



International Association of Hydrogeologists

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

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Submission to House Standing Committee on Science and Innovation

Inquiry into geosequestration technology

The Australian National Executive of the International Association of Hydrogeologists, representing some 500 practising groundwater specialists throughout Australia, makes the following submission in respect of the terms of reference:

The science underpinning geosequestration technology

- Considerable hydrogeological research and investigation would be needed for any potential geological repository which is not a proven hydrocarbon trap.

Potential environmental risks

- Geosequestration is a potential environmental risk to overlying fresh groundwater resources
- Geosequestration should only be considered in geological formations which are not potential groundwater resources, ie those aquifers which contain saline groundwater, essentially stagnant and of considerable age, and which are not connected with active meteoric driven groundwater flow systems.

Regulatory and approval issues

- Appropriate technology and regulation is needed to ensure the integrity of injection wells which pass through fresh-water bearing aquifers; there must be no possibility of leakage either during the injection stage, or after abandonment, and appropriate monitoring is required to ensure this
- A competent groundwater specialist with the appropriate expertise to be involved in the development of national protocols and guidelines to ensure protection of groundwater resources
- A competent groundwater specialist with the appropriate expertise to be involved in the assessment of proposals to ensure that hydrogeological data and models being used to assess geosequestration proposals are sound.

Philip Commander
President, IAH Australia

16 August 2006

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