



The Place To Be

# Media release

From the Acting Premier of Victoria

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## **GOVERNMENT INSTILLS CONFIDENCE IN ALPINE RESORTS FUTURE**

The Acting Premier, John Thwaites, today released the Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy, that provides a blueprint for growth and future confidence for Victoria's alpine resorts.

Speaking at the opening of the ski season at Mt Buller, Mr Thwaites said a key part of the strategy was to build on non-winter visitation to the resorts.

"Non-winter visitation to Victoria's alpine resorts has at least doubled in the last ten years and the Strategy will build on this trend," Mr Thwaites said.

"This will result in greater year round use of existing assets and provide a platform for future investment.

"The strategy also outlines measures for protecting the magnificent Alpine environment, including its unique flora and fauna.

"Practical initiatives include making sure that ski runs avoid areas of threatened species, rehabilitating degraded areas and doing further research into species ecology."

The Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy has been compiled following consultation with the industry and public in response to the release of the Alpine Resorts 2020 Draft Strategy in 2003 and Alpine Resorts 2020 Discussion Paper in 2002.

Mr Thwaites said Victoria's alpine resorts had for some time accepted they faced environmental challenges including climate change.

"This strategy includes a proactive response to these issues and a sustainable way forward."

Mr Thwaites said CSIRO research conducted as part of the Strategy showed that there was likely to be some reduction in the average snow season by 2020 as a result of climate change.

"However with sufficient investment in snowmaking, the larger, higher altitude ski resorts would be able to manage this impact," Mr Thwaites said.

"And across the resorts there will also be a greater emphasis on developing and promoting a wider experience for visitors.

"This will include the further development of non-winter visitation, eco-tourism, educational products and a focus on the cultural and natural heritage of the Alpine area."

Mr Thwaites said the Alpine Resort Management Boards had welcomed the Strategy as an important plan to protect the future of the industry that contributed \$129 million to Victoria's economy annually, and provided over 3,700 jobs.

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