's water.

"To deal with that Australia needs to accelerate the implementation of best water management practices and start putting in place no-regret initiatives such as encouraging behavioural changes. It is only after this that climate justified investments should come on the table.

"Keep working with the water management strategies already in place because we can adapt them to suit changing circumstances. Don't regret the money already invested in these initiatives because we could face the same issues in years to come. Then truly invest in measures specifically designed to adapt to climate change when you really know what you are doing.

"At this stage Australia's challenge is to determine who gets priority of water distribution and who makes this decision."

Australia will have the unique opportunity to attract global attention to its water issues and the way it is tackling the challenge of climate change during the 5th World Water Forum in Turkey next year. The global summit offers world leaders and policy makers the opportunity to debate with the world water community and find solutions to achieve water security.

.../More



Dedicated to a better Brisbane



Queensland
Government

Riverfestival is an initiative of Brisbane City Council
and the Queensland Government



RIVERSYMPIUM

BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

2/2

“The *Riversymposium* is one of three forums from the Asia Pacific region to help shape the direction of the 5th World Water Forum because of its ability to influence and inform policy making around the world.”

“Posing questions and ensuring water is on the climate change agenda at an international level will allow Australia to further advance its water management and climate change policies,” he said.

Riverfestival Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini said more than 500 delegates from 52 countries will come together for the four-day *Riversymposium* to explore the challenges associated with the increased incidence of flooding and drought expected with climate change in future years.

The 11th International *Riversymposium* – A Future of Extremes is part of *Riverfestival*, a dynamic 10-day annual celebration of Brisbane’s iconic river, its people, art, culture and environment.

ENDS

For all media enquiries contact: Sian Yewdall – 0403 090 914 or Nina Rinella – 0434 313 064



Dedicated to a better Brisbane



**Queensland
Government**

Riverfestival is an initiative of Brisbane City Council
and the Queensland Government