



New inquiry announced

The science and application of geosequestration

The House of Representatives Science and Innovation Committee has announced a new inquiry today (30 June) into the potential management of greenhouse gases using the process of geosequestration, which is the capturing of carbon dioxide emissions and storing them underground.

Geosequestration involves the injection of compressed CO₂ underground into geological formations including oil and gas fields and deep saline formations. It is the focus of much interest, both within Australia and internationally, and could contribute to managing the greenhouse emissions associated with fossil fuel power generation.

Project planning for geosequestration trials is underway, including a research trial at an Otway Basin site in south-west Victoria and a commercial trial off the north-west coast of Western Australia.

The Committee Chair Petro Georgiou said “there are potentially significant opportunities offered by geosequestration. Australia has taken a lead in exploring the science of geosequestration and its application to address greenhouse gas emissions”.

“This inquiry is timely given current energy debates in Australia and the commencement of geosequestration trials over the next two years,” Mr Georgiou said. “The inquiry will assess the potential application of geosequestration technologies to Australia, and how Australian scientists and industry might benefit from national and international developments.”

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, Julie Bishop, has requested that the Committee inquire into and report on the science and application of geosequestration technology in Australia, with particular reference to:

- The science underpinning geosequestration technology;
- The potential environmental and economic benefits and risks of such technology;
- The skill base in Australia to advance the science of geosequestration technology;
- Regulatory and approval issues governing geosequestration technology and trials; and
- How to best position Australian industry to capture possible market applications.

Interested persons and organisations are invited to make written submissions to the inquiry by **Friday 18 August 2006**, after which the Committee will hold public hearings.

Further details, including the terms of reference, membership of the Committee and advice on making submissions can be obtained on the Committee’s website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/scin/index.htm> or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4150 or emailing scin.reps@aph.gov.au

For media comment: contact the Committee Chair Mr Petro Georgiou at Parliament House on (02) 6277 4419 or at his electorate office (03) 9882 3677.

For information: contact the Committee Secretary on (02) 6277 4150