

Australia and China partner for a low-emission energy future

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Australia and China today signed a partnership agreement that will pave the way for the installation of low-emission coal energy technology in Beijing next year.

Signed by CSIRO Chief Executive, Dr Geoff Garrett, and Mr Li Xiaopeng, the President of China's state-owned energy enterprise, the China Huaneng Group, the agreement will see a post combustion capture pilot plant installed at the Huaneng Beijing Co-generation Power Plant.

Post combustion capture (PCC) is a process that captures carbon dioxide (CO₂) from power station flue gases and is a key technology that can potentially reduce carbon dioxide emissions from existing and future coal-fired power stations by more than 85 per cent.

The installation of the PCC pilot plant in Beijing forms part of the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate initiative (APP) which first announced funding for PCC research in November 2006.

Low-emission energy generation is a key research area for CSIRO as Dr Garrett explains.

“CSIRO has developed a significant energy research program with the objectives of significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the energy sector whilst increasing efficiency and developing new technologies for our future energy mix,” he said.

“China is a nation undergoing an immense period of growth and energy security and supply is vital to support this process.

“With issues such as climate change at the front of our minds, this research – and the development of a diverse range of low-emission energy technologies – is now more important than ever. This is a priority for both CSIRO and the China Huaneng Group.

“CSIRO has been working on collaborative projects with China for over 30 years, in areas as diverse as minerals and mining technology, plantation forestry, environmental sustainability, and crop science. We are delighted to continue this process as we partner with the Huaneng Group to address the global issue of greenhouse gas emissions from the energy sector,” Dr Garrett said.

The APP program for PCC also includes a pilot plant installation at Delta Electricity’s Munmorah power station on the NSW Central Coast, with additional Australian sites currently under negotiation for PCC installation and demonstration.

PCC research in Australia is also taking place outside the scope of the APP program with the announcement of the Latrobe Valley post combustion capture project – a \$5.6 million endeavour that focuses on the reduction of emissions from brown coal power stations.

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