



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Groundwater Expert Returns from IAH Congress

One of the Northern Territory's leading groundwater experts believes China and the NT have much to learn from each other in terms of managing water resources.

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts (NRETA) Water Resources Principal Engineer Peter Jolly recently returned to Darwin after attending the 50<sup>th</sup> International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH) Congress in Beijing and visiting a number of water institutes in the region surrounding Beijing.

Mr Jolly's visit to China was organised by Professor Xu Zhenci, Director of the Hebei Academy of Water Resources.

The Academy is located in Shijiazhuang, the capital of Hebei Province.

Hebei Province is one of the world's most densely populated areas.

It covers an area of 130,000 square kilometres and is home to 70 million people.

In 2005, Professor Xu spent six months in the Northern Territory on a visit hosted by Charles Darwin University and NRETA.

"The visit to China enabled me to build new networks and strengthen existing ones, as well as experiencing different ways of managing water use," Mr Jolly said.

"The people I spoke to in Hebei Province were surprised to learn we allocate so much water to the environment.

"Environmental water to them means water provided for lawns, gardens and ornamental lakes.

"The water resource managers in Hebei Province are in a position where they must allocate all of the available water to industry, agriculture and residential use.

"The Territory is in the enviable position where it is able to monitor what works and what doesn't, so relevant knowledge can be used to produce the best possible outcomes for Territorians and the environment."

During the visit Professor Xu Zhenci expressed the desire to develop an ongoing exchange program between Charles Darwin University, NRETA and the Academy and while no formal arrangement has been finalised, useful contact and communications continue.

Ends

**Media Note – For more information contact Peter Jolly on 8999 3606**

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