

Minister Ian Hunter

Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation

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Groundbreaking bill cements State's renewable energy reputation

Environment Minister Ian Hunter said today's successful passage of the Pastoral Land Management Bill through the Lower House cemented South Australia's reputation as the national leader in renewable energy and would provide a major boost for economic development in regional areas.

Mr Hunter said the legislation, which has now passed both Houses, was the first of its kind in Australia and sent a strong message to developers that South Australia is a competitive place for investment in the renewable energy sector.

"This legislation makes it easier to establish wind farms on Crown Land that's subject to a pastoral lease, to establish solar energy projects on pastoral land," Mr Hunter said.

"It will now be possible for a wind farm developer to apply for a licence to build and operate a wind farm on Crown Land subject to pastoral lease, and for that wind farm to co-exist with a pastoral leaseholder's activities.

"Importantly, the legislation also supports multiple land use on Crown Land and ensures that a pastoral lessee's views are taken into account through the licence application process, and that 95 per cent of the wind farm licence payment will be passed through to pastoral lessees and native title holders."

Mr Hunter has renewed the State Government's call for the Abbott Liberal Government to formally reject the Commonwealth Warburton review, which recommended scaling back or even cancelling the national Renewable Energy Target.

"The Prime Minister should look no further than South Australia for evidence of the positive outcomes that could be achieved if the Coalition accepted the scientific evidence about climate change and embraced these advanced energy industries.

"The State Government's previous target of 33 per cent renewable energy by 2020 has already been surpassed. We are pushing towards 40 per cent and generating international investment interest.

"South Australia remains committed to a renewable energy future. Just last month we announced an increase in our renewable energy target to 50 per cent, which builds on our investment target of \$10 billion in low carbon generation, both by 2025.

"This new target of half of the State's power to be generated by renewable sources will create jobs and drive capital investment and advanced manufacturing industries.

“Since 2003 there has been an investment of \$5.5 billion in renewable energy in South Australia, with nearly half of that occurring in regional areas.

“This legislation will provide further encouragement for these advanced industries to commit to South Australia, which will lead to more jobs for regional areas and benefit the environment,” he said.