



SEGRA 2010

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention News Editors / Chief of Staff
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE REAL AUSTRALIA OF THE FUTURE - GOVERNING A HOLLOW COUNTRY

Governments need to learn to govern a large 'hollow' country in which most people live on or near the coast, according to Associate Professor Geoff Cockfield, of the University of Southern Queensland.

Speaking ahead of next month's Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia (SEGRA) annual conference, where he will be presenting a paper on this topic, Associate Professor Cockfield said recent policy approaches have been based on romantic platitudes and sporadic and widely dispersed funding.

"Governments, for understandable political reasons haven't publicly acknowledged and widely discussed the real, future picture of our country" he said.

“There is not one regional Australia, but sea change areas, tree change areas, remote indigenous communities, large-scale agricultural and pastoral areas, mining hot spots and regional cities and they all need different approaches”.

“Open discussion of the reality of Australia’s make-up would allow public policy to focus on servicing the population where it is concentrating, investing wholeheartedly in infrastructure to access the major production areas and regional centres and then developing new approaches and technologies for remote communities.

Associate Professor Cockfield will present his paper to the SEGRA conference in Townsville, 19 – 21 October, where the concerns of regional Australia will be in the spotlight.

This paper will sit alongside a raft of agenda items critical to regional Australia including connectivity via transport and internet, health provision, water allocation and security, and leveraging the current national interest in regional issues.

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