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Minister for Resources and Energy
Special Minister of State

Katrina Hodgkinson MP
Minister for Primary Industries

MEDIA RELEASE

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LAND USE POLICY TO BE INVESTIGATED AT NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDY CENTRE

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, and Minister for Resources and Energy, Anthony Roberts, today launched a collaborative research initiative between the NSW Government and the University of Newcastle to drive cutting-edge research into land use policy.

Ms Hodgkinson said the new International Centre for Balanced Land Use will provide independent, evidence-based research into optimal land use.

“In NSW we have put in place some of the strongest requirements in Australia to balance the needs of prime agricultural and water resources with industry,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The Centre will complement the NSW Government’s Strategic Regional Land Use Plans, and offers a unique opportunity to address how the critical industries of agriculture and resources can coexist.

“By combining the knowledge and expertise of the NSW Government with the research strengths of Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources (NIER) we will be able to work together to further develop clear, evidence-based policy.

“The NSW Government and the University of Newcastle are contributing \$1 million in joint funding over the next three years, for this collaborative project.”

Mr Roberts said the NSW Government is committed to securing energy and food resources in NSW.

“We can only meet the challenges of food and energy security if we investigate a balanced approach to land use and agreed community objectives for the economic, environmental and social aspects of these industries,” Mr Roberts said.

“An important element of the project will be to analyse how land can be used multiple times through planned stages for various uses. This will promote sustainable land use and allow agriculture and industry to coexist.

“The NSW Government welcomes the opportunity to engage with an independent body that has the capacity to provide rigorous and independent research that will build on the critical reforms implemented by the NSW Government,” Mr Roberts said.

Member for Newcastle, Tim Owen, welcomed the new Centre.

“This collaboration is a great win for Newcastle and further cements the University of Newcastle’s reputation as a world-class research institution,” Mr Owen said.

For more information about the Centre, which will be based at the NIER, visit www.newcastle.edu.au/nier.