

Coal e-Newsletter

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COAL NEWS

NEW ZEALAND

Environment Court approves West Coast coal mine

The Environment Court has approved resource consents granted for Solid Energy's planned Cypress opencast mine near Granity in June 2004 by the Buller District and West Coast Regional Councils. The court rejected appeals by Forest and Bird (since challenged) and 2 other environmental groups based on harm the groups claimed mining would do to threatened species, including great spotted kiwi and a rare land snail. Solid Energy proposes the new mine development will commence later this year, with coal production beginning in late 2006. About 5M tonnes of coal will be produced over about 10 years from 2 open-cast pits covering 105 ha. A further 155 ha will be used for overburden disposal, roads, water treatment facilities and associated infrastructure.

The company has undertaken to use mining and waste disposal practices that will cause minimal harm to the Upper Waimangaroa Valley. Vegetation and soils will be stockpiled at the start of mining for use in progressive rehabilitation of the site and for final rehabilitation and monitoring at the end of mine life. The court acknowledged Solid Energy's management plans for both the kiwi and the snail, accepting the proposal to create a predator proof reserve of some 17 ha and an extensive predator control programme in a wider area. Expert evidence presented to the court stated that this predator control programme will enable kiwi and snail populations in the area to increase with an overall net conservation gain in the number of animals that will be present at the end of the 30 year programme.

Pike River mine final investment decision

New Zealand Oil & Gas Ltd recently estimated that the first production from its Pike River export coking coal mine will start in June 2006. Pike River Coal Company plans to float shares on the New Zealand stock exchange to finance the mine. It estimates the pre-initial public offer value at over \$220M, of which NZOG's 72% share would be about \$160M.

The final cost estimates will be provided through tender processes for the access road, tunnel construction, dewatering plant (where coal is separated from water following transport in a coal slurry pipeline) and the transport chain. Pike River coal is a low ash, low phosphorus and high fluidity coke oven coal, valuable for use in the steel making process. Output is planned to rise to over 1M tonnes per annum from June 2007.

Coal Production Statistics (2004)

Total cumulative production from all New Zealand coalfields by the end of 2004 was about 276M tonnes. Of the 5.2M tonnes of coal produced in 2004, 49% was bituminous, 46% sub-bituminous and 5% lignite. All bituminous production was from the West Coast region, and most sub-bituminous production was from the Waikato region, with much smaller amounts from Otago, Southland and the West Coast. Lignite production was from the Southland and Otago regions.

What's news?

COAL NEWS 1

NEW ZEALAND 1

Environment Court approves West Coast coal mine 1
Pike River mine final investment decision 1
Coal Production Statistics (2004) 1
Coal and waste fired Meremere could answer Waikato problems 2
Benefits for coal from Chile free trade agreement 2
Rock fall barrier demonstrated at Stockton Mine 2

INTERNATIONAL 3

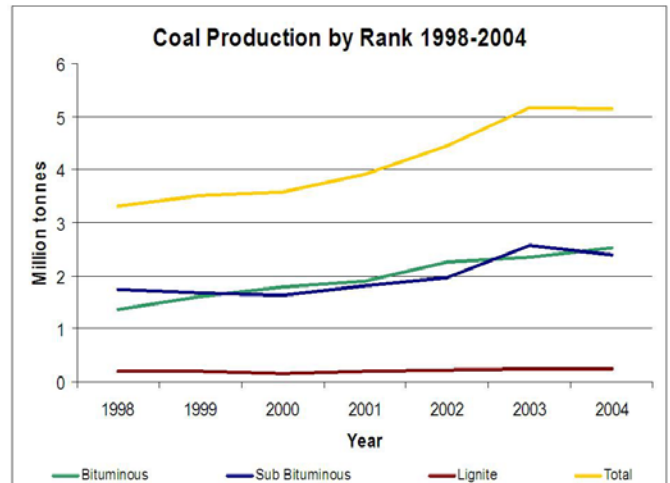
Petrobranga sign Chinese deal (Bangladesh) 3
Hillsborough announces another shipment of coal into international market (Canada) 3
Caribou Resources announces Coal Bed Methane sale and farm-out agreement and sale of non-core pipeline (Canada) 3
Coal to oil the wheels of industry (China) 3
India-US energy talks focuses on clean coal technology (India) 3
Feasibility study on Thar coal completed (Pakistan) 3
Three firms get Government approval to develop coal resources (Philippines) 4
DBT equipment solves productivity problem (Siberia) 4

