



Climate change talks at Yea forum

Professor Rod Keenan was guest speaker at a recent forum organised by the Goulburn 100 Club and hosted by Donna Petrovich, Liberal Party MP for northern Victoria region.

The forum on our future at Yea's Royal Mail Hotel posed the question, "Climate change: Is biosequestration the answer?"

Professor Keenan, who is with the Department of Forest and EcoSystem Science at the University of Melbourne, is a research leader in climate change, forest ecology and sustainable forest management.

Biosequestration is the capture and storage of the atmospheric carbon dioxide by biological processes, mainly plant photosynthesis.

Professor Keenan stated that the soil carbon levels of land under active agricultural production are only 60-75 per cent of that under native conditions and so we

need to look at how we can improve farming methods to increase soil carbon levels.

The overriding message Professor Keenan delivered was that while it is very difficult to estimate the likely level of future climate change we as a society should be doing everything we can to reduce carbon emissions.

Professor Keenan's presentation sparked lively debate with several agricultural producers fearing that their industry would bear the brunt of costs associated with emission reductions and calling for a greater spread of responsibility.

"We are very fortunate to have someone of Professor Keenan's calibre to speak in this community," Donna Petrovich said.

"He explained the issues clearly, particularly the costs associated with reducing emissions and the need to spread these costs fairly."