

Submission

2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap Capability Issues Paper

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Title/role	-
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2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap Environment and Natural Resource Management

Question 20: Is there anything else that needs to be included or considered in the 2016 Roadmap for the Environment and Natural Resource Management capability area?

Would you please add Remediation, Rehabilitation and Storage/ Treatment of Hazardous Wasteⁱ as well as consideration for the establishment of a National Superfund Program, similar to the US EPA's Program.

With regards,

Lynda Newnam

ⁱ It is worth noting at this time that Orica (formerly Imperial Chemical Industries, ICI) has recently submitted an export application to the Australian Government for an initial shipment of HCB (stockpiled in Banksmeadow, 10km from Sydney CBD) to Finland. It maintains that Australia does not have the capacity to deal with this waste which normally it would be expected to do under the Basel Convention. There are scientists in Australia who contend that acceptable processes are available. There is, however, investment required to build a facility as well as community support for siting. The HCB history dates back to the 1980s when the Australian Government committed \$25million for a facility. There was strong opposition to the site chosen and the facility was not built. In 2002 a NSW Commission of Inquiry approved a 24/7, 5 year Geomelt facility operating at Banksmeadow. This approval was later withdrawn after an Independent Review recommended siting the facility in regional NSW at what would be an acceptable distance from any residents. A site could not be found. Orica then proposed export to Germany, then Denmark, then France. All failed after international and local protest campaigns. About a year after the Danish failure the then local member Peter Garrett wrote to the Chief Scientist, Professor Ian Chubb, about storage of the HCB in Banksmeadow. In a reply on 5th December 2011 Professor Chubb stated: "As previously concluded by the Independent Review Panel (2006), long-term storage of this waste represents an unacceptable level of risk given mixed land use containing residential and commercial operations at Botany."