

Prime Minister launches Global CCS Institute

The Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute has been launched internationally by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd at an event jointly hosted by the US President Barack Obama and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi in L'Aquila, Italy.

The launch follows a meeting of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate.

The Global CCS Institute is an international initiative led by Australia to speed up the development of carbon capture and storage technology, and reduce the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere.

The Institute will play a significant role in delivering the G8's goal of developing at least 20 fully integrated industrial-scale CCS demonstration projects around the world by 2020.

Rudd says that despite the growth of renewable energy, fossil fuels, especially coal, will continue to be a major source of energy for some time to come.

"Without global action like CCS, fossil fuel emissions are forecast to increase by 130 percent by 2050," he says. "That is why Australia believes that CCS technology is so important."

The International Energy Agency says that CCS plays a crucial role in the technologies that will underpin climate change mitigation targets. "Strong leadership now is essential," says IEA Executive Director Nobuo Tanaka.

"We believe that now is the time for CCS. If we do not develop several largescale integrated CCS demonstration projects within the next decade, we won't be able to deploy the technology in time to prevent CO₂ levels from exceeding allowable limits. If that happened, our only alternative would be to develop and deploy novel technologies to remove CO₂ from the air, which would be enormously expensive and may not succeed. Time is running out," says Tanaka.

Since the creation of the Global CCS Institute in September 2008, 131 entities have become foundation members, including 23 national governments and more than 100 major companies and organisations. All members of the G8 are foundation members of the Institute.

The Prime Minister has also announced further appointments to the Institute's International Advisory Panel which will be chaired by former World Bank President James Wolfensohn.

The new appointments are Lord Nicholas Stern from the UK, former Executive Director of the International Energy Agency Claude Mandil and Executive Director of the Indian Energy and Resources Institute Dr Leena Srivastava.

Source: esaa news Issue 27 (13 July 2009)