



Flocking to renewable energy

Champagne corks popped to open the Carnegie Wave Energy Research Facility at North Mole last Monday.

In the large shed 200 hundred guests watched a telecast of Carnegie's Ceto unit, a submerged buoy swaying with the ocean's swell that operates a piston-like pump.

Inside guests applauded as sea water, pumped by the Ceto unit, gushed out of the pipe to drive a turbine. At full scale this will produce zero emission electricity and desalinated water.

The celebration was a part of a day long Renewable City Seminar hosted by Curtin University's Sustainability and Policy Unit. I spoke with Carnegie's Managing Director, Dr Michael Ottaviano.

What's the most exciting aspect of this project?

MO: Ceto is WA invented and has twenty local people involved in the research and development. They're super-motivated; it's cutting edge renewable energy

technology with global potential.

RW: What's the next step?

MO: A large scale commercial demonstration that can produce 50 MW. We're pleased that the State government has given agreement to use a site near Albany.

RW: What else has to happen for the realisation of a wave farm of that size?

MO: Banks won't lend at this stage of technical development. It's funny, we're not trying to put a man on the moon. The Ceto technology is really quite simple and it works, as you saw. We are hopeful that we'll get financial support from state and federal government.

It wouldn't be the first time that innovative Australian technology has been forced off-shore because of lack of financial support for innovation.

MO: Yes, Ausra Solar is an example. Last year, solar expert David Mills was invited to continue development of his large-scale solar energy production in America. His

innovative technology wasn't implemented in Australia at a viable scale so he accepted the off-shore offer. The current Federal Government in Australia is more supportive so we're hopeful.

How can energy consumers support the development of wave energy and other renewables?

MO: Education about all renewable options is very important now. People need to understand how renewable energy can replace the base-load energy currently generated by power stations. Everyday here at Carnegie we see a base-load power resource washing up on our shores. It's not going away and it's not going to explode.

Readers, are you up to the challenge?

Encourage renewable energy production, reduce the Freo Footprint and do your bit for future generations.

1. Participate - The final Garnaut Report is out. Read it!

Tell your Member of Parliament that major CO2 reductions are doable, at home and in business.

2. Change - Residential Green Energy options: www.synergy.net.au

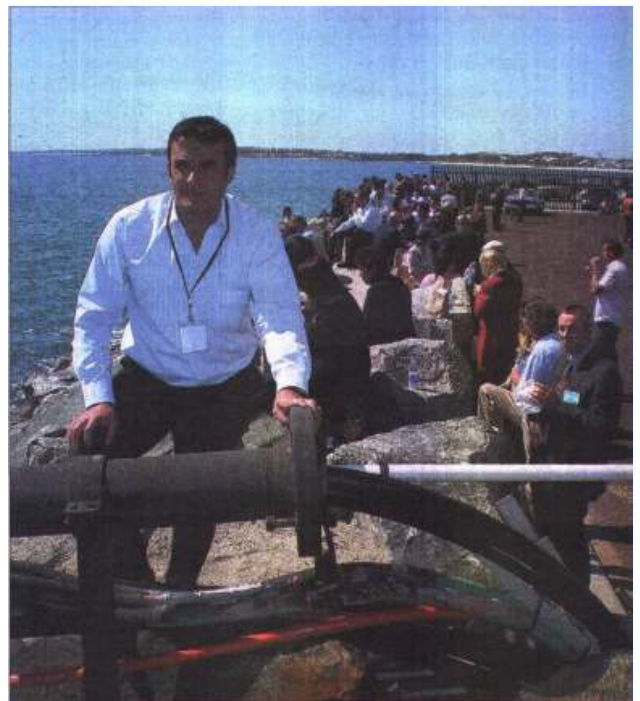
3. Respect - If you must use an air-conditioner then do the community and the planet a favour. Find out about energy efficiency before and after purchase and installation. Choice Magazine can help: www.choice.com.au Products>Heating/Cooling

4. Attend - Sustainability in the Senate: presentations by three senators, 6.15pm, 30 October at Alexander Library in Perth. Email for details: info@spa.asn.au

5. Learn - Sustainable Energy Now is a not-for-profit association committed to sustainable energy options for WA, energy efficiency in the home, and the technical side of energy generation: www.sen.asn.au



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• Carnegie's Managing Director, Dr Michael Ottaviano. Politicians, business and community members flock to the rocks to enjoy the ocean view while the Ceto wave energy unit sways underwater like seaweed.