

# Plan to bury big polluters' carbon waste in SW a step closer

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A bold proposal to bury millions of tonnes of industrial carbon dioxide in the South-West involving some of the State's biggest polluters is a step closer to becoming a reality.

The Federal Government has short-listed the Collie South West Hub concept along with three others in the race to create the nation's first industrial-scale carbon capture and storage projects. The proposal aims to store underground up to 3.3 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from coal-fired power stations and heavy industry somewhere on the coastal plain between Bunbury and Mandurah.

The project involves the Department of Mines and Petroleum and the companies Griffin Energy, Verve Energy, BHP Billiton Worsley Alumina, Wesfarmers Premier Coal and

Perdaman Chemicals and Fertilisers.

A 12-month study has been under way since May, examining the region's geological potential to store carbon dioxide.

Federal Resources Minister Martin Ferguson will announce today the South West Hub will share in \$120 million worth of funding for pre-feasibility work.

Mr Ferguson said it was chosen because of the potential for storage and proximity to the industrial centres of Kwinana and Collie.

The other funded projects are Queensland's ZeroGen, the Wandoan power plant near Brisbane and CarbonNet in Victoria's La Trobe Valley.

The Government has said its CCS Flagships Program will help develop between two and four projects.

The small number of proposals to be short-listed for this stage has raised hopes that the South West Hub could be green lit for development.

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has placed great store on developing CCS in Australia as part of the international effort to cut greenhouse emissions.

His Government has budgeted \$2 billion to help develop the flagship projects as part of the goal of the G8 powers to have at least 20 big developments up and running around the world by 2020.

"The international community accepts coal and gas are fundamental sources of energy and that no serious response to climate change can ignore the need to reduce emissions from fossil fuels," Mr Ferguson said.