



# MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon Peter Garrett MP**

*Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts*

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## **NATIONAL ATLAS HIGHLIGHTS OUR RENEWABLE ENERGY POTENTIAL**

Environment Minister Peter Garrett today launched the first ever, user friendly interactive atlas to map the full extent of Australia's renewable energy resources.

Speaking at the site of the new solar 'big dish' at the Australian National University, Mr Garrett said the atlas would be a fantastic and invaluable tool for industry, governments and the community as Australia explored solutions to climate change.

"This on-line Renewable Energy Atlas is available to anyone who wants to know more about our continent's energy potential and the array of options available to us," Mr Garrett said.

"It will be used by planners and investors to expand and develop renewable industries in Australia, and will help build community awareness of the enormous potential for growth in this area."

Mr Garrett said the atlas was a practical tool showing in-depth, nationwide information on all forms of renewable energy from solar exposure and wind speed to geothermal temperatures.

"Wind speeds, wave and tidal information, ocean currents, biomass and hot ground water data are all charted in this excellent resource. Other information such as contours, roads, towns, electricity transmission lines and climatic factors gives data better context.

"Never before has there been such a comprehensive resource available with information about renewable energy in our country and never before has it been so easy accessible for everyone to learn from and use for the benefit of our environment.

"It is an important step in making renewable energy a more viable and practical choice for the future."

Funded under the Australian Government's Low Emissions Technology and Abatement Program, the Renewable Energy Atlas will continue to be developed.

It will support the Australian Government's expanded renewable energy target that aims to ensure at least 20 per cent of Australia's electricity comes from renewable energy by 2020.

The ANU 400m<sup>2</sup> big dish is the world's largest solar dish concentrator and was completed in 1994. A second solar dish is under construction as part of a multi-million dollar project to commercialise a combined solar thermal energy storage and electricity generation technology developed by the ANU.

Under the project, four dishes and the associated energy storage system will be installed near Whyalla. This project is being supported by a \$7.4 million grant to Wizard Power under the Australian Government's Advanced Electricity Storage Technologies program.

**To explore the Renewable Energy Atlas visit: [www.environment.gov.au/renewable/atlas](http://www.environment.gov.au/renewable/atlas)**