

**01 February 2007
MEDIA RELEASE**

CSIRO STUDY RECOGNISES THAT MINING MAKES WATER 'CENTS'

It's not quite the same as turning water into wine, but a recent study by the CSIRO has shown that the mining industry creates huge economic benefits from the responsible use of water.

The CSIRO has employed a life cycle assessment (LCA) methodology to calculate the economic value generated by a range of industries per cubic metre of water used. According to the CSIRO:

"At an average value of \$80 per cubic metre, the economic value of water used by the minerals industry is higher than that of the industrial sector (averaging about \$40/m³) and the agricultural industry (averaging about \$5/m³)."

NSW Minerals Council Chief Executive, Dr Nikki Williams, said that whilst the industry was proud of the shared economic benefits derived from mining, it remained committed to further improving its water use efficiency through innovation and new technologies.

"The ongoing drought has brought the issue of water into sharp focus. Water allocations have been reduced in the Hunter and other locations across the State. The reductions have affected farmers and miners alike. It is a critical issue for everyone, including the minerals industry."

Dr Williams said that the current situation showed the value of the industry's leadership in developing innovative strategies to reduce water consumption.

"The industry has been active in tackling the water issue for some time. It does not approach the current crisis from a standing start," she said.

"Northparkes Mine in the State's Central West, for example, is trialling new technology to reduce losses of water through evaporation from storage dams, to allow greater recycling and ensure less reliance on new water."

"The mining industry also invests millions of dollars in water conservation and efficiency measures. In the Hunter Valley the mining industry has made significant voluntary investment in water pipelines, which allow for the sharing of surplus water to reduce extraction from the Hunter River."

"The mining industry also has one of the highest recycling rates in the State. Mines in the Hunter Valley and Central West use effluent from local sewage treatment plants."

ENDS...

Media Contact: Jai McDermott, Manager Communications
Tel Direct: (02) 8202 7222
Mobile: 0400 435 646
Email: jmcdermott@nswmin.com.au

