



## MEDIA RELEASE

August 2008

### Sydney student honoured for helping rescue the world's rivers

A 35 year old PhD student from Sydney who conducted new research to improve water use on dairy farms is one of five young scientists recognized for improving the outlook of the world's rivers.

James Neal, a finalist in the 2008 *Riversymposium* Young Water Scientist Award (in partnership with GHD), joins four other young scientists acknowledged for their innovation in water conservation and management. Mr Neal is in the running to win \$3000 and will present a paper outlining his project at the 11<sup>th</sup> International *Riversymposium* in Brisbane on Tuesday 2 September, 2008.

Mr Neal's study evaluated 30 types of plant materials eaten by dairy cows to inform his study on improved water use on dairy farms. His analysis will help dairy farmers maximise their profitability through revealing which plant materials are the most efficient in using water during various seasons.

"These findings will help dairy farmers produce more milk with the limited water they have available through ensuring they are feeding their dairy cows the most water efficient plant materials," he said.

His study, one of the largest of its kind in the world, is particularly pertinent to the dairy industry with climate change affecting water availability and water prices looking set to increase over the coming years.

Other finalists vying for the Award include Kathleen Ahern (Brisbane), Kylie Catterall (Gold Coast), Kasper Johansen (Brisbane) and Thang Nam Do (Vietnam). Their projects include new research which slowed the rapid growth of toxic blue-green algae in South East Queensland and a new warning system which rapidly detects wastewater treatment problems.

GHD Business Manager (Water and Environment) Ross Fryar said the company is proud to partner with the International *Riversymposium* and support the development of the prestigious Award.

"As a large engineering and architecture company, GHD understands the future challenges faced in managing our environmental footprint and we recognize the opportunity to bring together a range of professionals working to achieve better outcomes," Mr Fryar said.

"GHD became involved in the Award because at any time one quarter of our business is involved in a water project somewhere in the world. Our goal is to build interest among other students and encourage more to enter in coming years."

The Award was established in 1998 and has evolved into a prestigious annual event to celebrate the excellence of young Australian water scientists.

The 11<sup>th</sup> International *Riversymposium* in partnership with GHD will present the winner of the 2008 Young Water Scientist Award during the morning plenary session on Wednesday 3 September.



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



# RIVERSYMPOSIUM

BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

More information on the Award and the 11<sup>th</sup> International *Riversymposium: A Future of Extremes* can be found at [www.riversymposium.com](http://www.riversymposium.com)

**ENDS**

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