

Jobs at EcoCover

A MANUFACTURING plant unique in Australia will soon be calling Coffs Harbour home.

Coffs Harbour Challenge will later this year take delivery of the equipment needed to make EcoCover, a patented mulch mat made from recycled paper.

The \$2 million project is expected to provide employment for as many as 20 people.

Coffs Harbour Challenge general manager, Ian Wade, said a \$522,500 Federal Government grant had helped to finalise the purchase and installation of the plant at the firm's Keona Circuit complex.

"We hope to be producing EcoCover mulch matting before the end of the year," he said.

The 30-metre long manufacturing plant could well be the first production plant outside New Zealand. One is also earmarked for California.

"EcoCover is an ideal replacement for black plastic that people use in their gardens. It degrades and is easy to use," Mr Wade said.

"The product also has excellent moisture retention properties that will help with water management during the current drought period.

"University research has shown



Coffs Harbour Challenge general manager Ian Wade, left, and the Member for Cowper, Luke Hart-suyker, celebrate the establishment of the EcoCover project. Photo: TREVOR VEALE 07042809A

that EcoCover is a unique product. It is a world first."

The process will use paper from Coffs Harbour Challenge's secure document destruction service and other sources.

"As well as the project's environmental benefits in making a product using material

removed from the waste stream and providing a viable alternative to plastic, this project will deliver a number of jobs for people with disabilities, and provide an income stream that will support Coffs Harbour Challenge's programs for full community participa-

tion," Mr Wade said.

Over three years, the manufacture of EcoCover will remove an estimated 1200 tonnes of paper from the waste stream.

For more information, contact Coffs Harbour Challenge on 6652 6066.