



## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

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**23 March 2009**

### **Australia leading the way with water savings initiatives**

A top US water efficiency expert has praised Australia's water savings programs and urged the US to adopt similar initiatives.

Speaking at the 10<sup>th</sup> Rain Bird Intelligent Use of Water™ Summit, in Melbourne, **Executive Director, Alliance for Water Efficiency, Mary Ann Dickinson**, said Australians have done a remarkable job in educating consumers to use water sustainably.

"Australia's efforts to reduce water consumption are well known around the world".

"Americans could learn from the example set in Australia to be more sensitive about reducing our own consumption without a noticeable loss of lifestyle," she said.

Ms Dickinson said that communicating the need to reduce water use for irrigation was another area where the US could learn from Australia's example.

"We have been successful in developing much of the technologies and proper landscape design techniques, but awareness of the seriousness of the water situation is still well behind that of our counterparts here in Australia."

Presented by Rain Bird, in partnership with Smart Approved WaterMark, the 10<sup>th</sup> Intelligent Use of Water™ Summit convened an impressive panel of Australian and U.S. water experts in Melbourne for a day-long discussion on the sustainability of Earth's water resources.

**Chief Research Scientist with CSIRO's Division of Marine and Atmospheric Research, Dr. Bryson Bates**, told the Summit that Australians should be proud of the way they were leading with their attitudes to water conservation.

"Australians seem to readily adopt water restrictions because it is a simple and socially responsible thing to do," Dr Bates said.

Dr. Bates said the next step was to ensure Australia's water conservation efforts also reduce electricity dependence.

"In Australia, we need to investigate and pursue sustainable housing design to reduce the excess use of heating and cooling systems that draw on our electricity and water supplies," he said.

"Water managers need to work more closely with climate scientists to plan for future water supply needs in an era of population growth and increasing climate uncertainty."

**Former Asst. Administrator for Water at the U.S. EPA, Benjamin Grumbles**, stressed the importance of a three point plan to manage water resources - reducing waste, reusing water and restoring water sheds.

“It’s important to conserve water at every point of the water journey from mountains to catchments,” Mr Grumbles said.

“In the future, we have to grow with the flow – which means a focus on smart growth and green buildings,” he said.

Mr Grumbles said initiatives, including green roofs, are a growing trend in the US, with citizens planting grasses on their roof tops to filter and clean storm water.

**Rain Bird Corporate Marketing Director, Dave Johnson**, said Australia’s harsh climate and current drought provide a real challenge to maximising water sustainability measures.

“Australia faces some of the worst drought conditions of any inhabited continent on the globe, and reduced water availability presents a significant challenge for homeowners and landscape professionals as they strive to preserve landscapes while maximizing every drop of water,” he said.

“Australia serves as a reminder to the world that water is the resource that most affects human life. Keeping the planet’s water resources viable into the foreseeable future requires advanced water conservation and better water efficiency through education and innovation.”

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### **ABOUT THE INTELLIGENT USE OF WATER™ SUMMIT**

Established in 2004 as a forum to further define the relationship between water conservation and landscape water use, *The Intelligent Use of Water Summit* series is an insightful examination of the current state of Earth's most precious resource in the face of environmental uncertainty. Previous summit locations included Pasadena, Calif., Tucson, Ariz., Tempe, Ariz., Madrid, Spain, and Aix-en-Provence, France.

This years Intelligent Use of Water Summit was held on Thursday, 19 March in Melbourne.

Panellists and speakers included Mary Ann Dickinson, Executive Director, Alliance for Water Efficiency, Benjamin Grumbles, Former Asst. Administrator for Water at the U.S. EPA; Dr Bryson Bates, Chief Research Scientist with CSIRO's Division of Marine and Atmospheric Research, Geoff Gardiner, General Manager Service Sustainability, City West Water in Melbourne; Julian Gray, CEO of Australia's Smart Approved WaterMark; Stuart White, Director, Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology in Sydney; and Greg Stewart, General Manager, Total Eden and Chair of Irrigation Australia WA Region.

Visit [www.rainbird.com](http://www.rainbird.com) for more information.

### **ABOUT RAIN BIRD CORPORATION**

Based in Azusa, Calif., Rain Bird Corporation is the leading manufacturer and provider of irrigation products and services. Since its beginnings in 1933, Rain Bird has offered the industry's broadest range of irrigation products for farms, golf courses, sports arenas, commercial developments and homes in more than 130 countries around the world. Rain Bird has been awarded more than 130 patents, including the first in 1935 for the impact sprinkler. Rain Bird and The Intelligent Use of Water is about using water wisely. Its commitment extends beyond products to education, training and services for the industry and the community. Rain Bird maintains state-of-the-art manufacturing assembly facilities in the United States, France, Sweden and Mexico <http://www.rainbird.com>.

### **ABOUT SMART APPROVED WATERMARK**

Smart Approved WaterMark is Australia's water saving labeling program for products and services which are helping to reduce outdoor water use. The scheme was set up by the Australian Water Association, Irrigation Australia, the Nursery and Garden Industry Australia and Water Services Association of Australia in response to the challenge of reducing per-capita urban water consumption across Australia. Smart WaterMark is funded through the Australian Government's Water Smart Australia program and is supported by all the States and Territories. [www.smartwatermark.info](http://www.smartwatermark.info), consumer web site: [www.smartwatermark.org](http://www.smartwatermark.org)