

MEDIA RELEASE

Daylesford, 22 June 2011

Hepburn Wind is generating!

As the Government's carbon committee negotiations draw to a close in Canberra, Hepburn Wind, Australia's first community-owned wind farm, located 10km south of Daylesford, Victoria, began exporting energy to the electricity grid today.

The two turbine project at Leonards Hill was initiated by the local community of the Hepburn Shire and is expected to generate more electricity annually than used by the houses of nearby Daylesford.

Hepburn Wind Chairman, Simon Holmes à Court said, 'This is a great achievement for the Hepburn Shire and community. Six years ago, our community chose to be a beneficiary of the move to clean energy.'

'While the political debates about carbon pricing have bogged down, the Hepburn community has built its own wind-farm, which will generate enough electricity to offset most of the town,' said Mr Holmes à Court.

Already, more than 45 communities have contacted Hepburn Wind's sister organisation, Embark about adapting the Hepburn Model.

At 10.20am the first of the wind farm's two REpower 2.05 MW turbines was commissioned with the second up and running several hours later. Over the coming weeks the turbines will be put through reliability tests before moving fully into service.

Hepburn Wind's community officer, Taryn Lane, said 'More than 1700 people have invested almost \$9m to build Australia's first community-owned wind farm.'

'This generation shows the power of community. We can't wait to see other communities growing their own projects and benefiting from local clean energy.'

'The project is part of our community's response to the threat of climate change, and in the process our whole community stands to benefit. This pioneering model will see dividends returned to the members of the co-operative and the community supported through a significant sustainability fund,' said Ms Lane.

Of the \$13m required to build the project, more than \$7m is Australian content, with the majority sourced from regional Victoria. The project has created three long-term jobs and supported dozens of local businesses during its six year gestation.

More information:

Taryn Lane, Community Officer, 0458 048 287 taryn.lane@hepburnwind.com.au