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CHIEF SCIENTIST'S STRATEGIC APPROACH WOULD BENEFIT REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

Australia's Chief Scientist, Professor Ian Chubb, today launched a position paper which advocates a strategic approach to science and technology subjects which would benefit regional Australia, according to the Regional Universities Network (RUN).

The Chair of RUN, Professor David Battersby, urged the Government to implement the comprehensive and integrated strategy contained within the Strategic Approach to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics position paper.

"Australia must act with urgency if we are to continue to compete internationally. The four essential elements of education, knowledge, innovation and influence noted in the paper are as important in regional Australia as they are in capital cities. RUN universities are playing their part in teaching and learning as well as research in areas such as geochemistry, forestry sciences, crop and pasture production, agriculture and land management, zoology, biological and marine sciences, engineering and mathematics," Professor Battersby said.

"However, more regional Australians need to acquire skills in science and maths. A stronger emphasis on education in these subjects in school and university is essential.

"RUN is enthusiastically leading projects such as the RUN Maths and Science Digital Classroom, funded under the Government's Australian Maths and Science Partnership Program, to encourage the study of maths and science by Year 9 and 10 students. But a medium- to long-term strategy from Government is essential to ensure lasting change.

"We urge all political parties to seriously consider the strategy when formulating their science and research policies," Professor Battersby said.

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