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# Renewable exports bid

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POWERLINK is investigating plans to connect up to 2000 megawatts of renewable projects which could see North Queensland become an exporter of wind and solar power.

The State Government has announced plans to connect renewable projects in Cairns, Forsyth, Kidston, Hughenden and Townsville, while Power-

link has called for expressions of interest from other potential renewable and storage proponents as well as potential major new loads.

Proponents need to respond by September 8.

Powerlink Queensland chief executive Merryn York said they were anticipating strong interest.

"The four-week EOI process is just one step in a six-month feasibility study," Mr York said.

"Powerlink will continue to engage and seek information from proponents and other key stakeholders in the coming months."

Powerlink has already committed to easement acquisition and environmental studies for a transmission line connecting Genex's hydro-solar project at Kidston to an existing trans-

mission line at Mount Fox, west of Ingham.

More lines could connect projects in Hughenden and Townsville.

Mr York said Powerlink's role was to ensure a safe, cost-effective, secure and reliable transmission network and that all generators would have to

meet strict technical standards before being allowed to connect.

A spokeswoman for the Treasurer and acting Energy Minister Curtis Pitt said increased large-scale renewable energy capacity would put downward pressure on wholesale prices.

The spokeswoman said there were 20 renewable energy projects financially committed or under construction in Queensland, injecting \$3.4 billion of investment and over 2700 construction jobs.

"A new coal-fired power station is not needed in Queensland," the spokeswoman said.

"We already have ample existing traditional baseload generation.

"Even the federal Treasurer Scott Morrison has conceded that 'new cheap coal is a bit of a myth'.

"The idea of constructing a new coal-fired power station has been criticised by industry and energy experts alike because it is unbankable and would lock in higher greenhouse emissions."

The LNP's energy spokes-

man Michael Hart said Labor was copying South Australia's mistakes.

"It's clear Labor is desperately scrambling to counter the LNP's policy to support a coal-fired power station in North Queensland," Mr Hart said.

"Only a coal-fired power station will provide affordable baseload electricity for North Queensland families, small business and industry.

"Annastacia Palaszczuk is copying South Australia's energy policy that has led to blackouts and the highest electricity prices in the world."