


# BARRIERS TO WIDE-SPREAD DEPLOYMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN AUSTRALIA



Dr David Leary  
Climate Change Law & Policy Initiative  
Faculty of Law, UNSW

## BACKGROUND

- Debate on renewable energy in Australia to date dominated by discussion of
    - pricing carbon (CPRS) and
    - targets (20 % by 2020)
  - pricing carbon and targets are only one part of a much bigger series of challenges to the wide scale roll out of renewable energy in the stationary energy sector in Australia
- 

## LARGE SCALE INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT

- CERPA Funding \$20,000
- Initial scoping study to:
  - delineate key legal, regulatory, policy and wider institutional roadblocks to the future wide scale adoption of renewable energy technologies in Australia; and
  - scope innovative frameworks for facilitating high levels of renewable energy technologies within our existing energy supply systems
- Interdisciplinary approach
  - Law (David Leary)
  - Engineering (Ian MacGill)
  - Economics (Regina Betz and Paul Twomey)
  - Science (Mark Diesendorf) and
  - Humanities and Social Sciences (Stephen Healey)

## LARGE SCALE INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT

- key renewable technologies in the Australian context, their current status and future potential
- frameworks for assessing the barriers to their deployment, and the most important barriers at present to widespread uptake in Australia
- key innovation focussed policy and regulatory needs and opportunities and, critically, appropriate institutional ‘decision making’ frameworks for implementing these
- Specific case studies of renewable energy deployment challenges and innovative efforts to address them.

## LARGE SCALE INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT

- Literature review completed:
  - Academic literature
  - Policy documents
  - Industry, government and NGO roadmaps etc
- Invited experts workshop held in November 2009 obtained feedback on our approach and assumptions and has helped us refine our ideas and where to take the project from here
- Linkage Project application in the next round (May 2010?)
- Possible partners?

## PLANNING AND NEM PROJECT

- Parliamentary inquiries in 2009 NSW & Vic
- Key players in Australia's renewable industry submitted that existing legislative frameworks for planning and development approval are acting as impediments to project development, especially in the case of wind energy
- The legislative requirements:
  - unnecessarily cumbersome;
  - expensive;
  - time consuming
- PV systems installed on businesses and homes - inconsistency in approaches across and within jurisdictions
- A lack of consistency in planning law across jurisdictions even though most of these jurisdictions are part of the NEM
- Issues with connection to the NEM and grid
- Other stakeholder interests- NIMBY

## PLANNING AND NEM PROJECT

- ARC Discovery grant application
- To test industry claims and where appropriate come up with recommendations
- Project aims:
  - critically assess the extent to which the implementation of the NEL and planning laws and processes (including environmental impact assessment) are acting as barriers to deployment of wind energy and solar power into the NEM;
  - to assess options for addressing the barriers posed by these legislative regimes
  - to consider more systemic options for improving the processes by which these legislative regimes operate.
    - Harmonization of planning laws
    - Strategic environmental impact assessment
    - For the NEL, relevant options include explicitly incorporating environmental and wider sustainability objectives into the rule making process, facilitating more proactive rule making, strategic initiatives to address particular renewable energy barriers, and revising current institutional arrangements.

