

**Metago Environmental  
Engineers (Australia) Pty Ltd**

*Integrating specialist  
engineering, scientific,  
social, financial and legal  
skills for sustainability.*

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# The Sustainable Production



## Welcome

The aim of this newsletter is to update our current and potential clients with trends, summaries and comments as our Australian society moves further towards sustainable development. We hope you find the contents of this newsletter useful. If you have any questions, or do not want to receive the newsletter please e-mail: [tiffany@metago.com.au](mailto:tiffany@metago.com.au).

## Alcoa in Legal Battles

Residents living near Alcoa's Wagerup alumina refinery, 125km south of Perth, Western Australia, have filed a U.S lawsuit against Alcoa. The mining company is accused of knowingly, negligently and recklessly operating its refinery and poisoning surrounding communities with toxic emissions. Prosecuting lawyers are working with Erin Brockovich, the high profile American environmental health campaigner made famous in a Hollywood movie, and are seeking an unspecified amount of damages.

In a similar issue, the WA Department of Environment & Conservation charged Alcoa in December 2008 with causing pollution with criminal negligence from dust emissions in May 2006. Alcoa, who sought a 3 month adjournment in April, is to face court on 23rd July 2009 over the charge. More info from: <http://www.news.com.au/perthnow>



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## Australia's 'Cleanest' Car

Toyota has unveiled its 3rd generation Prius. With a combination of petrol and electricity, David Buttner, Senior Executive Director of sales and marketing, says the new model is ultra efficient using 3.9L/100 kilometres, power has been increased by 21 % to a healthy 100 kilowatts, with just 89g CO<sub>2</sub> emissions/km. More information at: [www.news.ninemsn.com.au](http://www.news.ninemsn.com.au).

Prius' rival, 2nd generation Honda Insight, will be available in Australia in 2010. It too has a petrol-electric hybrid motor with a fuel efficiency rating of 3.4 L/100 km and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions rating of 80g/km. More information at: [www.whatgreencar.com](http://www.whatgreencar.com)

To compare, it's been assessed that cyclists of average fitness exhale approx. 40g/km of CO<sub>2</sub>.

## Climate Change Policies in Action

A U.K company, GHK Consulting, has completed a study examining 15 European companies about how climate change policies are being implemented. The study reveals that climate change and related regulations have strongly influenced some major European companies. Energy efficiency measures are usually the main options pursued and hiring new employees is being avoided by retraining or "greening" existing employees. Initiatives include:

- New fleets of cars and trucks;
- Airlines investing in new planes;
- Substituting energy-intense goods and services with ones that are less intense;
- Building partnerships for lobbying purposes and to manage their external responses;
- Greening existing jobs by introducing new training programmes;
- Reducing carbon-based fuels;
- Using 100% recoverable or biodegradable packaging.

The study found that "it's regulation which pushes enterprises to think about climate change and manage their business accordingly" says Medhurst, Director of GHK. However, factors other than regulations affect the companies' responses to climate change, and these vary according to different sectors. For example in the food and drink sector "most of the companies have strong corporate brands and want to be seen to be 'doing the right thing' which they see as including taking action on climate change" states the study.

More info at: <http://www.wbcds.org/includes/getTarget.asp?type=DocDet&id=MzQ5MjQ>



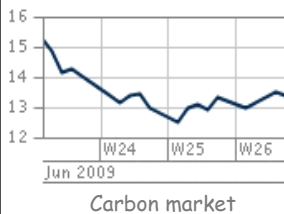
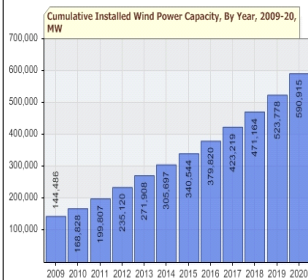


## The Dawning of Smart Energy

In a statement U.S President Obama recently summed up the smart energy debate when he said the country that leads on clean green energy will lead the world in the 21st century. In a single sentence, Francis Grey, research manager for the AuSSI (the Australian SAM Sustainability Index) believes Obama transformed the debate of energy sustainability from a tree hugging issue and put it in with the 'big boys' of security, national defence and being number one in the world. Grey states that the challenge is to deliver energy 'services' production from renewable sources at costs per kWh (kilowatt hour) less than the present cost of coal power.

In a recent article emphasising the scale of China's energy commitment the *New York Times* reported China will deliver 30,000 MW of wind power next year, 10 years ahead of schedule. One wind farm, out of eight planned, is equivalent to 16 coal fired power plants - and the number of wind plants has outrun the ability of the grid to keep up with the wires. While the rate of construction for new coal plants is falling the rate of wind power construction is rising. Continued investment will drive the cost of renewable energy down and in to competition with coal. The economic gains from this are immense, and a new industry is born. Unlike the previous period of economic growth most of these jobs will last through time.

More information from: [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/03/business/energy-environment/03renew.html?\\_r=1&hp](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/03/business/energy-environment/03renew.html?_r=1&hp)



## The EU's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)

The European Union's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) commenced in January 2005 and is currently in its second phase. The ETS currently covers more than 10,000 installations in the energy and industrial sectors. The installations get the allowances for free from the EU member states' governments. Besides receiving this initial allocation on a plant-by-plant basis, an operator may purchase EU allowances from others (installations, traders, the government). If an installation has received more free allowances than it needs, it may sell them to anybody. The price of emissions permits tripled in the first six months of Phase I, collapsed by half in a one-week period in 2006, and declined to zero over the next twelve months. Such movements and the implied volatility raise questions about the viability of the trading system to provide stable in-

centives to emitters. The price of carbon at the end of June 09 was €13.40/t.

More information available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction>

- Denmark's Climate Plan has a greenhouse emissions target of 90% below 1990 levels by 2050.
- The U.K has passed their Climate Change Act which sets a greenhouse gas reduction target of 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.
- In 2008 the G8 confirmed a goal of halving the world's greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, which Japan campaigned for at the 2007 G8 meeting.
- It is the intention of some of the European members of the G8 meeting, being held this July, to call for developing nations to commit to similar ambitious reduction targets.



## Nuclear Energy Cleanest Option: study

A new study has found that nuclear energy is the world's only currently available 'clean' power capable of producing base-load electricity. The study was commissioned by the Australian Uranium Association and conducted by Professor Lenzen from the Centre for Integrated Sustainability Analysis in N.S.W. In 2009 there are some 439 nuclear power reactors operating in 30 countries. In 2007 these provided 2608 billion kWh, about 15% of the world's electricity. Over 40 power reactors are currently being constructed in 11 countries with multiple reactors in China, South Korea, Japan and Russia. It is estimated that this will give nuclear power a 17% share in world electricity production by 2020. More info from: <http://world-nuclear.org/info/inf17.html>

Despite this, in Bavaria, Germany, where nuclear energy provides up to 70% of the energy needs, the state environment minister, Markus Soeder, stated recently "Nuclear technology is a bridging technology," he said. "We need it until we have it completely replaced by renewable energy." More information at [www.philly.com/philly](http://www.philly.com/philly).

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