



Australia Takes Advantage of the World's Shifting Energy Portfolio

by Ross Louthean

Brisbane, Australia

The [Australian Uranium Association](#) (AUA) believes that [Australia's gross domestic product](#) (GDP) would be boosted by US\$ 11.2 billions by 2030 if the country maximized its supply role to the world's nuclear energy industry.

During the latest [Paydirt's Uranium Conference](#), held in March in Adelaide, Western Australia, the executive director of AUA, Michael Angwin, said that there are increasing opportunities for Australia in the world's shifting energy portfolio.

"On our modelling of action to address climate change, including carbon pricing assumptions, even the more conservative of those scenarios sees demand for nuclear energy doubling by 2030," Angwin said. "For Australia, with 38% of the world's low-cost uranium resources and 19% of current uranium supply, this presents a range of opportunities."

"A full response to that would see Australia's uranium production and exports increasing to about 37,000 tonnes per year by 2030," he said. "On known commodities forecasting, Australia would generate uranium exports of 14,000 tonnes in 2014, earning revenues of nearly \$A1.7 B (US \$1.12 billions), all on already known growth contributors to the world's nuclear energy industry."

However, key issues for the uranium mining industry in the future include

[indigenous economic development](#), [anti-proliferation](#) and [uranium stewardship](#).

Angwin cautioned against claiming or seeking too much influence internationally in the global nuclear power game. "This caution is not withstanding the potentially significant position we might occupy in an era of climate change, energy security and anti-proliferation initiatives."

"However, any influence an industry like ours seeks to leverage will always be moderated by the interests of our governments," he said. "They control our export conditions and are responsible for Australia's foreign relations."

Meanwhile, one of only two companies with a current uranium mining lease in Western Australia (WA) told the conference that the demand fundamentals for the commodity remain strong. This augurs well for the sales outlook for the more than 136,000t of uranium oxide under resource evaluation or study in WA.

Greg Hall, managing director of [Toro Energy Ltd](#), said that global demand would be driven by continued improved utilisation of nuclear energy, extensions to the operational life of existing reactors and new reactors in the pipeline.

Toro is developing the [Lake Way & Centipede deposits](#) near Wiluna, while [BHP Billiton](#) has the [Yeelirrie project](#), which had gone through mining approval processes decades ago under previous owner WMC Resources, taken over by BHPB.

Hall said that the commodities and equities markets needed to focus on the long-term uranium price of US\$ 70 a pound, as this was what long-term supply contracts were written on, and not on spot prices of around US\$ 44/lb that are currently used for short-term buyers and sellers. ■

Ross Louthean writes for *Mineweb*

Links and References

- [Australian Uranium Association](#)
- [Australia's GDP](#)
- [BHP Billiton](#)
- [Lake Way & Centipede Deposits](#)
- [Paydirt's Uranium Conference](#)
- [Toro Energy Ltd](#)
- [Uranium Industry and Indigenous Leaders Establish Dialogue Group in Australia](#)
- [Uranium Industry Supports Drive for More Robust Anti-Proliferation Measures and Eventual Disarmament](#)
- [Uranium Stewardship Principles](#)
- [Yeelirrie Project](#)

Click here for full list of links:
<http://go.mining.com/july09-a1>