



MEDIA RELEASE

MARTIN FERGUSON

Minister for Resources and Energy
Minister for Tourism

11 May 2010

FACT SHEET 2:

\$92 MILLION FOR LARGE-SCALE SOLAR DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

The Australian Government has awarded \$92 million to two large-scale solar energy demonstration projects to help accelerate the deployment of renewable energy technologies in Australia and drive down their costs.

The Government has approved the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy's (ACRE) recommended funding of a 23 megawatt solar boost to coal-fired turbines at Kogan Creek, near Chinchilla in western Queensland (\$32 million); and a 40 megawatt concentrated solar thermal demonstration plant at Whyalla, South Australia, using Australia's own "Big Dish" technology (\$60 million).

Combined with investment from the successful applicants, the two projects will deliver about \$320 million in solar energy investment in Australia and more than 60 megawatts equivalent of solar peak load generation capacity, within the next four years.

These projects will save almost 100,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions a year.

In many locations around Australia, such as western Queensland and South Australia, the solar resource coincides with summer peak electricity demand periods; therefore projects such as these have great potential to improve system reliability.

These two projects show the flexibility of solar energy technologies either to stand alone and produce zero emissions power, or to attach to existing fossil fuel generators to reduce their carbon footprint.

The grants, which are subject to successful offer negotiations, are offered to:

- **CS Energy Pty Ltd - \$31.8 million**

The CS Energy project at Kogan Creek in Queensland will demonstrate the Compact Linear Fresnel Reflector (CLFR) solar array technology developed in Australia by Ausra Pty Ltd. This technology is now being marketed world-wide by the Areva Group. The project will be attached to the existing Kogan Creek A Power Station to provide a 23 megawatt equivalent superheated steam solar boost to the coal-fired turbines. This will allow an increase in energy output as well as saving around 35,600 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year. CS Energy is a Queensland Government-owned corporation.

- **N.P. Power Pty Ltd (Whyalla Solar Oasis Consortium) - \$60.0 million**

The Whyalla Solar Oasis Consortium will demonstrate Wizard Power's 'Big Dish' concentrated solar thermal power generation technology developed at the Australian

National University in 1994. The 40 megawatt demonstration plant at Whyalla will utilise 300 'Big Dish' solar thermal concentrators that will be built on site using Wizard Power Pty Ltd's proprietary factory-in-the-field concept. The technology is easily scalable and a successful demonstration of the 'Big Dish' technology will open the way for further deployment of the technology, both within Australia and overseas. The project will generate power for about 9,500 average households and save about 60,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions a year. The Whyalla Solar Oasis Consortium consists of N.P. Power Pty Ltd, Sustainable Power Partners Pty Ltd and Wizard Power Pty Ltd.

Following the May 2009 budget and revised funding arrangements for solar technologies, prospective solar energy applications for the Renewable Energy Demonstration Program were referred to the Interim ACRE Board for full assessment and funding recommendations.

These two projects are the successful applications from that process.

ACRE's investment in these two solar demonstration projects is further evidence of the Australian Government's strong support for renewable and solar energy, complementing the expanded Renewable Energy Target – 20 per cent by 2020 – and the expanded \$5.1 billion Clean Energy Initiative, including the \$100 million Australian Solar Institute and the \$1.5 billion Solar Flagships Program.

Media contact: Michael Bradley (Ferguson) – 0420 371 744