

Premier and Minister for Trade
The Honourable Peter Beattie
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SMART STATE COMPANIES TAKE ON THE WORLD AT BIO 2007

Queensland companies are set to showcase their Smart State expertise to more than 20,000 delegates at the biggest international biotech conference of its kind -BIO2007 -which opens in the US this Sunday, May 6.

Queensland Premier and Minister for Trade Peter Beattie said the Smart State matched it with the best in the world in biotechnology research and development, including the health, agriculture and the environment sectors.

"Our most significant competitive advantage is our natural mega biodiversity - very few places in the world have access to such an array of fauna and flora," Mr Beattie said.

"Combine these with a strong economy, top researchers and world-class infrastructure and Queensland is the biodiversity hotspot to watch," Mr Beattie said.

"I don't think people realise that more than 80 per cent of Australia's native species are found no where else on earth but in Queensland. For instance, one hectare of our Daintree Rainforest is home to more flowering tree species than in all of North America."

Mr Beattie said Queensland scientists were also pioneering in an equally diverse range of biotechnology projects that aim to find cures and save lives.

"We've got companies like ElaCor using a component in Taipan snake venom to develop a new drug to treat heart failure," he said. "Peplin is trialling a compound called PEP005 which is derived from weed sap to treat skin cancer.

"Implicit Bioscience is right now in clinical trials to test a new super drug to treat flu, hepatitis C and ovarian cancer, while firms like Panbio are manufacturing and marketing innovative and speedy tests to detect over 30 mosquito and animal-borne viral diseases including Dengue Fever, Ross River Fever and West Nile encephalitis."

During BIO 2007 the Premier will host a Queensland reception for about 200 representatives of the international biotechnology, business and investment community.

"Our long-term Smart State Strategy is all about positioning Queensland as the leading knowledge-based economy."

"BIO2007 is an exciting showcase of Queensland's many talents and it will enable the global biotech leaders to learn more about the Smart State, investment opportunities, jobs and potential collaborations."

Media Contact: Premier's Office 3224 4500
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