

CLIMATE CHANGE — LOW EMISSIONS ENERGY DEVELOPMENT FUND

Statement by Minister for Climate Change

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Climate Change) [2.11 pm]: The advent of climate change means we have entered a critical phase in the history of our state and our planet. The Carpenter government is committed to acting now for our future. Last year the Premier released his climate change action statement. This very important document outlines the Carpenter government's response to our changing climate and featured a range of strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. One of the most exciting features is the \$36.5 million low emissions energy development fund to promote emission reduction and support technological advances that cut greenhouse gas emissions. The fund is a key initiative in the government's target to cut the state's greenhouse gas emissions by 60 per cent by 2050. The development fund will focus investment towards technologies in which Western Australia has distinctive natural and competitive advantages, such as geothermal, bio-energy and clean coal technologies, as well as renewable energy generation, such as wind and solar power. Last November, applications were called for the first round of funding under the scheme, and \$8.5 million was allocated for suitable projects to be funded in 2008-09.

I am pleased to report to the house that 12 innovative applications were received for first-round funding, together representing more than \$300 million in potential clean energy investments in this state. The high level of interest in this fund demonstrates that WA has the potential to be at the leading edge of clean energy development. With our great endowment of renewable energy opportunities in WA, the LEED fund will provide an important foundation for a WA-based sustainable energy industry. The applications also confirm that Western Australia has significant potential to demonstrate the use of carbon capture and storage technology, which will be critical in the fight against climate change.

Earlier this month I established an independent expert advisory group to advise the government on the allocation of funds under the LEED program. The advisory group is chaired by the state's Chief Scientist, Professor Lyn Beazley. Its membership is comprised of representatives from the investment and financial sectors, research institutions, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, and renewable energy environmental consultancies. The other members of the group are Mr Andrew Hall, investment manager at Stone Ridge Ventures, with broad experience in the commercialisation of a variety of low emissions technologies; Garry Baverstock, an award-winning expert in the field of ecologically sustainable development, and adjunct associate professor in energy studies at Murdoch University; Dr John Wright, director of the CSIRO Energy Transformed Flagship; Martina Calais, a former research engineer on automotive power supplies and university lecturer, who now works on the development of renewable energy projects; Alan Pears, adjunct professor at RMIT University and former senior adviser to the Victorian government on sustainability; and Suzanne Tuite, a highly qualified financial management specialist and group manager finance at GRD Minproc.

After the Minister for Energy and I receive the advice of the expert advisory group and the Office of Climate Change, I expect to be able to announce the successful applicants sometime next month so that the grants can be made available in early July. The LEED fund is yet another example of how the Carpenter government is making decisions for the future and leading the way in preparing Western Australia to meet the challenges of our changing climate.