

13 NOVEMBER 2019

Strictly Embargoed Until 12:01am

## ARENA to develop roadmap to boost bioenergy opportunities in Australia

On behalf of the Australian Government, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has today announced that it will begin work on the development of a roadmap to identify the role that the bioenergy sector can play in Australia's energy transition and in helping Australia meet its emission reduction obligations.

The ARENA Board has agreed to a request from the Minister for Energy and Emission Reduction Angus Taylor, to invest in the development of a roadmap for the bioenergy sector that quantifies opportunities where Australia has a competitive advantage to inform future investment and policy decisions.

Key issues the roadmap will canvas include:

- The potential for biofuels to decarbonise the industrial and transport sectors, particularly 'hard-to-abate' sectors such as aviation and marine
- The potential for biofuels to contribute to Australia's liquid fuel security
- Opportunities to decarbonise the gas network
- Bioenergy opportunities for heat, steam and power
- Quantifying the economic opportunities for Australia, including a focus on regional Australia.

Bioenergy is a form of renewable energy that uses organic and renewable materials to produce heat, electricity, biogas and liquid fuels. The most cost effective and environmentally beneficial sources of biomass and other feedstock is typically wastewater, industrial, commercial and municipal waste and waste streams from the agricultural, forestry and industrial sectors.

Bioenergy has scope to expand as an energy source in Australia, where it currently contributes up to approximately four per cent of Australia's total energy consumption, as opposed to approximately seven per cent in other OECD countries.

The roadmap will leverage the existing work undertaken in bioenergy supported by ARENA, the Clean Energy Finance Corporation and the Department of the Environment and Energy.

ARENA CEO Darren Miller said: "Bioenergy and energy from waste technologies are well-developed worldwide, with the International Energy Agency's forecasted renewables report identifying this area as an 'overlooked giant' within the renewables space. There is also significant potential for biofuels to decarbonise the industrial and transport sectors in Australia."

"Much like with hydrogen, we're hoping that this will lead to further uptake and unlock new opportunities for bioenergy in Australia, and will enable bioenergy to play a considerable role in helping us to reduce emissions while also providing secure, reliable and affordable energy supply."

ARENA has provided over \$100 million in funding towards bioenergy projects across Australia spanning energy from waste, biogas, biomass and biofuels. ARENA's investment to date encompasses electricity and biogas production, efficient feedstock harvesting technology and projects that aim to capture energy from a range of waste materials.

The scope of the roadmap will be developed in consultation with key bioenergy industry stakeholders. ARENA will then engage suitably experienced consultants to develop the roadmap.

A broader industry consultation process will begin early next year. The roadmap will be finalised and presented to the Minister by mid 2020.