

Global monitoring network to visit CO2CRC Otway Project

More than 20 atmospheric researchers from the Advanced Global Atmospheric Gases Experiment (AGAGE) will visit the CO2CRC Otway Project today to see the atmospheric monitoring system used to assure the project's safe storage of carbon dioxide deep underground.

"The Otway Project has given us a lot of experience in this area," says Nadja Muller, Otway Project Manager.

"CSIRO researchers working within CO2CRC have been continuously monitoring carbon dioxide and other related trace gases at the Otway Project since 2007".

"The system is extraordinarily sensitive and can easily detect small amounts of CO₂ from operations at the site. It's great to be able to share knowledge with an international body like AGAGE, especially as we are both engaged in tackling climate change."

AGAGE is part of the powerful global observing system that is monitoring the trace gases in the Earth's atmosphere with the potential to affect the climate and the ozone layer. AGAGE measuring stations at coastal sites around the world provide an accurate picture of the earth's atmosphere and how it is being affected by human beings.

The network is holding their bi-annual meeting in Melbourne this month, giving the group the opportunity to see the equipment CO2CRC uses to measure levels and changes in carbon dioxide.

"AGAGE has been continuously measuring the composition of the global atmosphere for ozone-depleting and greenhouse gases since 1978," says Paul Fraser, CSIRO researcher and coordinator of the tour.

"We currently focus on the long-lasting trace gases that affect the ozone layer, such as halocarbons, and those that contribute to global warming, such as methane.

"The Otway Project provides a detailed and practical approach to monitoring carbon dioxide."

The CO2CRC Otway Project, Australia's first carbon dioxide storage project, has successfully injected, stored and monitored over 65,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide-rich gas since April 2008. The comprehensive monitoring program measures carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, groundwater, soil and deep underground, as well as regular seismic and other testing to provide assurance of safe and secure geological storage.

The CO2CRC Otway Project involves researchers from Australian universities and research organisations as well as researchers from New Zealand, Korea, Canada and the United States. The Project has been financially supported by the Australian Federal Government, the Victorian State Government and the US Department of Energy, as well as CO2CRC members.

Further information: Nadja Muller, 0417 066 318, nmuller@co2crc.com.au

Paul Fraser, 0448 013 086, Paul.Fraser@csiro.au

Media assistance: Tony Steeper, 0417 697 470, tsteeper@co2crc.com.au

More information on AGAGE: <http://agage.eas.gatech.edu/>

CO2CRC collaborates with leading international and national CCS experts to conduct world-class research into carbon capture and storage. Organisations participating in CO2CRC research include CSIRO, Geoscience Australia, the Universities of Adelaide, Curtin, Melbourne, Monash, NSW, Queensland and Western Australia, GNS Science (NZ), the Alberta Research Council of Canada and the US Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. Industry and State core partners supporting CO2CRC are Anglo American, ANLEC R&D, BG Group, BHP Billiton, BP Australia, Chevron, Foundation for Research Science and Technology (NZ), INPEX, KIGAM, Mitsui, NSW Industry & Investment, QER, QLD Department of Mines and Energy, Rio Tinto, Sasol, Schlumberger, Shell, Solid Energy, Stanwell, Total, the Victorian Department of Primary Industries, WA Department of Mines and Petroleum and Xstrata.