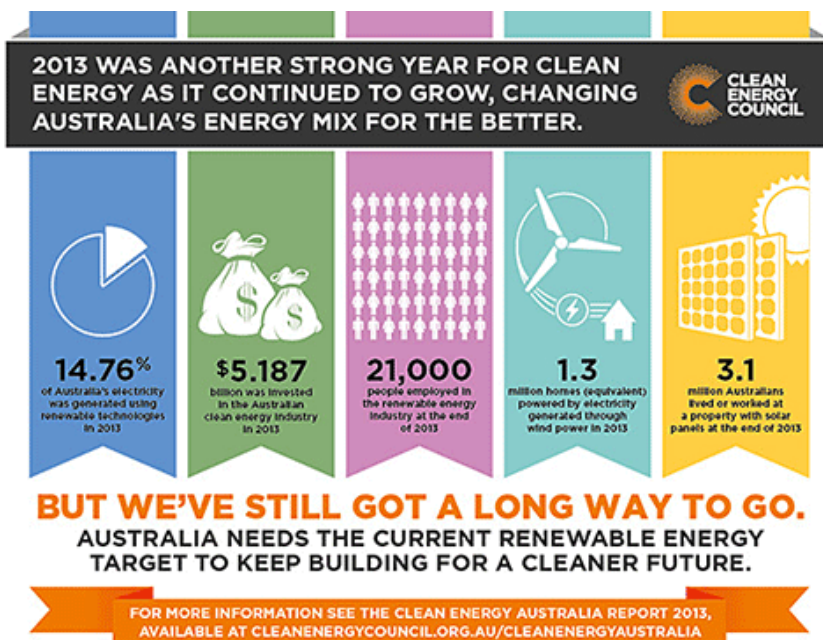


## Hydro and wind fuel upward trend in renewable energy

According to a recent report released by the Clean Energy Council, strong hydro generation and the opening of the largest wind farm in the country lifted renewable energy's share of Australia's power generation to over 14 per cent in the 2013 calendar year.



Credit: Clean Energy Council

Clean Energy Council Chief Executive, David Green, commented that both energy efficiency and renewable energy had an important role to play in building a stronger, cleaner economy.

‘Australia’s renewable energy potential is massive, but we have so much more to do to fully unlock it,’ he said.

‘[Our] report shows that the industry contributed more than \$5 billion of investment to the economy each year for the past three years and 21,000 jobs. Much of this economic activity was in regional areas where it is badly needed,’ Mr Green added.

‘This report shows that this is an industry poised to unlock tens of billions of dollars in investment, if the national Renewable Energy Target (RET) remains in place.’

Mr Green said analysis by ROAM Consulting for the Council showed that power prices will actually be lower by the end of the decade, if the RET were left in place, than under a scenario in which it was removed.

‘This is because without the RET we would need to get more of our electricity from gas, which the Australian Industry Group and the NSW Government predict may as much as triple in cost this decade.’

Key findings from the *Clean Energy Australia 2013* report include:

1. \$5.2 billion was invested in clean energy during the 2013 calendar year, the third successive year that domestic investment has been more than \$5 billion.
2. Almost 1.25 million solar power systems were installed at the end of 2013, meaning more than 3.1 million Australians now live or work beneath a set of solar panels.
3. Renewable energy produced 14.76 per cent of Australia's electricity in 2013 – enough to power the equivalent of almost 5 million homes. While hydro had an extremely strong year, wind and solar power use also grew to record levels.
4. Approximately 21,000 people were employed by the renewable energy industry at the end of 2013. This is several thousand fewer than the year before, mainly due to a contraction in the market for household solar power.
5. The largest wind farm in the Southern Hemisphere, the Macarthur Wind Farm, opened in 2013. In total, Australia's 1639 wind turbines across the country provided enough electricity to power the equivalent of 1.3 million homes.

Source: Clean Energy Council

From ECOS online <http://www.ecosmagazine.com/?paper=EC14142>