

Media release

JOINT STATEMENT

Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment

The Honourable Curtis Pitt

Minister for State Development and Minister for

Natural Resources and Mines

The Honourable Dr Anthony Lynham

Minister for Disability Services, Minister for
Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on

North Queensland

The Honourable Coralee O'Rourke



Huge North Queensland hydro and solar project, supporting 500 construction jobs, surges towards construction

The construction of more than 500 megawatts (MW) of hydro and solar is one step closer after an agreement was signed yesterday between Powerlink and Genex Power Limited to progress Stage 2 of the Kidston Hydro-Solar Project, that combined with stage one will support up to 500 construction jobs.

Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland Coralee O'Rourke welcomed the signing of a Heads of Agreement between the Queensland Government owned Powerlink and Genex.

"This agreement is a significant milestone in the delivery of one of Queensland's largest renewable projects – the Kidston Hydro-Solar Project," Ms O'Rourke said.

"The huge stage two of the Kidston Hydro-Solar Project comprises the 250MW Kidston Pumped Hydro Project and the 270MW Kidston Solar Project at the site of the former Kidston Gold Mine in North Queensland

"It follows the 50 MW Kidston stage one solar farm currently under construction, financially supported by the Palaszczuk Government's Solar 150 program, which provides a 20 year revenue guarantee.

"Stage one involves approximately 100 construction jobs and in total, both stages will support up to 500 construction jobs and 18 operational positions when online."

Treasurer and Acting Energy Minister Curtis Pitt said the announcement highlights the Palaszczuk Government commitment to generate 50 per cent of Queensland's electricity needs from renewable energy by 2030.

"The Heads of Agreement announced yesterday brings this project is one step closer to construction and allows Powerlink to commence early project works including a targeted

environmental study, design works, and further engagement with landholders and stakeholders about the transmission line route required for the project," Mr Pitt said.

"The Kidston Hydro-Solar project is a key part of the clean energy boom occurring in Queensland and proof Palaszczuk Labor Government getting the policy settings for the renewable energy sector right.

"Our *Powering North Queensland Plan* announced earlier this year includes a \$150 million investment towards the development of a strategic transmission line to support projects like Kidston through the establishment of a North Queensland Clean Energy Hub.

"Powerlink is currently undertaking a feasibility study into the North Queensland Clean Energy Hub, due for completion early 2018."

"The initial studies and early work being undertaken by Powerlink for the Genex project will be one of many inputs to that feasibility study."

State Development Minister Dr Anthony Lynham said today's announcement follows the project receiving critical infrastructure status from the Queensland Government.

"Prescribed project powers and critical infrastructure status allows Queensland's independent Coordinator-General to employ special powers to help deliver project and ensure timely approvals," Dr Lynham said.

"This is about supporting a project that will help deliver a reliable renewable energy source and support hundreds of jobs," Dr Lynham said.

"This highlights our commitment to generate 50 per cent of Queensland's electricity needs from renewable energy by 2030 and the job-generating effect that action will have."

Mr Pitt said the Palaszczuk Government had kick-started the renewable energy industry in Queensland with 20 renewable energy projects currently financially committed or under construction in Queensland.

"This pipeline of projects will bring strong benefits to regional Queensland, including \$3.4 billion of investment, over 2,700 construction jobs and once operational they will more than double Queensland's large-scale renewable energy capacity, helping put downward pressure on wholesale electricity prices.

"We are leading the nation in large-scale renewable energy projects under construction or starting in 2017 – we have the most megawatts, most investment and most jobs.

"Our comprehensive \$1.16 billion Powering Queensland Plan retains electricity assets in public ownership, promotes Queensland's sustainable energy mix including coal, gas and renewables, and provides power bill concessions to vulnerable Queenslanders."

Powerlink Chief Executive Merryn York said the signing of the agreement reinforced the important role the transmission network will play in facilitating large-scale renewable generation.

“Powerlink will play a key role in delivering a lower carbon future for Queensland as we connect renewable generation projects to our transmission network,” Ms York said.

“Powerlink has enjoyed a strong working relationship with Genex to date, and we look forward to delivering these early project works on their behalf as part of the agreement.”

Genex’s Managing Director Michael Addison said he was pleased to have finalised this vital element of the project.

“The proposed work on the transmission corridor is key to connecting our project to the national electricity grid,” Mr Addison said.

“We maintain an excellent relationship with Powerlink and are delighted to be working with them towards meeting our power transmission requirements.”

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Media contacts:

Powerlink: (07) 3860 2654

Minister’s office: Amy Hunter - 0423 651 484