

Safe storage of CO₂ in sight

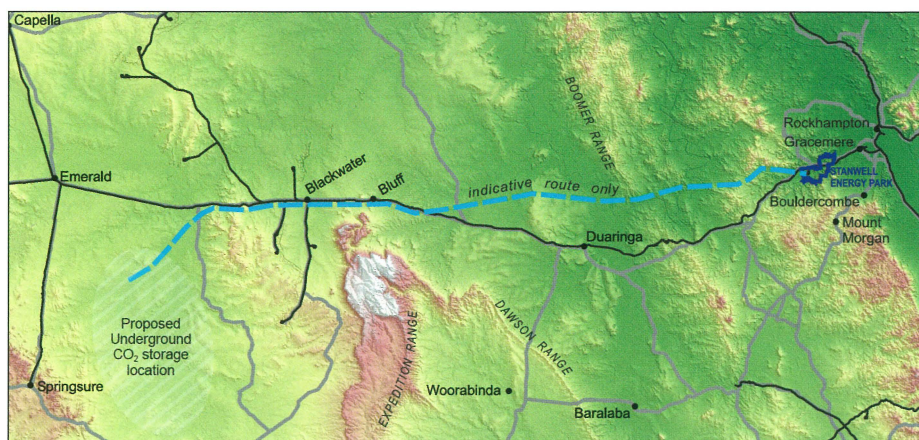
The ZeroGen Clean Coal Power Demonstration Project has successfully completed the first stage of its test drilling program. If the project is successful, it will include the construction of a 220 km CO₂ pipeline, near Springsure in Queensland.

The ZeroGen project aims to enable deep cuts in CO₂ emissions to the atmosphere by combining the technologies of Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle and CO₂ Capture and Storage.

The first phase of ZeroGen's test drilling involved the drilling of two wells of depths in excess of one km.

Speaking at the Australia/New Zealand Climate Change and Business Conference, Peter Beattie, former Queensland Premier, said that ZeroGen had found – in this first stage – that CO₂ can be safely stored and injected into saline reservoirs and that the geology in the Northern Denison Trough is suitable to safely inject and store CO₂ in saline aquifers.

“This will assist in locating reservoirs suitable for the long-term, safe storage of CO₂, which is



The proposed pipeline and storage site near Springsure in Queensland.

fundamental to any clean coal technology. So it's a big hurdle successfully cleared", he said.

Beattie said the successful results meant ZeroGen could move onto the next stage of its feasibility study and that the board had approved the next phase of test drilling to locate a reservoir with sufficient capacity for the project.

“The second drilling test will allow for an analysis of one of the greatest challenges facing clean coal technology – the costs associated with the Carbon Capture and Storage process”, Beattie said.

The feasibility study is expected to be completed by the end of 2008. ■