TECHNOLOGY 4

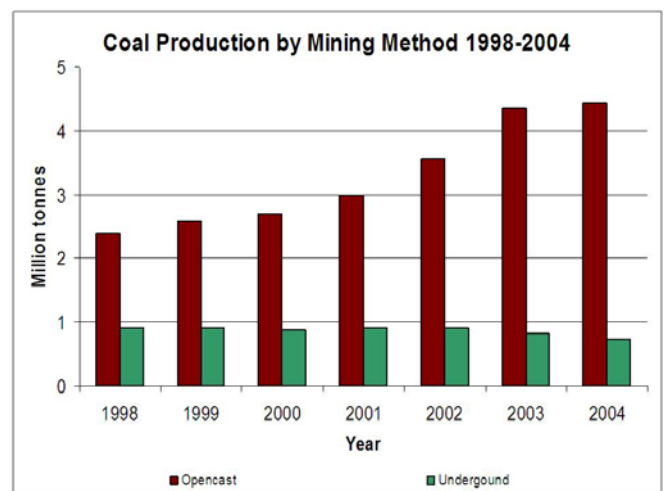
Third Coal Technology Tour 4
Consensus developing on clean coal technologies (Australia) 4
COAL21 Annual Review 5
Investing in Coal 5
Legal aspects of storing CO₂ 5
The Prospects for CO₂ Capture and Storage 6
UK shows NSW how to make deep cuts in greenhouse emissions 6
Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions - The Potential of Coal 6
New IEA-CCC reports 6

EVENTS 7

2004 NZ COAL PRODUCTION BY COAL RANK (in thousand tonnes)				
Region	Bituminous	Sub-bituminous	Lignite	Total
Waikato	0	2,054	0	2,054
North Island	0	2,054	0	2,054
West Coast	2,527	100	0	2,627
Canterbury	0	4	0	4
Otago	0	57	2	59
Southland	0	175	238	413
South Island	2,527	336	239	3,102
New Zealand	2,527	2,389	239	5,155



2004 NZ COAL PRODUCTION BY MINE TYPE (in thousand tonnes)			
Region	Opencast	Underground	Total
Waikato	1,612	442	2,054
North Island	1,612	442	2,054
West Coast	2,359	268	2,627
Canterbury	4	0	4
Otago	59	0	59
Southland	395	17	412
South Island	2,817	285	3,102
New Zealand	4,429	727	5,156



Coal and waste fired Meremere could answer Waikato problems

A senior lecturer at Auckland University of Technology, Leo Neal, argued recently that a new coal fired plant co-firing waste at Meremere could answer a number of current environmental and energy supply problems in the Waikato. The plant would be an additional electricity supply source to Greater Auckland and would give some breathing space while the need for the 400kV transmission line is further evaluated. It would also ease the volume of rubbish currently being sent to landfills.

Mr Neal argued the business community is sensitive to hints of electricity supply problems and the nation's prosperity will become more dependent on value added products for which a reliable source of electricity is vital. It therefore makes economic sense to continue using the Meremere site because it is close to the metropolitan area - but in an area of low population. There is also land close by that could utilise some of the waste heat produced for industrial processes and/or greenhouses, providing further useful employment. He stated that in the past he would have supported the decommissioning of the 1950s era Meremere coal fired power station. However, use of super-critical technology would reduce the CO₂ output as well as cleaning the gas emissions to an acceptable level.

Benefits for coal from Chile free trade agreement

The Prime Minister announced at the June APEC Trade Ministers meeting in Korea a free trade agreement that would include a lifting of tariffs on coal imports to Chile. Solid Energy said the tariff removal would mean a 5-6% margin increase, meaning the company could be more competitive in the face of stiff competition from Australia and Indonesia - both of which enjoyed bigger economies of scale. The coal producer exports up to 200,000 tonnes of coal to Chile each year, accounting for about 6% of its total annual international sales.

Rock fall barrier demonstrated at Stockton Mine

A 4 metre high rock fall protection barrier has been on show to community representatives at Stockton Opencast Mine, north of Westport, as part of Solid Energy's proposal to mine coal along the Stockton ridge. Solid Energy senior management and staff, along with members of the Stockton Consultative Group, representatives of the West Coast

Regional Council, Department of Conservation (DOC) and Buller District Council attended in June a demonstration of the type of barrier that the company plans to install, as one of a number of measures, to stop rocks and debris falling down the slope into adjoining DOC land during mining of the ridge within the Stockton Coal Mining Licence (CML).

