

## Media Release

09 June 2010

Prime Minister  
Treasurer  
Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research  
Sustainable energy boost for super telescope bid  
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The Rudd Government will invest \$47.3 million in Western Australian to ensure solar energy and the nation's largest direct heat geothermal facility power Australia's bid to host the world's strongest radio telescope.

Two key pieces of infrastructure being built to support the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) bid will now have full-scale, clean energy generation systems because of the investment.

- The Pawsey High-Performance Computing Centre in Kensington, will now use hot sedimentary aquifers to provide cooling and ventilation in the largest direct heat geothermal demonstrator in Australia at 10 MWth; and
- The Murchison Radio-astronomy Observatory will now use a full scale solar/storage/diesel energy generation system.

This investment has the potential to cut energy costs by \$5 million per year, and reduce Australia's carbon emissions by 12,000 tonnes per year - the equivalent of taking 6,000 cars off the road.

The projects will also help the CSIRO, which owns or leases 1,000 buildings across 55 locations, achieve its goal to be carbon neutral by 2015.

The announcement will strengthen Australia and New Zealand's bid to host the mega-science \$2.5 billion SKA radio telescope by ensuring it meets the international community's aspiration that sustainable energy be used for the project.

The Australian Government has demonstrated a strong commitment to the SKA bid with other important investments: \$100 million for the SKA Pathfinder, \$80 million for High Performance Computing for the SKA, and \$25 million for an optical fibre backbone broadband link from Perth to Geraldton.

The SKA involves 20 countries and will have the potential for discovery ten thousand times greater than existing radio telescopes. It will explore a number of fundamental scientific questions such as the origin of the universe, the nature of dark matter and the existence of life in the universe.

Hosting the SKA will generate significant economic and scientific benefits, particularly to WA, including spin-offs in areas such as supercomputing, data transmission, renewable energy, construction and manufacturing.

The decision on the location of the SKA between Australia-New Zealand and Southern Africa is expected around 2012.

Construction on the energy generation projects is scheduled to commence in November 2010, be completed in August 2013, and support 62 construction jobs.

The \$47.3 million Rudd Government investment is part of the Sustainability Round of the Education Investment Fund, which is seeing a \$4 billion investment in world-leading, strategic tertiary education and research infrastructure.

To learn more about Australia and New Zealand's SKA bid - including access to images, animations and factsheets - visit [www.ska.gov.au](http://www.ska.gov.au)