

# PROFESSOR PENNY D SACKETT

## Chief Scientist for Australia

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### CHIEF SCIENTIST'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL VISIT

Astronomy and sustainability were the major points of focus for my first official overseas visit as Chief Scientist for Australia.

This focus included my attendance at the launch of the International Year of Astronomy in France and a variety of meetings in California, London, Brussels and Paris. At each stop, I took the opportunity to build relationships with members of international science and research communities.

We discussed issues including Australia's global science engagement; climate change research and policy; sustainable clean energy; and the Square Kilometre Array initiative.

The first engagement of a full schedule was attending the 213<sup>th</sup> meeting of the American Astronomical Society in Los Angeles, where I delivered the keynote address on: *Science, the Sky, and Society: A view from an astronomer in the Antipodes*.

Attending this meeting also provided an opportunity to engage with key figures in the American and international astronomical community.

In Brussels, I gave a lecture to the Club of Rome, an influential organisation of scientists, economists, businesspeople, international high-level civil servants, heads of state and former heads of state from all five continents.

My lecture, entitled *Science, scientists, a sustainable world: Views from Down Under*, focused on the role of scientists in addressing key global challenges such as climate change and the importance of international scientific cooperation, given the global dimensions of the challenges we face. A transcript and summarised video of this speech will be available on my website shortly.

I was fortunate to meet with representatives from a number of key European and international organisations including:

- Professor John Beddington, Chief Scientific Advisor to the UK Government
- Professor Fotis Kafatos, President of the European Research Council and Chairman of its Scientific Council
- Education policy analysts at the UK Royal Society
- Dr Zoran Stančič, the European Commission's Deputy Director-General for Research
- Mr Stavros Dimas, European Commissioner for the Environment
- Professor Walter Erdelen, Assistant Director General for Natural Sciences, UNESCO

- Ms Sally Mansfield, Australia's Permanent Delegate to UNESCO
- Dr Marcio Barbosa, Deputy Director-General, UNESCO
- Senior Secretariat Staff of the International Energy Agency
- Professor Jean-Jacques Dordain, Director General of the European Space Agency

This visit was a valuable opportunity to nurture Australia's international science relations and increase partnerships in areas of Australia's strengths.

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*Photo caption: Professor Sackett with Professor John Beddington, Chief Scientific Advisor to the UK Government*