The ridge project has been peer reviewed by an independent German expert on rock slope stability and rock fall mitigation projects throughout the world.

INTERNATIONAL

Petrobangla sign Chinese deal (Bangladesh)

Bangladesh's state-owned petrochemical company, Petrobangla, signed a US\$82M deal with two Chinese companies to extract coal from one of the country's biggest mines. Under the agreement the Chinese companies will extract 4.8M tonnes coal from Boropukuria coal mine in Northern Bangladesh, 300km north of the capital Dhaka. Studies carried out by Petrobangla estimate the mine has reserves of 390M tonnes of fine quality, low-ash and sulphur-free bituminous coal. Some 70% of the coal will be used for power generation in Bangladesh and the rest will be sold out on the local market.

Hillsborough announces another shipment of coal into international market (Canada)

Hillsborough Resources Limited announced that it has completed another shipment into the international market (Chile) of 45,100 tonnes of thermal coal from its Quinsam Coal Mine located in Vancouver, British Columbia. Loading of the ship was completed in less than two days and without complication, from a deep sea ship loading facility after transfer through Hillsborough's barge loading facility. Hillsborough is a coal mining company that operates the Quinsam underground thermal coal mine in British Columbia (serving the local and west coast U.S. cement industry) and the Crossville underground coal mine in Tennessee which is currently being brought into commercial production.

Caribou Resources announces Coal Bed Methane sale and farm-out agreement and sale of non-core pipeline (Canada)

Caribou Resources Corp. ("Caribou") announced that it has entered into a binding sale, farmout and joint venture agreement with a company whose sole focus is to evaluate and develop natural gas from coal (CBM).

Caribou will farm out its CBM interests in seventeen net sections in the Wizard Lake area of Alberta. The agreement provides for a substantial cash payment to Caribou and a commitment by the private company to drill five Horseshoe Canyon test wells. Successful completion of this programme will result in the private company earning an interest in natural gas from the coal beds underlying Caribou's lands. Caribou will retain the option to participate as to 35% of its original interest in the future development of the Horseshoe Canyon resource or choose to retain an override on Horseshoe Canyon production. An area of mutual interest has also been established to cover the acquisition of other conventional and CBM rights in a 6 township area.

Coal to oil the wheels of industry (China)

China is planning to turn its abundant coal reserves into oil to help close a widening supply gap and make synthetic fuels as a key part of the country's energy mix. Optimists say China could be making up to 1.2M barrels per day (bpd) of liquid fuel from coal in 10 years, equivalent to more than a sixth of current demand, as high prices and a growing import reliance renew interest in the process.

Liquefaction, in which coal is used to produce gas and then treated to produce liquid fuel, was once seen as an expensive fallback. But crude oil prices, which rallied to more than US\$58 last month and are seen averaging above US\$40 through to next year, have spurred new interest from businesses. It is among a host of oil alternatives, such as ethanol and gas-to-liquids projects, that have been given new life by oil's 2-year boom.

India-US energy talks focuses on clean coal technology (India)

India and US have launched a new bilateral dialogue on energy, which envisages setting up working groups focussing on clean coal technology. Together, they will promote increased trade and investment in the energy sector to strengthen mutual energy security and promote stable energy markets to ensure adequate supplies. The first meetings of the working groups are expected to take place prior to the visit of Indian Prime Minister to the USA.

Feasibility study on Thar coal completed (Pakistan)

The feasibility study on Thar coal has been successfully completed by German company Rheinbraun Engineering and the documents have been purchased by US company AES Oasis Limited for mining and setting up of an integrated coal fired power project of up to 1,000MW. An agreement was signed for setting up a coal washing plant and a power plant with Ukrainian company Ukrinetreregergo.

Three firms get Government approval to develop coal resources (Philippines)

The Department of Energy recently awarded four coal operating contracts to three local firms for the exploration and development of coal resources in Southern Luzon, Cebu, and Mindanao. This brought to 10 the total number of contracts signed this year.

The contracts were awarded to SKI Construction Group Inc. (formerly Summa Kumagai Inc.), Rock Energy International Corp., and Bonanza Energy Resources Inc. SKI Construction got two exploration contracts for coal sites in Cebu. Rock Energy was given the right to explore and develop coal resources in three blocks covering 3,000 hectares in Zamboanga del Norte. Bonanza Energy was awarded a contract for eight blocks of coal areas in three sites in Mindanao.

