

Media Release for immediate release

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Collaborating for a cleaner, greener future

Demand for sustainable goods and services is booming on a global scale. This demand is driven by three main factors – growing consumer preference for responsibly sourced and manufactured products, government initiatives, and environmental necessity. Now, on the back of the National Innovation Agenda, Australia has a golden opportunity to become a world-leading producer of clean goods and services and potentially transform the national economy in the process. Furthermore, there are opportunities for regional communities to play their own part in creating a more sustainable future at a local level.

A growing group of Central Coast businesses and organisations have joined forces to lead the global green business boom at a regional level for the benefit of our local community. Facilitated by the Sustainability Advantage Program of the Office of Environment and Heritage NSW and supported by Manufacturing Connect Limited, the group known as the Central Coast Sustainability Cluster (CCSC), consists of fifteen organisations representing a broad cross section of industry sectors, from construction, manufacturing and waste management, to local government, skills training and community Services providers. Some of the organisations and businesses involved are Central Coast Council, Erina Fair, Agrana Fruit Australia, Sanitarium Health & Well Being, Bib n Brace, Central Coast Community Council Inc and North Construction, just to name a few.

The goals of the cluster are to share best practice, facilitate networking, and drive innovation through collaboration within and across industry sectors. The group's overarching mission is to work together on projects that will create economic, social and environmental benefits for the Central Coast.

Bruce Cottrill, the Director of local recycled timber manufacturing business, Bib n Brace said, *“While we all understand that manufacturers need to pursue whatever efficiencies we can to remain competitive in this global market, the steady march of manufacturing jobs offshore doesn't need to continue if we look for high value processing opportunities of local resources. It's about finding innovative ways to renew resources in order to keep manufacturing alive within the community.”*

Meeting monthly, the group does a lot more than just talk about sustainability. All members are working collectively on four projects that have been identified as having the greatest capacity to deliver the group's mission across three primary areas of focus – the Circular Economy (establishing infrastructure that will facilitate the recovery of waste streams), resource efficiency, and community engagement.

CCSC facilitator and Executive Officer of Manufacturing Connect Limited, Frank Sammut, said, *“Our current projects focus on opportunities to create value out of*

waste and the future possibilities around social and business enterprises that create jobs. Ideally having the waste generated and processed locally for real value is the goal. That is what is meant by the term Circular Economy.”

One of the group’s current projects is the establishment of a database that can record and track the industrial and commercial waste generated on the Central Coast. *“It may sound far fetched, but once the database is established, we will potentially have the ability to trade waste as readily as people trade goods on Gum Tree.”* said Mr Sammut.

To express interest in becoming a member of the Central Coast Sustainability Cluster contact Frank Sammut on 0411186634

For further information, high-resolution images or interview opportunities please contact Phaedra Pym on 0438 684 689.

About Sustainability Advantage

Sustainability Advantage is the NSW Government’s flagship program for medium to large organisations wanting to improve their sustainability. This business support service helps organisations reduce costs through improved resource productivity and greater efficiencies and will enhance environmental performance and reputation. The program has worked with over 500 organisations from a diverse range of sectors across NSW. Members are currently saving \$95 million per year from savings made via improved productivity and reduction in the use of raw materials, energy, water and waste. Sustainability Advantage works with individual organisations and a small number of priority sectors and is a great way to obtain expert advice, build your knowledge base, strengthen networks and demonstrate commitment to sustainability.

About Manufacturing Connect limited

Manufacturing Connect Limited, a not for profit organisation that is a passionate and active industry group formed through collaboration between NSW industry bodies and local manufacturing and engineering organisations.

This collaboration combined with its close working relationship with all levels of government, enables CCMC to effectively support Central Coast Manufacturers and facilitate opportunities for the growth and sustainability of our local manufacturing industry. It trades under Central Coast Industry Connect and Central Coast Manufacturing Connect.