

# Working across boundaries

## the common link between greenhouse gas and salinity

Researchers at the Centre for Sustainable Resource Processing (CSRP) are working across boundaries to combat important environmental issues. By sourcing charcoal from trees planted for salinity amelioration, they hope to replace fossil carbon in high temperature metallurgical processes, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

“What makes this research unique is that it brings together different organisations who are attempting to deal with some of Australia’s most challenging environmental issues, namely greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and salinity,” says CSRP CEO Stevan Green.

The CRC for Plant-Based Management of Dryland Salinity is investigating the use of Mallee trees as a method for tackling salinity in agricultural areas. With the assistance of the Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC), Mallee trees have been planted in the Wheatbelt area of Western Australia.



Sampling a molten bath during injection of charcoal at CSIRO  
Photo by C Pearson – mishey

“Mallee trees were chosen because of their short harvest cycle,” says Mr Green. “The oils from the trees can be extracted and used in other industries, while the large quantity of woody residue (biomass) provides a potential supply for low cost charcoal.”

The use of biomass has the potential to significantly reduce the net carbon emissions or greenhouse gas to the atmosphere during the metallurgical processing by providing a cost effective alternative to the use of solid carbon.

In addition to the foundation work, biomass research is now looking at carbonaceous waste from South Australian agricultural industries for use in a local smelting company, while iron and steel makers in NSW are exploring the possibility of using biomass in their processes.

“It is an exciting time at CSRP with our biomass research programme,” says Mr Green. “Our work in regional Western Australia is continuing, with two new projects commencing in South Australia and New South Wales. This work is truly collaborative, with researchers and industry working together to develop the technology, right across Australia.”

More information: [www.csrp.com.au](http://www.csrp.com.au)

## 2006 Selection Round Successful CRCs open for business

In the 2006 Selection Round, funding provided to new CRCs, or those developing from existing CRCs, ranged from \$21 million to \$37.69 million. From 1 July this year, these successful CRCs will begin operation.

The successful CRCs include three new CRCs with one in principle approval, seven centres to be developed from existing CRCs, and supplementary funding for four CRCs.

The new CRCs are the Australian Seafood CRC, the National CRC for Advanced Manufacturing (in principle approval) and the CRC for Cancer Therapeutics. The full list of CRCs that will commence or continue operation from 1 July this year can be found at [www.crc.gov.au](http://www.crc.gov.au).