According to government estimates, the country's total coal reserves are 343M tonnes. Last year, local coal production reached an all-time high of 2.7M tonnes. Power and other industrial sectors are the country's biggest coal users, with the power sector accounting for around 80% of total coal demand.

DBT equipment solves productivity problem (Siberia)

Juzhkuzbassugol is a major Russian coal producer operating 6 mines with annual production of more than 20M tonnes. It has selected DBT equipment to solve a productivity problem in its Abashevskaya mine. The customer is located in the southern part of the Kuznetsk Coal Basin which has coal reserves with 160 billion tonnes, 2nd only to the United States.

DBT will supply all equipment for a 300m plow longwall for a seam height of 1.35-1.75m, including shield supports, power supply and a state-of-the-art control system. JKBU selected the Gleithobel GH plow, suitable for seams ranging from 1m to over 2m regardless of the incline of the seam or the hardness of the coal. Productivity is enhanced by high rates of advance, maximum power for cutting (up to 2 x 400 kW), rapid cutting height adjustment, and the ability to carry out maintenance during operation.

TECHNOLOGY

Third Coal Technology Tour

The Coal Association hosted the third coal technology tour to Australia in late-June. The aim is to expose key people (MPs, officials and industry representatives) to the clean coal technologies in place or actively researched in Australia. This tour provided new insight and understanding of coal issues and was very well received by the participants.

Consensus developing on clean coal technologies (Australia)

Discussion at the first COAL21 annual conference reflected a growing broad consensus in Australia that clean coal technologies are among the technological options necessary if there is to be an effective response to climate change. The developing consensus included contributions from international and Australian non-government organisations (NGOs).

The conference reviewed developments in clean coal technologies over the past year, including progress in projects to secure new low to near zero emission coal fueled power generation involving capture and storage of CO₂. In a keynote address, Eileen Claussen, President of the Pew Center on Global Climate Change made two predictions: "carbon constraints are coming; and coal will remain a crucial source of energy throughout the world." She said these needed to be reconciled in two ways: "first, by making a much more vigorous commitment to technologies that will reduce the environmental impact of coal generation; and second, by advancing broader public policies to mobilise real action on the climate issue both in our domestic economies and worldwide." A global technological revolution was required and the goal of governments, acting multilaterally and within their own borders, must be to adopt policies and strategies that spur this revolution on. "It is time to erase all the doubts and the uncertainty. It is time to act boldly, government and industry together, to embrace the importance of both technology and public policy in protecting the climate we share."

COAL21 Chair, Tim Besley, said the debate on greenhouse gas abatement had matured over the past year. The COAL21 partners recognised the task is immense and that there are no simple solutions - no "silver bullets". Fossil fuels, including coal, will continue to feature prominently in the energy mix for many decades. Therefore technologies that will enable them to be used with greatly reduced or even near zero emissions must be developed and deployed as a priority. The coming year promises further acceleration of the global effort, including the anticipated release of the IPCC special report on CO₂ capture and storage.

In addition to the opening address by Ms. Claussen, the conference featured presentations by CSIRO, Battelle, Australian clean coal project proponents, Cooperative Research Centres, industry, NGOs, the US DoE, Japanese Government and others. The Australian CEO of World Wildlife Fund for Nature said it would not be wise to write off coal as an energy source, without first exploring the clean coal option. He said the challenges for the coal industry included recognising and acknowledging that deep cuts in CO₂ emissions are required in the developed world. He said there needed to be piloting of CO₂ capture and storage as soon as possible if confidence in its efficacy was to be justified. Regulatory principles should be established locally and internationally based on the precautionary principle with the prominent issues being leakage, liability and direct impacts on biodiversity. "We need therefore to try absolutely to store the CO₂, to store it underground, see whether it works because if it does, that protects a very, very valuable asset in Australia."

The Coal Association of NZ (Inc) has recently been invited to join COAL21 as a full member of the programme.

COAL21 Annual Review

In the COAL21 Annual Review released at the conference, the past year was described as a period of increasing RD&D activity both within Australia and internationally. In Australia, a number of proposals have emerged for pilot or demonstration projects related to the priority technologies identified in the COAL21 National Action Plan released last year. Federal and state governments have responded through important initiatives like the \$500M Low Emissions Technology Demonstration Fund (LETDF) and the work of the Ministerial Council for Mineral and Petroleum Resources on the regulation of geosequestration.

