

Bilateral activities

Bilateral activities provide opportunities for Academy and government officials to meet high-level international researchers and funders of research to discuss international science and technology policy and practices, and to promote Australian research and technology. These opportunities also help to promote and strengthen long-term relationships and increase Australia's presence and influence at the international level.

Meetings between Academy representatives and their international counterparts provide opportunities to discuss the operation of individual programs and make necessary modifications to ensure they are meeting their objectives. A large part of the Academy's bilateral activities is funded as part of the Australian Government Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research's International Science Linkages – Science Academies Programme.

The Academy organised a series of scientific symposia and workshops on global issues, conducted in Australia and overseas. To enable wide dissemination of information from the workshops the publications and presentations have been posted on the Academy's website.

Asia

China

China-Australia symposium on global ecosystems

Over 40 Australian delegates attended the *Sustaining global ecosystems* symposium in Beijing from 8 to 10 August, the fourth annual joint symposium with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). The symposium, organised by the Academy of Science and the Academy of Technical Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, included five specialised workshops: health and the environment, and sustainable water, land, air and energy.

Approximately 100 Chinese and Australian researchers participated in the event. The Australian delegation was led by Academy



Photo: Stockxpert

New opportunities: China-Australia Clean Coal Technology Centre proposed

President, Professor Kurt Lambeck and ATSE Vice-President, Mr Peter Laver. Professor Bai Chunli, Executive Vice-President of CAS, led the Chinese delegation.

Professor Ian Frazer FAA presented a plenary address, *Sustainable health in the twenty-first century*. The Australian delegation also attended site visits to the CAS Institute of Biophysics and the CAS Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research. The aim of the symposium was to bring together senior research scientists from both countries to gain an appreciation of what the other is doing. A range of potential joint research programs were identified, including the opportunity to establish a China-Australia Clean Coal Technology Centre. A joint statement issued by the three academies is available at: www.science.org.au/reports/14august07.htm

Australian Garden at the South Chinese Botanical Garden, Guangzhou.

Following a visit to the Australian National Botanic Gardens in November 2003, Professor Lu Yongxiang, President of CAS, decided to establish an Australian garden in the 300 hectare South China Botanical Garden in Guangzhou. Professor Lu engaged Australian garden curator Dr Ben Wallace, to create a garden that included not only Australian native flora but aboriginal cultural elements as well.

Professor Andrew Smith FAA and Professor Sue Serjeantson, the Academy's Executive Secretary, attended the Australian Garden opening ceremony on 18 January. The ceremony was attended by about 100 secondary school students. Following the ceremony, Professor Smith gave a one hour lecture to the secondary school students on the flora and fauna of Australia and its geography.

The new garden showcases a Southern Cross fountain at the entrance, an obelisk surrounded by a growing strangler fig, mounds of grass in the shape of boomerangs, and representation of a midden, gunyas and a bora ring. A major feature of the garden is the extensive educational signage, on rocks, plaques, theme signs and plant labels.

BHP Billiton made a generous donation towards the establishment of the Australian Garden and the Academy contributed to its establishment by the administration of the donation and by coordinating donations of planting materials from Australian botanic gardens and herbaria.



Opening celebrations for the Australian Garden in the South China Botanical Garden

Nobel Laureates Beijing Forum 2007

Professor Kurt Lambeck and Professor Martin Green FAA were invited to the Nobel Laureates Beijing Forum 2007, hosted by CAS and the Beijing Municipality on 11 and 12 September 2007. The Forum was established in 2005 to examine issues around a permanent theme of harmony and development of human beings. Each forum has a distinct topic: the 2007 meeting focused on energy and the environment.

The forum invited Nobel laureates and renowned Chinese scientists, government officials and industry insiders to examine in-depth the issues on scientific and technological development, institutional arrangement and social management around the chosen themes.

Professor Lambeck gave two speeches whilst attending the forum in Beijing. The first was on the utilisation and promotion of new energy sources in Australia, and the second was entitled *Climate-energy nexus: The transition from vicious circle to virtuous circle*.

Whilst in Beijing Professor Lambeck met with the President of CAS, Professor Yongxiang Lu, to discuss issues of mutual interest including the 2008 Australia-China symposium.

Indonesia

Australia-Indonesia workshop on emerging diseases

Ten Australian delegates participated in the Human Health – Infectious Diseases workshop held in Jakarta, 14 and 15 April. This bilateral workshop was organised by the Academy on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.

Approximately 50 Indonesian researchers participated in the event. The Australian delegation was led by Professor John Mackenzie, Professor of Tropical Infectious Diseases, Australian Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre, Curtin University of Technology. The Australian delegation also attended site visits.

The aim of the symposium was to bring together research scientists from both countries to gain an appreciation of what the other is doing in the area of human health and to enhance collaboration between Australian and Indonesian researchers.

Korea

Visit to Korean academies

On 31 May 2007 the Academy's Foreign Secretary, Professor Jenny Graves FAA, met with President Hyun Ku Rhee, President of the Korean Academy of Science and Technology (KAST), at the KAST headquarters in Bundang. Professor Rhee commenced his term of office as President of KAST earlier in 2007 and Professor Graves took the opportunity to discuss ways in which both countries could strengthen the bilateral research collaboration.

