The ‘Evaluation of the CRC Programme’ July 2003 report by Howard Partners was very influential in directing selection Rounds 9 and 10 to focus on commercial outcomes. It may be, following the recent Productivity Commission report ‘Public Support for Science and Innovation’, that the guidelines for Round 11 will embrace a wider range of outcomes.

Our CRC was a Round 7 CRC and, as well as our commercial outcomes, we promised to develop optimal long-term performance criteria for wood products through the simulation of various environmental conditions that they may encounter during transport, storage and use. This outcome is being delivered through the CRC’s work at the Queensland Government Department of Primary Industry and Forestry and will be an extremely valuable long term benefit from the CRC.

Tom Spurling
Chief Executive Officer

Project reviews and Governing Board meeting

The CRC conducted a review of its research projects on September 6th and 7th at Prahran. This review followed the format of the December 2006 review. It is planned to have a final project and budget review in February 2008. The purposes of this review were:

- to review all the research projects in relation to the milestones agreed to in the Commonwealth Agreement;
- to review the progress of work being carried out for the purpose of commercialising the CRC technology packages; and
- to allocate resources in accordance to the priorities of the CRC.

The Deed of Variation, dated 14th March 2007, had a revised schedule of milestones that the CRC has to achieve before 30th June 2008. Our Wind-up plan indicates that we expect that at least 90% of them will be achieved. The current review confirmed that expectation. In the past two years the CRC has concentrated on work concerned with the seven technology packages agreed by the Governing Board to be the most prospective. These are:

- the stress measurement device;
- microwave modification
  - accelerated drying of hardwoods
  - softwoods;
- preservation
  - hot wood treatment and fast preservation;
- enhanced adhesion;
- pyrolysis; and
- Wood Shapes.
In addition to the commercialisation of the technology packages the CRC has identified a number of ‘public good’ outcomes. These are largely associated with Project 2.4 in its ‘Development of high quality wood products for long-term service in a wide range of environmental conditions’ but include aspects of the other projects.

The budget for 2007-08, approved by the Governing Board at its October 9th meeting, includes $664,356 to research providers for research and technology transfer activities associated with commercialisation of the technology packages, $25,000 for the development of a ‘public good’ outcome and the remainder to cover additional commercial and administrative expenses.

**J W Gottstein Memorial Trust**  
**Wood Science Course 2008**

The Gottstein Trust in collaboration with The University of Melbourne and Ensis is organising the Wood Science Course 2008 at The University of Melbourne, Parkville and Ensis, Clayton from 4-8 February 2008.

The objective of the course is to provide an understanding of wood and the origin of the properties which affect its processing and end-use, to give an insight into the potential for development of new products, and to provide an appreciation of environmental issues and international trends in the forest products industries.

Professors Peter Vinden and Ian Ferguson are among the distinguished group of lecturers and speakers.

Further information may be obtained from Dr Adrian Wallis, Secretary, J W Gottstein Memorial Trust, Private Bag 10, Clayton South, Vic, 3169 or email: secretary@gottsteintrust.org

**Dawning of a new age**

The July/August 2007 issue of ‘Inwood Australasia’ has an article entitled ‘Dawning of a new age, raft of preservation products about to launch’. The article includes the following:

Had to be a way

Meanwhile, Australia’s Cooperative Research Centre for Wood Innovations (CRC) has developed preservative technology that impregnates wood in less than a minute. TimTech Chemicals is the exclusive licensor of the technology, which has already been sublicensed on an exclusive basis in New Zealand. A number of Australian companies are showing interest in the process.

“I have long believed there had to be a way to effectively treat in-line and still achieve the full sapwood penetration standard for H1 and H2 that sprays and dips cannot achieve,” TimTech Australia’s general manager Mike Brown (above) told Inwood.
“This means 100 percent sapwood penetration for pine framing with touch-dry and drip-free products treated at a speed that keeps pace with the framing production line. This full penetration means that any cutting or machining done during the building process will not expose untreated sapwood.”

The technology is the brainchild of Professor Peter Vinden, CRC project team leader, who says it is a great example of how fundamental science can attract commercial interest when scientists work closely with an industrial partner.

Although achieving full sapwood penetration was not difficult, the scientists focused on minimising the uptake of the water-based preservative formulations. Dr Jeff Hann, who leads the process research at the Australian Centre for advanced Wood Processing (ACAWP), elaborates: “Our aim always has been to produce a drip-free, touch-dry product that doesn’t require redrying but ensures all sapwood is properly penetrated. Smart use of process variables and clever engineering have enabled us to achieve that goal.”

Another variation on this process technology is its application to CCA treatment, allowing the chemical to fix almost immediately.

The technology is apparently best suited to operations that steam round wood or timber before treatment and Vinden is excited by the prospect of combining this technology with microwave processing of timber. TimTech is taking the process to market and has one treatment operation in Australia and another installing the process in New Zealand.

The company has also received approval from the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines association (APVMA) for its new LOSP preservative system, Azguard. The formulation is based on azoles as active fungicides with an added insecticide, permethrin.

Forests in the news

A multibillion dollar plan to protect forests and lessen global warming is set to be backed by an alliance of nations, home to more than 80 per cent of the world’s tropical rainforests.

The grouping of up to 20 countries will be announced during UN talks on climate change in New York on Monday, following a meeting chaired by Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.
The alliance will claim negotiations on a post-Kyoto protocol are not adequately tackling deforestation, which contributes up to a quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. It is expected to call for billions of dollars in climate change funding to be allocated to nations that preserve their forests.

The alliance is expanding rapidly. Indonesian Foreign Minister Hassan Wirayuda said that a month ago, eight nations were to participate. Days ago, the number rose to 12 and now another eight have asked for invitations.

Critically, the alliance includes Brazil and Indonesia, which are the world's fourth- and third-largest greenhouse-gas emitters when deforestation is taken into account. Members also include Costa Rica, Colombia, the Congo, Malaysia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea and Peru.

With Indonesia hosting the pivotal UN meeting in December to determine a new formula to combat global warming, Dr Yudhoyono is in a unique position to shape the debate. Indonesia's UN representative said Dr Yudhoyono's trip to New York showed his personal commitment to the issue.

As well as heading the meeting of rainforest nations, Dr Yudhoyono will attend a leaders' global warming summit called by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and a General Assembly session on climate change.

Indonesian Environment Minister Rachmat Witoelar said the rainforest nations would commit themselves to sustainable forest management and develop an action plan at the New York meeting.

The alliance aimed to increase the bargaining position of rainforest nations at the Bali negotiations in December to shape the successor to the Kyoto Protocol, Mr Witoelar said.

In an effort to swing attention away from reducing industrial carbon emissions, Mr Witoelar said tropical forest management had to become part of the post-Kyoto agenda. The concept of "avoided deforestation" had to be recognised and rewarded, he said.

Essentially, countries with remaining tropical forests are asking to be compensated, probably with carbon credits, for not logging them. Under the Kyoto Protocol, a carbon credit scheme of financial incentives specifically excludes forest protection. Only replanting is eligible for assistance. A recent World Bank report was highly critical of continued forest logging in Indonesia.

Finally

A notable event at the October Governing Board meeting was when Mike Brown gave the Chairman the CRC’s first royalty cheque. It will be the first of many and is deposited in the newly established bank account for the Centre Intellectual Property Trust. Not many CRC’s have had a royalty cheque in their seventh year!