Highlights from the past year in developing the COAL21 National Plan of Action include:

- Formation of an international partnership to conduct a detailed feasibility study for demonstration of Oxy-fuel combustion.
- Commencement of a detailed feasibility study for Australia's first black coal Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle plant, with Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS).
- Further development of Ultra Clean Coal.
- Progress with the Victorian brown coal Integrated Drying Gasification Combined Cycle power project by HRL Developments.
- Purchase by Anglo American of the Australian Power and Energy Limited coal gas to liquids, power generation and CCS project in Victoria (now called the Monash Energy project).
- Announcement by CLP Power and Yallourn Energy of a feasibility study for a brown coal advanced gasification power station in the Latrobe Valley.
- Progress towards a scaled up Mechanical Thermal Expression pilot plant by the CRC for Clean Power from Lignite and the Latrobe Valley Generators.
- Advanced planning for Australia's first CO₂ injection and storage pilot project led by the Cooperative Research Centre for Greenhouse Gas Technologies (CO2CRC).
- Establishment of the Centre for Low Emission Technologies.
- Release in June 2004 of the Australian Government's Energy White Paper, "Securing Australia's Energy Future", including the LETDF establishment.
- Release of the ABARE report, "Near Zero Emissions Technologies".
- International Energy Agency in-depth review of Australian energy policy.
- Establishment of the Energy Futures Forum, a component of CSIRO's Energy Transformed Flagship.
- Release by the Victorian Government of a public consultation paper on CCS.

Investing in Coal

American commentators have noted in the Harvard Business Review that energy markets are shifting back towards coal. They believe new clean coal technologies are an effective strategy for helping safeguard our planet's climate and air quality as demand for energy skyrockets. There is major worldwide competition for fossil fuel supplies. In all energy markets, demand for coal in any given area is largely driven by costs, including those imposed by regulation. The costs of oil, natural gas, geothermal energy, and renewable energy sources like solar and wind power make coal attractive as an investment. Clean coal is also important to national security with estimated 200-plus years of coal reserves in the ground worldwide. Energy companies around the world are investing in clean coal technologies and important research is being done in government and academic laboratories in Canada, the United States, China and India.

Legal aspects of storing CO₂

(http://www.iea.org/textbase/nppdf/free/2005/co2_legal.pdf)

An overview of the major legal and regulatory issues involved in advancing CO₂ storage technologies. This is a companion to the recently published Prospects for CO₂ Capture and Storage.

The International Energy Agency has a very keen interest in CO₂ capture and storage. This technology could help limit increasing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere while meeting future energy needs, ensuring better security of supply and maintaining strong economic growth.

The most important approaches to reduce CO₂ emissions include energy efficiency, renewable technologies and nuclear energy. They face limitations, though, and none can solve the problems alone. The IEA considers the task so challenging when facing economic imperatives to continue fossil fuel use that technologies must be considered that will eliminate CO₂ emissions.

The Prospects for CO₂ Capture and Storage

Fossil fuels will be used extensively over the next half century with significant CO₂ emissions as a consequence. However, CO₂ capture and storage (CCS) technologies can drastically reduce these emissions.

This IEA study introduces a scenario analysis of the future role of CCS and presents the main uncertainties that surround a CCS policy strategy. Results show that an aggressive policy of developing and deploying CCS technologies could achieve substantial reductions in world-wide CO₂ emissions. Although its main role would be in the electricity sector, interesting possibilities exist also in manufacturing and in the production of transportation fuels. This book provides detailed estimates of the probable CO₂ reductions available from CCS under a variety of technological and economic scenarios. Coal remains an important fuel in all of these scenarios, improving the security of overall energy supply and resulting in economic benefits. With sufficient technology investment, and after successfully solving various environmental and legal issues, CCS can provide a way to curb GHG emissions while achieving, strong economic growth.

UK shows NSW how to make deep cuts in greenhouse emissions

The Australian Coal Association welcomed the UK Government's June announcement of a programme to support low carbon technologies as a key part of its climate change policies, including capturing CO₂ from power plants and safe storage in depleted North Sea oil and gas fields. The ACA considered this further recognition by the Blair Government, (considered a leader on climate change policy) that cleaner electricity generation from coal and gas is central to meeting deep emission reduction targets. It reflects growing confidence that CO₂ capture from coal fueled power plants will become economic in the near term.

The UK targets have now been matched by NSW, advocating a 60% reduction in the state's emissions by 2050.

Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions - The Potential of Coal

<http://www.iea.org/textbase/nppdf/free/2005/ciab.pdf>

This publication explores technology's potential for substantially reducing greenhouse gas emissions from burning coal. It urges governments to assist by establishing regulatory frameworks that encourage the development and deployment of the latest technologies.

