



Minister for Resources and Energy, Minister for Tourism

Australia: An Attractive Destination for Advanced Biofuel Projects

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Minister for Resources and Energy, Martin Ferguson AM MP, is in the United States raising the profile of Australia's clean energy capabilities to encourage investment and cooperation in clean energy projects, such as advanced biofuels.

"The United States is looking to biofuels to reduce its dependence on imported oil and decrease the environmental impacts of their energy use," Minister Ferguson said.

"This visit represents an opportunity for Australia to expand its collaboration with the USA and attract investors to Australia who are looking for new international sites to develop advanced biofuel projects."

Advanced biofuels are seen as the future of the biofuels industry because they are not derived from or compete with food sources and do not deplete native forests.

The USA has committed to tripling biofuel production by 2022, and in the last two years has announced 40 advanced biofuels projects valued at over \$US 850 million. By 2016, the US Navy under Secretary Ray Mabus also plans to deploy a "Great Green Fleet" powered entirely by alternative fuels, including advanced biofuels.

Minister Ferguson met with Secretary Mabus to discuss further opportunities for collaboration between the two countries in advanced biofuels research and commercial development.

While in the USA, Minister Ferguson will also visit a demonstration-scale algal bio-refinery plant near Columbus, New Mexico this weekend. The Sapphire Energy project aims to show that algae can consume about 56 tonnes of CO₂ a day and produce, on average, 100 barrels of "green crude" oil a day. The green crude can then be refined into gasoline, diesel and jet fuel as a renewable alternative to traditional fossil fuels.

This visit builds on the Australia and US Memorandum of Understanding signed in September 2011 which provides for cooperation to encourage the development and production of sustainable aviation alternative fuels.

"Part of our strategy for developing biofuels involves international collaboration," said Minister Ferguson.

"Australia has great potential to grow a range of non-food crops for energy. We also have world-class scientists and expertise in managing large clean energy projects.

"This visit is a small but important part of building a significant and sustainable Australian advanced biofuels industry."

The Australian Government recognises the growing role Australia could play in the research and commercialisation of advanced biofuels as they emerge as a growing energy source globally. As such late last year Minister Ferguson released the Advanced Biofuels Study, which outlines Australia's potential competitive advantages in building an advanced biofuels sector.

Minister Ferguson's investment-focussed visit to the US includes meetings with senior policymakers, investors, strategists and business leaders in Los Angeles, Washington DC and Houston. The Minister is participating in *GDay USA*; a showcase of opportunities and investment potential in Australia.

The Advanced Biofuels Study is available online at <http://www.ret.gov.au/energy/clean/acre/Australian-Biofuels-Research-Institute>.

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