

Forestry School Launched At Creswick

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THE University of Melbourne launched Creswick's new School of Forest and Ecosystems Science yesterday, billing the campus as the nation's premier forestry research centre. The school is part of the university's new Land and Food resources faculty, and is Australia's largest forest research and education school. More than 100 staff will work at the site providing a range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in forest and wood sciences. Formerly known as the school of forestry, the new school has recruited 50 research employees from the Department of Sustainability and Environment, 17 of whom are based at the university's research centre in Heidelberg.

Vice-chancellor of the University of Melbourne, Professor Kwong Lee Dow, and deputy secretary for land stewardship and biodiversity for the DSE, Kevin Love, officially launched the school. Both praised the value of the partnership between the university and the DSE. The School of Forest and Ecosystems will also take part in three Co-operative Research Centres - the CRC for Wood Innovations, the Bush Fire CRC and the CRC for Catchment Hydrology. "This school will have a huge academic, research, and industry strength," Prof Dow said.

Mr Love said the school would research environmental issues important to both the future of the region and the nation. "The research here will make sure we understand how forest ecosystems work and how we can optimise the way we offset the greenhouse effect," Mr Love said. Interim head of the new school, Professor Malcolm Hickey, said the two new degrees on offer were an exciting part of the school's launch.

Next year the school will offer a new bachelor of forest science degree and an advanced diploma of wood products management. "We tried to make them (the new degrees) capture a broader range of activities and potential employment for students," Prof Hickey said.

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