



SEGRA 2011

# MEDIA RELEASE

SEGRA Secretariat  
GPO Box 2301, BRISBANE, Q 4001  
Phone: (07) 3210 0021  
Fax: (07) 3210 0044  
Web: [www.segra.com.au](http://www.segra.com.au)  
Email: [info@segra.com.au](mailto:info@segra.com.au)

Attention News Editors / Chief of Staff  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **REGIONAL AUSTRALIA:12 MONTHS AFTER THE INDEPENDENTS AGREEMENT**

The political agreement on regional development between the three regional independents and the Gillard government was hailed as promising a great future for the regions.

Twelve months on how is this \$1 Billion initiative progressing?

Has it brought a meaningful policy shift for regional Australia?

The place of regional Australia in the national agenda will come under scrutiny at the **SEGRA (Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia) national conference being staged in Geelong this week.**

"A number of the elements of the Independent's Agreement have now been delivered and the 55 Regional Development Australia bodies have contributed to our understanding of our regional character and its place in the national outlook," says Ms Kate Charters, convenor of the **SEGRA** conference.

“The first \$150m tranche of the one billion dollar Regional Development Australia Fund has focussed on projects that support regionalism and this is to be welcomed.”

The annual **SEGRA** conference will be looking at the current trends for regions and emerging issues and ideas for the future.

Keynote speakers will be looking at issues such as regional cities of the future, sustainable technologies, the huge opportunities the national broadband network will create for regional Australia, rising above adversity, as well creating economic development through business finance and attracting investment.

“Regional Australia has an important place in the current discussion about population, population growth, and the impact on the major metropolitan cities,” says Ms Charters.

“Regional cities are part of the solution and a spotlight session will be talking about the functions, planning needs, land use issues and green futures opportunities that this opens up.

“Key papers will look at what we can learn about the place midcities have in fostering and maintaining economic growth. What sort of regional cities do we envisage and need to plan for 50 or 100 years down the track.”

**SEGRA** is dedicated to being a voice for regional Australia – regional cities, and the network of towns and communities they support, as well as remote Australians.

“Regional Australia is a vibrant part of Australia and **SEGRA** is committed to bringing the success stories and aspirations to the forefront of the national agenda,” says Ms Charters.

“The debate needs to stay focussed on tapping into the assets of regional Australia. This will sometimes mean challenging the traditional ways of looking at our regions – debates that go back to federation.

“Regional Australia is a hotbed of innovation, which will be boosted further by the rollout of the national broadband network.

“It is where so much of our economy resides – including agriculture, manufacturing and mining.

**SEGRA** will be looking at how Regional Australia contributes to achieving Australia’s national priorities.

Ms Claire Penniceard will be presenting from her own experiences as owner of The Pig Pen Ltd on the opportunities for regional Australia to deliver on food security and future opportunities to be considered when setting policy directions for the future.

Ms Charters says enormous change is transforming Australia. With sea- and tree- change achieving the largest population movement the country has seen since colonisation, the resource sector is about to open up northern Australia with projects of unprecedented magnitude, propelling a new wave of change across the country.

**“Planning, policy and infrastructure for Australia needs to stay attuned to the opportunities for regional Australia as part of the national narrative,” said Ms Charters.**

The national conference aims to raise the profile of issues impacting regional, rural and remote communities.

**SEGRA** has been speaking out for regional Australia for 15 years. It is a critical forum where regional development practitioners, industry, researchers and government bring together their combined knowledge on regions from across Australia. After the conference a Communiqué 'Speaking up for Regional Australia' will capture some of the key proposals and initiatives and will be widely available.

A full conference program is available at [www.segra.com.au](http://www.segra.com.au)

-ENDS-

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

KATE CHARTERS,  
0408 882 871

MICHELLE FARQUHAR  
0432 334 994

SEGRA thanks its supporters and sponsors:

Host region: City of Greater Geelong  
Australian Government, Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government; Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation; State Government of Victoria, Deakin University, Barwon Water, Keystone Business Park, Indigenous Business Australia, Avalon Airport, Warralily Armstrong Creek, Southern Cross University, National Institute for Rural and Regional Australia, The Australian National University, EIDOS institute