Coal plays an important role in ensuring secure, reliable and affordable energy supplies both in OECD and in non-OECD countries, and will continue to be a leading fuel for power generation on a global level for the foreseeable future.

This report by the IEA's Coal Industry Advisory Board (CIAB) explores the potential for technology to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions from burning coal. It finds that coal based technologies have the potential to make significant CO₂ emissions reductions and urges governments to assist by establishing regulatory frameworks that encourage the development and deployment of the latest technologies. It presents collaborative action by governments and industry to encourage coordinated research and action to develop and demonstrate clean coal technologies.

New IEA-CCC reports

The International Energy Agency Clean Coal Centre recently published three reports, namely:

"Fundamentals of Pulverised Coal Combustion" by Zhangfa Wu updates an earlier (1986) report and reports on considerable research on fundamental aspects that has been undertaken since then. In particular, mathematical modelling has been increasingly used to investigate the combustion processes.

"Utilisation of CFBC and IGCC Residues" by Debo Adams looks at the utilisation of residues from two clean coal technologies – circulating fluidised bed combustion (CFBC) and integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC). CFBC ash is a more variable product than ash from pulverised coal combustion. It can be used as aggregate, in concrete, for filling mine voids, as grout in mines as well as remediation of acid mine drainage and a binder in municipal waste

incineration residues. There are only six IGCC plants globally, but more are planned. The limited production of IGCC ash has restricted development of applications and markets for the ash. Some uses include aggregate in road bases and specialised cements as well as in place of activated carbon for mercury and NO_x adsorption.

“Air Pollution Control Technologies and their Interactions” by Hermine Nalbandian describes our understanding of each combustion technology and how it interacts with both upstream and downstream equipment which is critical to achieve successful application. A thorough understanding of the chemical constituents of the flue gas is also necessary in order to arrange, size and design high efficiency, cost effective air pollution control systems that result in minimum adverse impacts on the individual technology performance and balance of plant.

EVENTS

22nd annual international Pittsburgh coal conference, Pittsburgh, PA, USA, 12-15 Sep 2005, Crystal M. Jones, PCC Secretary, University of Pittsburgh, School of Engineering, 1249 Benedum Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15261, USA, Tel: +1 412 624 7440, Fax: +1 412 624 1480, Email: pcc@engr.pitt.edu, Internet: www.engr.pitt.edu/pcc

Power-Gen Asia 2005 conference, Suntec City, Singapore, 13-15 Sep 2005, Vanesa Martinez, PennWell Publishing UK Ltd., Warlies Park House, Horseshoe Hill, Upshire, Essex EN9 3SR, UK, Tel: +44 1992 656 600, Fax: +44 1992 656 704, Email: attendingpge@pennwell.com, Internet: www.powergeneurope.com

Platts 28th annual coal marketing days conference: issues in coal supply/demand, regulation, transportation, and finance, Pittsburgh, PA, USA, 26-27 Sep 2005, James Gillies, Platts, Boston, 4 Hartwell Ave., 3rd Floor, Lexington, MA 02421, USA, Tel: +1 781 860 6110, Fax: +1 781 860 6101, Email: James_gillies@platts.com, Internet: www.platts.com/Events/Coal%20Marketing%20Days/index.html?S=n

2005 ICCS&T - international conference on coal science and technology, Okinawa, Japan, 9-13 Oct 2005, Ms Yoshimi Kunugi-Nishina, AIST Tsukuba Central 1, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305-8561, Japan, Tel: +81 29 861 8423, Fax: +81 29 861 8417, Email: y-nishina@aist.go.jp, Internet: <http://unit.aist.go.jp/energy/iccst/>

15 international coal preparation congress & exhibition: designing for the environment, Beijing, China, 17-20 Oct 2006, Ms. Sun Jiaohua, Department of International Cooperation, China National Coal Association, 21 Hepingli Beijie, Beijing 100713, China, Email: sjiaohua@chinasafety.gov.cn

Cooperative Research Centre for Coal in Sustainable Development Annual Conference, Brisbane, Australia, 25 Oct 2005, www.ccsd.biz

Greenhouse 2005 -on Climate Change, Melbourne, Australia, 13–17 Nov 2005, www.greenhouse2005.com

2005 Clean Coal and Power Conference, Renaissance Mayflower Hotel, Washington DC, USA, 21-22 November 2005. Email: faith.cline@hq.doe.gov; www.fossil.energy.gov/news/events/cleancoal

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