



## Media Release

24 February 2015

### Next steps for innovative biofuel technology

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) today announced \$5.2 million funding for Renergi to design and construct an innovative [pilot scale biofuel production facility](#) in Perth.

ARENA CEO Ivor Frischknecht said the project would result in simple, cost effective production of renewable energy from biomass.

“Renergi was created out of Curtin University to commercialise some of its bioenergy ideas. Renergi is aiming to scale up existing technology successfully developed with ARENA funding support,” Mr Frischknecht said.

“These projects demonstrate how ARENA’s unique role supports renewable energy technologies across the innovation chain, advancing them from the laboratory to the field.

“A 100 kg per hour biomass conversion (pyrolysis) unit will be designed and constructed along with a complementary 20 litre per hour biorefinery unit.

“Biomass like agricultural waste and mallee can be used to produce products that replace fossil fuels, including bio-oil and advanced biofuels.

“Renergi’s approach would allow green bio-crude to be produced by conversion units at the source of feedstocks and refined into high quality transport biofuels at a large central refinery.”

Mr Frischknecht said the technology had the potential to reduce the cost of bioenergy by offering novel approaches to conversion and refining processes.

“Existing processes require agricultural waste crops to first be ground into smaller pieces, costing considerable time and energy,” Mr Frischknecht said.

“Renergi’s solution aims to streamline this step by incorporating steel grinding balls into a rotating biomass conversation unit, allowing simultaneous break-down and gasification.

“The plant will operate at low temperatures and close to atmospheric pressure increasing safety and reducing energy requirements and capital costs.

“Successful development of an effective bioenergy technology could have significant export potential as well as being good for Australia’s biofuels industry.

“ARENA is working with Renergi to develop a rigorous strategy aimed at increasing scale and ultimately making the technology commercially competitive.”

The \$12.9 million project is scheduled for completion in October 2017.

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ARENA media contacts:

**James Webber: 0410 028 899**

**Judith Ion: 0434 169 037**

**[media@arena.gov.au](mailto:media@arena.gov.au)**

**For more  
information**  
[arena.gov.au](http://arena.gov.au)

### **About ARENA**

ARENA was established by the Australian Government on 1 July 2012 to make renewable energy technologies more affordable and increase the amount of renewable energy used in Australia. ARENA invests in renewable energy projects, supports research and development activities, boosts job creation and industry development, and increases knowledge about renewable energy. ARENA is currently supporting more than 200 projects and is actively seeking out new projects to support.

### **About Renergi**

Renergi is a start-up private company established in 2012 to commercialise a suite of energy technologies developed in the Fuels and Energy Technology Institute in Curtin University of Technology. The current technology foci in Renergi include biomass gasification for distributed power and heat generation, biomass pyrolysis and refinery for the production of biochar, bio-oil and advanced biofuels, and co-firing of biomass with coal in the existing coal-fired power stations.