February

The Deputy Secretary-General of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), Mr. Aart de Geus was a distinguished speaker at the University's International Forum Series “Problems of today – world of tomorrow”.

Expert panel members from the Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Australian Trade Commission discussed the global financial crisis, Australian government responses and regulatory reforms.

In his visit to the University, Mr. de Geus also led a high-level roundtable on “Human Capital - engine for growth, how to supply” focusing on migration and human capital flows impacting on economic development. Roundtable guests included leaders from Federal and State Government Departments and European business leaders represented in Sydney who have direct interest in issues of education, talent flows and patterns for growth.

February/March

The European Office hosted visits by the Danish Embassy, British Council, European Parliamentarians and NSW German Consul General. Information on the University’s engagement with each region and highlights of research expertise was provided whilst investigating opportunities for closer teaching and research collaborations.

In early March, an International Forum was organised on “EU Student Mobility - Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 and Bologna Update” with guest speakers from the Directorate General for Education & Culture, European Commission. The event was part of the Sydney Launch of the Second Phase of the Erasmus Mundus Programme which extends mobility and joint study programmes to the Doctoral level.

April

The International Development Manager, Europe chaired a roundtable session for staff on the COST and ISRES European funding instruments involving two University members directly involved in these schemes. Interested staff had the opportunity to clarify processes and hear more about the schemes from their colleagues. The Institute for Transport Logistics and the School of Chemistry are also involved in the COST programme.

May

The International Development Manager, Europe hosted a session on the University’s engagement with Europe and provided information on EU funding instruments at the NSW Chapter Launch of SAAN (Swiss Australian Academic Network). SAAN hosts a number of networking events, scientific lectures and presentations by Swiss and Australian academics and it is hoped that the NSW Chapter will continue to expand academic networking activities between both countries.

For more information go to: www.saan.id.au

June

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, International, Prof. John Hearn led a delegation of senior academic leaders to Paris to participate in the OECD Forum 2009 and to hold a joint symposium with INRA, the French National Institute for Agricultural Research. The delegation included: the Dean of Sciences, Prof. David Day; the Dean of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Prof. Mark Adams; the Director of the Graduate School of Government, Prof. Geoff Gallop; member of Senate, Dr Robin Fitzsimons; the Regional Director for Europe and Hong Kong, Mr Murray Cobban and the International Development Manager for Europe, Ms. Sandra Margon.

The theme for the 10th Annual OECD Forum “The Crisis and Beyond: For a stronger, cleaner, fairer economy” focused on key global issues of our time ranging from economic recovery and stimulating growth to climate change and green growth. The University of Sydney is a “Knowledge Partner” with the OECD.
June (continued)

Three members of the University delegation were directly involved in the Forum as speakers: Prof. John Hearn was a speaker in the “Education for recovery” session chaired by the OECD Director for Education, Dr. Barbara Ischinger. Prof. Geoff Gallop was an invited discussant in the “Economies of Health” session and Prof. Mark Adams was a speaker in the session on “Future of food: markets, prices, security”.

Whilst in Paris, Prof. Hearn hosted a high-level dinner to highlight the University’s close engagement with the OECD and growing research collaborations with French research bodies. Dinner guests included the Australian Ambassador to France, H.E. Mr. David Ritchie, the OECD Director of the International Futures Programme & Global Science Forum, the OECD Director for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, the Australian Minister-Counsellor (Agriculture), Paris and the Australian OECD Minister-Counsellor (Education and Employment), Paris. Leaders from French based research bodies including INRA, Institut Pasteur and the French Ministry of Higher Education were also invited as was a select group of French based alumni who had the opportunity to meet with senior academic leaders in their professional fields.

The second major event for the delegation in Paris was a joint symposium with INRA: “Physiology of Adaptation: From Gene to Form and Function” featuring five leading academics from the Faculties of Science and Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. Prof. Day led the two day event which saw the joint symposium held at INRA research laboratories at Versailles and included alumni interested in these specific areas. The academic team included Prof. Mark Adams, Prof. Peter Waterhouse, Dr Charlie Warren and Dr Margaret Barbour. INRA is ranked number one for agricultural research in Europe and number two in the world.

The symposium was highly successful with the two faculties expected to begin negotiating a collaborative agreement with INRA in plant sciences that would allow for exchange of postgraduate students and post-doctoral researchers.

Additionally, Prof. Hearn and Murray Cobban visited Brussels for briefings on new policy developments with COST, FP8, Marie Curie and the Bologna Process. The Australian Ambassador to the European Union, H.E. Mr. Alan Thomas hosted a lunch that included several EC Directorate Heads. John Hearn was also an Australian representative at the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education held in Paris.

The University is a foundation partner in Australia’s associate membership of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL), Europe’s flagship laboratory for basic research in molecular biology. Australia is the first non-European member of EMBL. The Faculty of Science and the DVC-Research continue to develop the Sydney component of the Australian EMBL program including staffing and facilities.