



Wave energy plan moves step closer



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SOUTH Australia's first licence to develop ocean wave power into green electricity has been granted to wave energy developer Carnegie Corporation to explore 17,000 hectares of seabed near Port MacDonnell.

The licence area covers seabed west of Douglas Point to Danger Point, extending three nautical miles, and the three-year licence term allows the Minister for Energy to grant a life-of-project lease.

Carnegie Corporation managing director Michael Ottaviano said a wave project at this site had the ability to be connected into the national electricity market which supplies power to the majority of Australians.

"We are delighted to have secured a further option for the location of our commercial demonstration project in addition to our Western Australian sites," Dr Ottaviano said.

"The South Australian coast receives a world class wave energy resource and further adds to South Australia's leadership in developing renewable energy including wind, solar and geothermal."

Carnegie Corporation will use CETO wave energy technology, which involves the use of an array of submerged buoys tethered to seabed pump units.

The buoys move in harmony with the motion of passing waves, driving the pumps which in turn pressurise seawater that is delivered onshore via a pipeline.

The high-pressure seawater is used to

drive hydro turbines, generating base-load, zero-emission electricity and can also be used to supply a desalination plant, replacing greenhouse gas emitting pumps usually required for these plants.

Premier Mike Rann said the project was great news for climate change and would help reach the target to boost the proportion of renewable energy generated and consumed in Australia to 20pc by 2014.

"Major technological advances made in recent years in wave and tidal power generation means that within a few years, this new source of power has the potential to generate a significant amount of base-load power into the national grid," he said.

The licence near Port MacDonnell allows Carnegie Corporation to test the site with a view of building a demonstration 50mw wave power station.

"Whether this is the right site will depend on these tests, but Carnegie is one of several emerging companies taking up the challenge of providing a new form of base-load sustainable energy," Mr Rann said.

"Our message to these companies is that the South Australian Government will do all it can to open the way for renewable energy investment in the state."

Grant District Mayor Don Pegler welcomed the project.

"It's exciting news," he said.

"If it is economical in the end, more green power would be generated in the area and no doubt more jobs would be created in the construction and maintenance of the plant."