



UQ helps ports power up with clean energy

University of Queensland researchers engaged by North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation

University of Queensland (UQ) researchers are working with the North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation (NQBP) to create Australia's first 'advanced technology' coal terminals project at Dudgeon Point on the Central Queensland coast.

The contract was facilitated by the Consulting and Research Division of UQ's main commercialisation company, UniQuest Pty Limited.

Researchers from UQ's Global Change Institute and School of Economics Energy Economics and Management Group will help NQBP identify suitable sites for introducing possible solar, wind and tidal energy plants at the proposed Dudgeon Point coal terminals, south of Mackay. The research group will also advise on potential technologies that can be deployed on the identified sites.

The 1400ha proposed coal terminals site is situated at the existing Port of Hay Point. NQBP is the port authority for five port locations at Mackay, Hay Point, Abbot Point, Weipa and the non-trading port of Maryborough. The Dudgeon Point Coal Terminals Project is currently estimated at \$10 - \$12 billion and is expected to be operational by 2015/2016. The project was declared a project of significance by the Coordinator-General on 27 October 2011.

As well as identifying possible deployment sites for the new advanced energy technology, the research team will investigate the potential for developing a renewable energy market within the region. This includes assessing economic, environmental and social issues which may arise, and how the increased energy supply may be utilised to optimise outcomes for all stakeholders.

"The NQBP Corporation understands that ports are perceived as having large carbon footprints, but we believe we can reduce that impact and create a sustainable supply of energy on this site," said NQBP's Bob Brunner, General Manager Planning – Hay Point.

"The proposed Dudgeon Point development presents the ideal opportunity to look at all the possibilities for deploying renewable energy technologies and incorporating them into the overall expanded port design. The new coal terminals are expected to double the existing size of the Port of Hay Point, with the operation likely to become the largest coal port in the world."

UniQuest Managing Director, David Henderson, said the research team was well-placed to support NQBP's efforts to position Queensland at the forefront of 21st century port development.

"These UQ researchers are recognised internationally as renewable energy experts. The team worked with the Port of Townsville on a similar project in 2010, and they were also involved with UQ's own \$7.75 million, solar power system installed at St Lucia earlier this year," Mr Henderson explained.

"Working with the NQBP to actively pursue a sustainable future for the Mackay region and Queensland's energy sector demonstrates the capacity for Australian university-based expertise to contribute innovative responses to globally relevant challenges."

The research contract, which began in August 2011, is scheduled for completion this month.

Contacts

Leanne Wyvill

+61 7 3365 4037

mailto: l.wyvill@uniquest.com.au