

GEOTHERMAL ENERGY

Geothermal energy might hail as an alternative source of energy to drive our turbines in a race to produce "cleaner" electricity.

What is Geothermal Energy?

Geothermal energy is a natural "clean" source of energy that is tapped from holes drilled several kilometres below the earth's surface from which hot water and steam is extracted. It is a clean source of energy not requiring fossil fuel inputs (other than the drilling machinery), but may provide a lasting source of energy for decades, possibly even centuries.

Testing by Geodynamics

In South Australia, Geodynamics, a company established to work out a way to economically extract geothermal energy below the barren Cooper Basin in the state is conducting trials into drilling into 90 million year old granite rock bed into one of the hottest spots on earth to extract hot water, to provide steam to power turbines for "clean" fossil fuel free electricity.

A \$40 million exploration and testing program is currently underway in the hope of finding an economic form of extraction.

There is a hope that a full scale commercial operation will eventually commence that will provide hundreds of Megawatts of power to the state's electricity grid, in the race to reduce Greenhouse gases.

The major investor Origin Energy has already committed to taking 50% of the output to put into their electricity grid once the commercial operation commences in the near future.

[ABC News service]