



# Media Release

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**PETER GARRETT MP**

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

**SENATOR KATE LUNDY**

Senator for the Australian Capital Territory

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17 December 2009

## **\$2.9 million water project for the Australian National Botanic Gardens**

Work will begin in the new year on a multimillion dollar construction project to pipe water from Lake Burley Griffin to the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra.

Environment Minister Peter Garrett and ACT Senator Kate Lundy today announced the successful tenderer, the NSW construction firm Draincorp.

The project secures a long term water supply for the Gardens to maintain its living collection, delivering on a key election commitment for the ACT.

“This project will deliver 170 million litres of lake water a year, to ensure this fantastic living collection – the largest collection of Australian native plants in the world – continues to thrive,” Mr Garrett said.

“It means horticulturalists can irrigate the living collection even with tough water restrictions - and very importantly, it will free up valuable drinking water for the Canberra community.

“This is the fulfilment of an important election commitment by the Rudd Government – we’re providing \$1.5 million under the Government’s *Water for the Future - National Water Security Plan for Cities and Towns* and another \$1.4 million in funding through the Director of National Parks, to pipe water from Lake Burley Griffin.”

*Water for the Future* is the Australian Government's 10-year, \$12.9 billion initiative to prepare Australia for a future with less water, focusing on four key priorities: taking action on climate change, using water wisely, securing water supplies and supporting healthy rivers.

Senator Lundy said the Gardens showcases the extraordinary diversity of Australia’s native plant species, with more than 400,000 Australian and international visitors every year.

“The Gardens is not only much loved by the people of Canberra – it is a national treasure, a great national institution with a growing role in scientific research,” Senator Lundy said.

“The living collection represents more than one-third of Australia’s plant biodiversity – and with this investment, its future is secure.”

Mr Garrett and Senator Lundy inspected the water saving techniques which have cut the Gardens water use by more than 20 per cent, before visiting the newly renovated waterwise emu bush garden and planting two waterwise emu bush, *Eremophila christopheri*.

The National Capital Authority and the ACT Government have agreed to an allowance of 170 million litres from the lake each year. Subject to approvals, it is expected that work will be completed for the Gardens to switch to lake water by next summer.

For tips on making your garden waterwise, visit [www.anbg.gov.au/news.html](http://www.anbg.gov.au/news.html)