



Media Release

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ALPINE RESORTS FORUM TAKES A LEAD ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Over 130 alpine resort practitioners came together today to help 'shape their future'. The event was the Third Alpine Resorts Sustainability Forum held in Melbourne.

Mr Andrew Fairley, the Chairman of the hosting body, the Alpine Resorts Co-ordinating Council, said that "the Alpine industry now places great emphasis on sustainability".

The industry has been at the forefront of climate change action – engaging the CSIRO some four years ago (2003) to undertake leading edge scientific work on likely snowfall scenarios and spending millions of dollars on snow making and other adaptive strategies, including water reuse and recycling and energy saving.

Mr Fairley said: "Climate change underpinned most of the Forum presentations and much of the discussion". The message was clearly that we can and must continue to take an active lead in raising awareness about the impact of climate change on the Alps and that all of us can help.

Resorts are actively promoting climate change awareness with their visitors and the alpine communities through their 'Keep Winter Cool' initiative.

Welcoming the delegates to the Forum, the Minister for Water, Environment and Climate Change, The Hon John Thwaites, MP announced that the Subaru Victorian Interschools SnowSports Championships had made a commitment to go carbon neutral and spoke of a new Keep Winter Cool competition with SkiMag to find out exactly what snow visitors are doing. "By making a commitment to reduce your greenhouse gas emissions, you are making a commitment to the future of our Alps", he said.

One of three keynote speakers, Mr Luke Cartin, told of the environmental initiatives at the Vail resorts in Colorado and the North American 'Keep Winter Cool' program. Eminent scientist Dr Ken Green spoke of the implications of climate change for Alpine biodiversity and Ross Honeywill, an acclaimed consumer behaviourist, stressed that the 'new consumers' demand sustainability.

A number of leading practitioners led workshops dealing with the Al Gore message, going carbon neutral, all season activity and the importance of forging partnerships. A panel session provided stimulating debate on how Alpine resorts can be economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.

As part of their response to climate change, all Alpine resorts are now 'all season', and open over summer, offering a range of activities and events. All have active environmental programs and many of these were showcased at the Forum.

Authorised by: Brad Miles, Executive Officer, ARCC, 27 April 2007

Further details: Contact Brad Miles. Phone: 03 9637 8955. Email: brad.miles@dse.vic.gov.au.