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**'Good News' story from Catholic Earthcare Australia**

**'SUPER' PARTNER ON SUSTAINABILITY**

Bringing the Australian Catholic Church to ecological conversion has moved a step closer this month with Australia's largest Catholic superannuation fund, CSRF, committing itself to Catholic Earthcare Australia's vision of eco-sustainability.

At a meeting in Sydney on 14 July, the CEO of Catholic Superannuation and Retirement Fund (CSRF), Mr Greg Cantor, and Executive Director of Catholic Earthcare, Ms Jacqui Remond, signed a memorandum of understanding that will see the two organisations sharing resources, information and training on ecological and sustainable investment and best practices.

Mr Cantor said CSRF represents about 87,000 members, covering Catholic schools, agencies and clergy with about \$3.3 billion in assets under management.

"The average age of our membership is 42. They're part of the generation who wants to be part of the transition to low carbon economies. They want sustainable investments that minimise harm to the environment and complement their Catholic teachings." Mr Cantor said.

He said investing in sustainability also made good business sense. He said CSRF's investment in Generation Investment Management (GIM), co-founded by former US Vice-President Al Gore and his Australian partner David Blood was an example of ethical investment that paid dividends.

"Generation's international equity product was our best performing international shares manager for the last financial year. In this model of sustainable investment, it is not just environmental, but also including social and governance issues that directors of companies are expected to deal with."

CSRF is also a foundation investor, with up to \$40 million committed, to the GIM's Climate Solution's Fund, Mr Cantor said. "Its portfolio includes companies which are working on the green solutions to today's environmental problems, including the work of Australian scientist David Mills' Ausra solar thermal business. "

“For Generations X and Y, who are in super funds now, the expectation is that investment in environmentally sustainable products will be the norm, not the exception in their lifetime.”

On behalf of Catholic Earthcare, the agency mandated by the Bishops’ Conference to bring an ecological conversion to the Australian Church, Ms Jacqui Remond described the signing of the Earthcare–CSRF Memorandum as “a landmark partnership that brings into focus our collective consciousness on sustainability”.

“This partnership is part of the dialogue occurring in Catholic agencies right now in acting for a just and sustainable future. No one person or agency can do this alone. We have to move together as one people filled with faith, directed by God.”

Giving his blessing to the signing was Archbishop Adrian Doyle, the Chairman of the Bishops’ Committee for Justice and Development, who signed the document as a witness.

Archbishop Doyle concurred with the spirit of the new partnership, saying that the challenge in the Church was to educate its people on the environment and the importance of sustainability.

Adding his endorsement and signature as co-witness, former US Vice-President, Mr Al Gore, said the signing of the MoU spoke to him as someone who was raised in the Southern Baptist tradition and believes in the church’s mission to “to be a good steward of God’s creation.”

Coming near the end of his recent Australian visit, Mr Gore described being a witness at the MoU signing as a “great honour.”

“This is the best business meeting I’ve ever attended. And probably the best I ever will.” Mr Gore said.

## **END STORY**

(546 words)

**DAN MCALOON**

Sydney

**Caption: Partnering for sustainability** (July 14, 2009). Seated, Ms Jacqui Remond, Catholic Earthcare Australia and Mr Greg Cantor, CSRF, sign the memorandum of understanding with witnesses Mr. Al Gore and Archbishop Adrian Doyle.  
(PHOTO DAN MCALOON)