



New report released - Demonstrating the potential of carbon capture and storage

Opportunities for geosequestration or carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology to be part of Australia's greenhouse gas mitigation strategy are outlined in a new report by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Science and Innovation released today. The report, 'Between a Rock and a Hard Place', recognises the potential of CCS technology to reduce the negative impact of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions on the global climate. The report recommends the initiation of large-scale demonstration projects in Australia.

Currently, Australia relies heavily on coal for export revenue and domestic electricity production. A carbon constrained world would have a major impact on Australia's ability to benefit from coal exports and relatively cheap electricity. As the production of energy from coal creates significant greenhouse gas emissions, it is important that Australia pursues CCS technology as a means of reducing CO₂ emissions and ensuring Australia's prosperity in the future.

This report examines the science of CCS, the environmental and economic benefits and risks of CCS, and the legislative regimes necessary for its future use. The report also considers ways in which Australian industry can capture market applications from further research into and demonstration of CCS technology.

Committee Chair, Petro Georgiou MP, discussed the importance of CCS technology. "CCS is one of a suite of options which will have to be employed if Australia and the world are to address the challenge of reducing anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. Australia is well placed to contribute to the further development of CCS technology, as it is already a leader in this field and has begun to demonstrate the technology on a small scale".

"In order to maintain momentum, it will be important for Australia to demonstrate CCS technology on a large scale and, at the same time, ensure that adequate legislative regimes are in place. The recommendations in this report are intended to further progress CCS research, through adequate funding and financial incentives. The Committee is also recommending that the Australian government follow risk mitigation strategies designed to ensure the protection of the Australian environment and develop a strong legislative framework to support the deployment of CCS technology", Mr Georgiou added.

The report recommends that:

- more funding be provided to the CSIRO to progress research by CO₂CRC to assess the CO₂ storage potential of sedimentary basins in NSW;
- funding on a competitive tender basis is provided for large-scale CCS demonstration projects;
- a rigorous regulatory environmental risk mitigation framework for CCS is implemented;
- direct and tax-based financial incentives are employed to encourage science and industry to continue developing and testing CCS technology; and
- the Australian Government develop legislation to define the financial liability and ongoing monitoring responsibilities at a geosequestration site.

Copies of the report can be obtained by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4150, emailing scin.reps@aph.gov.au, or on the Committee's website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/scin/geosequestration/index.htm>. The Chair and Deputy Chair will be available for media comment following tabling and are contactable at their offices in Parliament House, Canberra (details below).

<p>For media comment: contact the Committee Chair, Mr Petro Georgiou MP, on (02) 6277 4419 or the Deputy Chair, Mr Harry Quick MP, (02) 6277 4304</p> <p>For information: contact the Committee Secretary on (02) 6277 4150</p>
