

Media Release

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST GEOSEQUESTRATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT TO START THIS YEAR

9 January, 2006

Just days before the first meeting of the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate in Sydney, a leading Australian research group, the Cooperative Research Centre for Greenhouse Gas Technologies (CO2CRC), has announced plans to conduct the first carbon dioxide (CO₂) geosequestration project in Australia.

A goal of the Asia Pacific Partnership is to work together to develop, deploy and transfer technologies, such as geosequestration, that address climate change.

Geosequestration is the geological storage of CO₂ in deep rock formations and is an important option for making deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere, along with energy efficiency; switching to less carbon-intensive fuels; and using renewable energy.

The Chief Executive of CO2CRC, Dr Peter Cook, said preliminary project assessments have already taken place and work would begin in early 2006. The injection of CO₂ into deep geological formations was expected to begin late this year or early in 2007.

“The project has the backing of Australian and international research institutions, industry and governments.

“What makes this project important at an international level is that it will be one of the most comprehensive geosequestration research projects to take place anywhere in the world.

“While a few similar projects exist in the Northern Hemisphere, the CO2CRC project will be the first in Australia to demonstrate geological storage and monitor the CO₂ before, during and after its injection in deep geological formations.

“The aim of the project is to research ways to help Australia make deep cuts into CO₂ emissions, the most abundant greenhouse gas,” Dr Cook said.

“The project, which will be situated in western Victoria, will cost around \$30 million and will involve approximately 40 Australian and overseas researchers.

“The project will simulate the capture of CO₂ from a power station; transport the CO₂ several kilometres by pipeline; and store it about two kilometres beneath the Earth's surface.

“In other words we will be putting the CO₂ back underground, from where it came.

“We will carefully monitor the behaviour of the stored CO₂ using very sophisticated techniques that can detect and track the CO₂ deep beneath the Earth’s surface.

“We will, of course, keep the local community fully informed throughout the life of the project through public meetings and one-on-one meetings with key landholders,” Dr Cook said.

“The research project will meet government planning and environment requirements.

“Western Victoria is a very good area for testing the technology as large amounts of CO₂ are naturally trapped in the Otway (sedimentary) Basin. Our experiments will simulate natural geological processes that trap CO₂ for up to millions of years.

“Over a one-to-two-year period we will inject the CO₂, scientists will monitor all aspects of the project to ensure it goes according to plan and to demonstrate the safety and effectiveness of the technology,” Dr Cook said.

“Global warming is a serious issue for communities and governments around the world. Our project will make a significant contribution to establishing technologies in Australia and globally, which have the potential of making deep cuts into greenhouse gas emissions,” Dr Cook said.

The CO2CRC collaborates with leading international and national geosequestration experts to conduct world-class research into CO₂ geosequestration.

Further information: Dr Peter Cook, 0419 490 044. Carmel Anderson 0418 461 250. General information on geosequestration and CO2CRC and its collaborating organisations can be found at www.co2crc.com.au

Note to TV News Chiefs of Staff:

Please retain the video news release as file footage. As the subject is often referred to in a variety of ways, it can be filed under: CO₂ geosequestration; Geosequestration; and Carbon Capture and Storage.

Note to newspaper Chiefs of Staff: Download the research project image from www.co2crc.com.au/imagelibrary