

Your own Landsat view of landscape changes

Thanks to rapid improvements in computer technology and some first class science, Australians can now openly access Landsat satellite imagery which details changes to the landscape over the past 30 years.

Australia 1972–2002: A Thirty Year View from Space was compiled for the National Greenhouse Account, and developed by the Australian Greenhouse Office in collaboration with CSIRO and Geoscience Australia, with support from NASA.

The world-leading data has used some of the best science available, yielding 12 specially matched and calibrated national snapshots of Landsat data to provide an outstanding record of landscape change in Australia since 1972.

Reinforcing the dramatic effects of recent land-clearing practices, the imagery shows that between the bicentenary in 1988 and 2001, 3.4 million hectares of forested land was cleared across Australia.

The image series is now an invaluable downloadable resource for a wide range of environmental monitoring, management and planning activities for both professional and personal researchers.

Firefighters, for example, can use the imagery to plan firefighting activities, farmers can download the imagery directly to hand-held palm pilots to plan management of natural resources on their properties, and teachers, student and the general



Landsat images showing dramatic agriculture-related changes in vegetation cover between 1972 (left) and 2002 (right). Inset: images can be downloaded directly to hand-held computers.

Australian Greenhouse Office

public will be able to better see and understand effects on the national environment.

Launching the image catalogue on 13 August, Federal Environment and Heritage Minister, Senator Ian Campbell, said, 'Good decisions rely on good information and this rich digital information

technology will help communities make informed decisions about where local and regional action will be most effective.'

More information:

Australia 1972–2002: A Thirty Year View from Space: www.greenhouse.gov.au/ncas/aspac/index.html

A landmark power station over-rule

An historic precedent may have been set for energy industry planning following an appeal decision to reject a proposed Hunter Valley power station because of greenhouse gas concerns.

Project developers, National Power, have withdrawn an appeal against the NSW Government's 2003 rejection of the Redbank 2 coal fired power station proposal on grounds of its high greenhouse gas emission potential.

The decision was welcomed by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), which opposed the 2002 power station proposal because it was highly inefficient and would, by their estimates, have emitted the equivalent of 250 000 cars worth of greenhouse gas pollution every year.

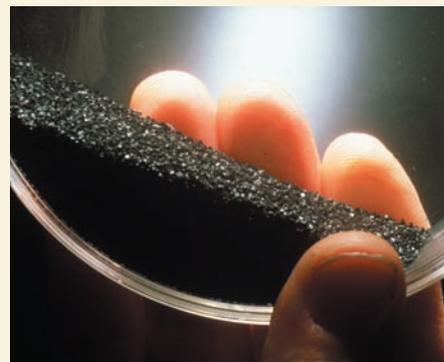
Climate change campaign manager for

WWF, Anna Reynolds, said 'Redbank 2's development proposal rejection is a precedent for other Governments, energy companies and the finance sector to act upon.'

'The next step needs to be a law that requires all major developments to be assessed for their greenhouse emissions before approval.'

'We can reduce greenhouse emissions to a level that will help prevent climate change only if there are more decisions like this one.'

WWF's *The Clean Energy Future for Australia* report, developed with six energy industry associations, found sufficient clean energy resources available today to deliver Australia's energy needs and result in a cut of greenhouse emissions by 50 per cent by 2040.



Ultra clean coal. 'Dirty' power station developments now may not be tolerated, meaning coal derivatives technology, such as gasification and drying, will be vital to future coal-based power generation.

CSIRO Mineral Exploration and Mining

Increasingly, emission cuts of at least 60% by 2050 are being proposed to mitigate severe climate change effects.