



MEDIA RELEASE

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Elements components for power proponents

Townsville Enterprise, as the region's peak economic development body is seeking to make northern Queensland the renewable energy generation capital of Australia.

Townsville Enterprise is reviewing the findings of a study commissioned into renewable energy solutions for north Queensland's energy supply woes.

The research was funded by Townsville Enterprise, Mackay Whitsundays Regional Development Corporation, Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Zone, Advance Cairns and the Department of Infrastructure and Planning.

The preliminary results of the study found that the north is a hotspot for world class renewable energy generation.

The study identified opportunities for wind powered generation on the Far North Coast and inland near Mount Isa, sugar cane bagasse generation in the Burdekin and Hinchinbrook regions, solar thermal generation west of Charters Towers and geothermal as a longer term option in the north west.

The push to make North Queensland a renewable energy hotspot received support from stakeholders all over north Queensland.

Townsville Mayor and Chairman for the Greater North Queensland Mayors Alliance, Councillor Les Tyrell, applauded the initiative as a great example of regional cooperation.

Cr Tyrell stated that the need for competitively priced energy had been identified as an urgent infrastructure need within the Mayors Alliance submission to Infrastructure Australia.

"As an organisation representing the 20 Councils making up the Northern half of Queensland, the Mayors Alliance is particularly concerned with missed opportunities that come from a lack of investment," Cr Tyrell said.

"There is no better example of this than energy, which will be greatly impacted by carbon trading initiatives currently being proposed. Governments at all levels and persuasions must take this seriously and back the findings of this research".

MITEZ Executive Officer Glen Graham said renewable energy would be of major importance for whichever party formed Government and during this next term would need to partner with the Commonwealth to attract incentives and help establish new infrastructure such as solar farms.

“With the new mandatory targets for clean renewable energy coming into effect many new jobs could be created in the north and west in construction and installing plant and equipment for a variety of these renewable energy stations”.

Townsville Enterprise Chief Executive Officer Glenys Schuntner said the changing climate of infrastructure investment, the carbon pollution reduction scheme and the desirability for sustainable practices make the push for renewable energy a winning solution to delivering base load generation to north Queensland.

“Townsville Enterprise is calling for the ALP and the LNP to address the region’s energy crisis through strategic policy solutions in the area of renewable energy.”

“Our research indicates that the north Queensland region could immediately produce wind, bagasse and solar thermal generators – in areas capable of producing ideal conditions for renewable energy generation.”

“Geothermal generation is a long term prospect with the technology still not at a point to be considered economically sustainable – but we’ve got the resources there to tap into when the technology becomes viable.”

“With the right combination of current power generation technologies we’ll be able to address the shortfall in base load generation in a way that does something positive for the planet.”

“Governments all over the world are looking for long term sustainable solutions to energy generation and we believe this is an opportunity for the future Queensland government to grasp.”

“Investment into renewable power generation around north Queensland will create immediate jobs for the region. It will solve a long term investment issue by delivering base load generation to the region’s energy users.”

“Investing into renewable technology would reduce our region’s carbon emissions, and it will make Queensland a world leader in sustainable business practice power generation.”

“Our region is a pioneer when it comes to homes and small businesses embracing solar technology. Hidden Valley Cabins is Australia’s first fully solar powered resort, and the Magnetic Island Solar City program has put the island at the cutting edge of residential solar technology.”

“Townsville Enterprise welcomes the Greens’ initiative for a solar thermal power station in the Townsville region – but this ROAM consulting report indicates solar energy is just the tip of the iceberg – the north Queensland region is blessed with

abundant natural resources to make renewable energy generation a conceivable reality.”

“The LNP has promised a \$120 million Alternative Energy Fund – and we expect to see northern Queensland included as an important component of that review”.

“It’s now time for the Labor Party to commit to energy generation in the state’s north. For too long we’ve seen Government led or facilitated investment into energy generation for the southern parts of the state.”

“We want to hear a commitment to energy infrastructure in North Queensland from state leaders and local candidates before voting day.”

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