

**A COMMUNIQUE FROM DR MICHAEL CRAWFORD
CEO OF THE CRC FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE SOILS**

9 February 2018

Greetings Soil CRC colleagues

Progress on Scoping Study Projects

Despite an initial flurry of activity in November and December, it was inevitable and largely unavoidable that progress on the scoping study projects slowed down over the Christmas/January period. Nonetheless, momentum has now been restored and each of the eight projects are abuzz with activity, with workshops planned for each of the projects over the next few weeks. The project workshops will be a great opportunity for researchers and end-users to sit together and really get into the detail of discussing what can potentially be undertaken through Soil CRC projects. I will personally be attending many of the workshops and will take the opportunity to provide direction where needed, as well as hear directly of the ideas that people have.

In response to feedback from Project Leaders and their organisations, we have pushed back the due dates for the Interim Report and the Final Report by a month to 14 March and 31 May respectively. We have also reviewed the need for individual IP Deed Polls for all project contributors and decided that where the risk and consequence is quite low, as in the case of these scoping study projects, signed IP Deed Polls are no longer a pre-requisite for contributing to a project. It is important in the early days of the Soil CRC, as new processes are being developed and implemented, that we receive and respond to feedback as early as possible, as we will not always get it right.

2018 Investment Rounds

There will be two investment rounds in 2018. The first call for projects will be made in early March with proposals due in early April, with successful projects commencing in July 2018. The second call will be in August for September submission with successful projects commencing in January 2019. Specific priorities for the first round will be identified by Program Leaders and approved by the Research and Adoption Committee. The second round will be fully informed by the findings and products of the scoping studies. More detail on this will be provided in coming weeks.

Contact list

We are rapidly moving to a more complete contact list for CRC communications. To date, this communique and other communications have been forwarded to key contacts in each organisation and we have relied upon internal distribution networks for dissemination. From the next issue, we are planning to email communications directly to all staff in all organisations who should be receiving Soil CRC information (with an option to unsubscribe of course). Can those who have received this email directly please email a list of 'forwardees' for their organisation to kathy.stokes@soilcrc.com.au so that we can now distribute information directly.

Upcoming Board Meeting

The Board will be holding its next meeting at the University of Tasmania in Hobart on 21 February. This is the first in a schedule that will see Board meetings held in various parts of the country to enable greater interaction with participants and stakeholders. A stakeholder event will be held in conjunction with the Board meeting, allowing local stakeholders to meet the Board and hear more about the Soil CRC.

Stakeholder visits and interactions

Stakeholder visits were limited during January as many people were on leave. But now they are starting to ramp up again. I will be meeting with Victorian participants, the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (Horsham) and the Birchip Cropping Group on February 19 and 20 before travelling to Hobart for the February 21 Board meeting. I will be in Sydney on 23 February for a workshop of the Project 1.2.01 team, led by Catherine Allan.

Position Available – Post-Doctoral Fellow/Associate Lecturer, Murdoch University

A Post-Doctoral position is available at Murdoch University with CRC researcher Prof Richard Bell through a new ACIAR Project on nutrient management. There will be research components in both Bangladesh and WA, as well as a teaching component. Applications close on 28 February 2018. Further details can be found at [Murdoch Post-Doc](#).

Upcoming Events

Soil-related events being organised by Soil CRC participants:

North Central Catchment Management Authority 2018 Farming for Sustainable Soils Conference. 8-9 March, Bendigo, Vic. soils.eventbrite.com.au

Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management 2018 Talkin' Soil Health Conference. 13-14 March, Dalwallinu, WA and 15-16 March, Katanning, WA. www.soilhealth.com.au

AORA (Australian Organics and Recycling Association) 2018 Annual Conference. 9-11 May, Brisbane, Qld. www.aora.org.au

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