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MEDIA RELEASE**

AUSSIE SCIENTISTS' OLYMPIC EFFORT IN CHINA TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

On the eve of the Beijing Olympics, Australian scientists and researchers are at the starting blocks of a vital race in launching a first of its kind project in China to combat climate change.

The pilot project, led by CSIRO's Energy Technology Centre and one of China's biggest power generation companies, the Huaneng Group, will trial leading edge technology that can be retrofitted to existing coal fired power stations to capture carbon dioxide.

NSW Minerals Council CEO, Dr Nikki Williams, said the Australian scientific and research community will receive world-wide recognition for an advance that has profound implications for tackling global warming.

Dr Williams said that China - which is now the world's biggest emitter of CO₂ - along with India have staggering rates of industrialisation which are accelerating the rate of global warming.

"China plans to build 500 new coal fired power stations over the next 10 years and the Chinese are building the equivalent of a city the size of Brisbane every month in order to lift their citizens out of poverty and become modern economies," said Dr Williams.

"If we don't have a solution to burning coal more cleanly in emerging economies which will continue to be dependent on coal as they modernise, then we simply don't have a solution to climate change, she said.

"This CSIRO initiative, which is placing Australian research and development experts on the ground in China at the same time as we are sending our athletes to Beijing, has the potential to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from coal fired power stations by more than 85%," said Dr Williams.

She said post combustion capture is one of the most promising of all carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies being developed, because of its potential to be retrofitted on existing power stations, with CO₂ then safely stored in geological formations up to 1000 metres underground.

Dr Williams said the Australian coal industry is investing more than \$1 billion dollars in carbon capture and storage trial projects around Australia.

"We need a broad suite of responses to climate change, including CCS, renewable technology and new technologies and policies to cut carbon emissions in transport, building design and agriculture as well as public education to reduce household energy wastage."

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