The Foreign Secretary was also hosted by the Korea Science and Engineering Foundation (KOSEF) in the city of Taejeon. Professor Graves met with Mr Byung Whan Ho, Director, Division of International Cooperation, and discussed joint ongoing and new programs between the Academy and KOSEF. She also visited a number of research organisations in Taejeon.

Professor Graves took the opportunity to congratulate KOSEF on the occasion of its 30th anniversary in 2007. Since its establishment, KOSEF has made important contributions towards the promotion of science and technology activities in Korea.

Early Career Scientist Research Program

To enhance links between Australia and Korea in science and technology, the Australia–Korea Foundation, the Academy of Science, the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering and KOSEF developed an Early Career Scientist Research Program. Under this program, with funding from the Australia–Korea Foundation and KOSEF, two young Korean scientists – Dr Je-Hoon Lee from Chungbuk University and Dr Jong-Ho Shinn from Seoul National University – conducted research for a period of three months between September and December at Murdoch University and the University of New South Wales (UNSW). They were hosted by Professor Mike Myoung-Ok Lee of the School of Electrical, Energy and Process Engineering at Murdoch University, and Professor Michael Burton of the School of Physics at UNSW.

The 2008 program will see young Australian researchers travel to Korea to undertake research with colleagues at Korean institutes.

Taiwan

Visit to Taiwan

The Academy's counterpart in Taiwan, The National Science Council, hosted a visit by Nancy Pritchard, Manager of International Programs, from 13 to 16 August. The Council organised a program of visits in Taipei, Hsinchu and Tainan, including the National Synchrotron Radiation Research Centre, the National Centre for High-Performance Computing, the National Health Research Institutes and the National Digital Archives Program of the Academia Sinica.

Meetings were also held with the Australian Commerce and Industry Office in Taipei. The Academy has a program of exchange visits to Taiwan, and it is hoped that the visit will raise the profile of the program.

Europe

Switzerland

Visit of the President of the Swiss Academy of Sciences

Professor Denis Monard, President of the Swiss Academy of Sciences, visited the Academy on 8 February and met with members of Council who hosted a lunch in his honour. Professor Monard is a professor of cell biology at the University of Basel. The Academy assisted the Swiss Embassy in Canberra to organise a program of visits for Professor Monard in Canberra and Melbourne. The Academy expects that this visit will strengthen the relationship with the Swiss Academy.

France

French Embassy Cotutelle fellowship program

The French Embassy Cotutelle fellowship program, operating in Australia and in France, allows PhD students to work under the direction and responsibility of a thesis supervisor in each country. The program, designed to enhance two-way international research collaboration, began in Australia in 1997 and the Academy assumed its administration in 2002. Each project is established under a reciprocal arrangement with a 'Cotutelle convention' binding the two partner institutions and recognising the validity of the studies undertaken. On completion of the program successful students are awarded a double-badged degree – a PhD from Australia and a PhD from France.

Germany

Meetings of the Nobel laureates in Lindau

The Academy of Science sponsored six young Australian scientists to attend the Meeting of Nobel Laureates in Lindau, Germany, from 1 to 6 July 2007. The topic for the meeting was physiology or medicine. Professor Bob Williamson FAA led the delegation, and arranged for the students to meet with some of the Nobel laureates.

Around 600 young scientists from around the world attended, giving them the opportunity to meet with about 20 Nobel laureates, both in formal and informal situations.

The Academy has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council for the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings and support for attendance is shared between the two organisations.

North America

United States of America

East Asia and Pacific Summer Program for US Graduate Students

The Academy and the United States (US) National Science Foundation conduct a joint program that enables twenty US graduate students in science and engineering to visit Australia between June and August each year for a period of eight weeks during the American summer. The purpose of the visit is to conduct research in laboratories and to initiate personal relationships with Australian counterparts.

The host research institutions – such as universities, CSIRO and museums – provide the students with office accommodation, access to laboratory, library and computing facilities, as well as technical assistance and the time and expertise of the host researcher.

For the fourth year the Academy organised a series of lectures and site visits as part of an orientation session in Canberra from 13 to 15 June. Professor Jenny Graves FAA, Foreign Secretary, welcomed the students to the Academy during the orientation session. This activity is funded by the Australian Government Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research's International Science Linkages – Science Academies Programme.



Participants of the 2007 East Asia and Pacific Summer Program for US Graduate Students

Other international activities

Federation of Asian Scientific Academies and Societies

Academy President Professor Kurt Lambeck attended the Council Meeting of the Federation of Asian Scientific Academies and Societies (FASAS) in Bangkok from 27 to 29 November. The Meeting was held at the same time as the First International Conference on Science Education in the Asia Pacific initiated by FASAS, the Association of Academies of Science in Asia (AASA) and the InterAcademy Panel (IAP). Following plenary lectures, the conference divided into three parallel sessions: best practice, innovation, and role of science academies in science education.

Professor Lambeck gave a presentation about four of the Academy's major science education programs: *Primary Connections*, *Nova: Science in the news*, *Interviews with Australian scientists* and *Science by Doing*.

The Academy will assume the Presidency of FASAS for three years, beginning in 2009.

Further information
about international
programs is available at:
[www.science.org.au/
internat](http://www.science.org.au/internat)