

Energy Policies Of IEA Countries: Australia 2012

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The IEA's 2012 review of Australia's energy policies and programmes finds that Australia enjoys the benefit of abundant and diverse energy resources; it is the world's ninth-largest energy producer and is one of only three net energy exporters in the OECD. Its substantial conventional energy resource base includes coal, natural gas, oil and uranium. The country also enjoys extensive wind, solar and geothermal resources as well as large biomass and ocean energy potential. The energy sector is a significant contributor to the Australian economy. Exports have more than tripled over the past decade and surging economic and social expansion in relatively nearby emerging economies such as China and India has driven significant demand for Australian energy and mineral resources. This boom is widely forecast to continue in the coming decades. Late in 2011, the Australian government released a draft energy white paper, which sets out a comprehensive strategic policy framework to guide the development of the energy sector. Also in 2011, the Australian government announced a climate change plan including a wide-ranging package of clean-energy proposals and the introduction of a carbon price mechanism accompanied by significant levels of financial support for innovation in clean-energy technologies. The scale of Australia's energy policy ambitions is enormous and very costly even for a resource-rich nation. Significant investments will be needed for the clean-energy transition and

building the infrastructure necessary to expand the domestic resource base. This review analyses the energy-policy challenges facing Australia and provides critiques and recommendations for further policy improvements. It is intended to help guide the country towards a more secure and sustainable energy future.