

The Future for Rural and Regional Research

**Sustaining Rural Communities Conference 2012
Narrabri NSW**

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Introduction

- Two hats
 - Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations
 - Regional Australia Institute
- Background
- Challenges
- Solutions and where to next

Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations

- Advance rural RD&E through the RDCs
- Provide strategic leadership for collaborative, effective and efficient investment in rural RD&E
- Provide a national coordinated voice on rural RD&E
- Forum for engaging the collective action of the RDCs

Rural Research and Development Corporations

- 15 RDCs servicing many different rural sectors
- R&D investments underpin Australia's:
 - competitiveness
 - profitability
 - sustainability and
 - natural resource base

Improving the system

- **Increased coordination and collaboration**
 - Across RDCs, RD&E community and government
- **Greater engagement and communication**
 - To industry, government and community
- **Improved efficiency and effectiveness in investments**
- **Better information and coordinated funding in cross-sectoral areas**

National Primary Industries RD&E Framework

- Commitment to strategic, cross-sectoral collaborative investments
- RD&E Framework provides investment in:
 - cross-sectoral
 - cross-jurisdictional
 - cross-portfolio
- 14 sector and 8 cross-sectoral strategies

Benefits

- Agreed national strategies, combined effort
- Focus on future capability
- More strategic engagement
- Teamwork & collaborative culture
- Large coalitions of specialists
- More stable funding arrangements and new funding models
- Significant new capital investments

Regional Australia Institute

- Independent policy think tank and research organisation
- Devoted to issues impacting regional Australia
- Aims to identify solutions that enhance the prosperity and sustainability of regional Australia
- Promote research results and foster debate

Challenges for regional Australia

- Capturing the best brains to find innovative solutions to difficult problems
- Increased power in national debates
- Boosting national productivity
- Job creation and population growth
- Understanding impact on communities
- Delivering better services

What RAI aims to do

- **Seeks to empower and engage regional communities so they can achieve their potential for the benefit of all Australians**
 - Contribute to developing national prosperity and sustainability
- **Seek to be authoritative and trusted source of independent information and policy advice**
 - Build the quality of thinking
 - Support decision making

RAI Research Focus

- Theme 1 – Position and Potential
 - Regional Information System
 - Build on existing work - stocktake
 - Population mobility in Australia's regions
- Theme 2 – Realising Opportunity
 - Overcoming land-use conflicts in regional development – CSG experience
 - Fly-in, Fly-out workforce

RAI Research Focus

- **Theme 3 – Successful Transitions**
 - Regions and Natural Disasters: From Recovery to Renewal
- **Theme 4 – Better Services and Engagement**
 - Solving the Local Infrastructure Crisis

Ongoing Consultation with Regional Australia

- **Regional Forums**
 - Showcase RAI work
 - Discuss regional challenges and policy issues with regional community
 - Discuss and develop regional solutions
 - Receive input to shape future activities and research
- **Conference/Symposium**

From Rural to Regional....

- It is crucial that investment in RD&E grows to ensure:
 - Productivity growth
 - Innovation
 - Global food security
- Crucial that RD&E can be implemented and inform policy that can enhance prosperity

Where to from here?

- Vision is to enable regions to achieve their potential for the benefit of all Australians
- Through the work of the RDCs, continued investment in R&D will contribute to this
- RAI will contribute by taking this R&D and acting as a catalyst to improve regional Australia.....which will ultimately benefit all Australians

Thank You