



CEO comment



Dr Chris Pigram – CEO Geoscience Australia

Australia is preparing to host the country's largest ever international geoscience event when the 34th International Geological Congress (IGC) is held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre between 5 and 10 August. The Congress will feature international expertise in environmental impacts, energy sources, mineral exploration and climate change. The importance of the minerals and petroleum industries to Australia will be strongly reflected in the Scientific Program and exhibits at the GeoExpo to be held during the Congress.

Geoscience Australia is heavily involved in the IGC having contributed to the planning and organisation of the meeting and will have staff involved in the science program and field trips. This issue includes details of the Congress and a new book on Australia's geology—*Shaping a Nation: A Geology of Australia*—which has been co-published by Geoscience Australia and the Australian National University E Press.

Details of the 2012 release of Offshore Acreage for petroleum exploration, which includes 27 exploration areas covering approximately 200 000 square kilometres in nine offshore basins, are included in this issue. The areas are located in Commonwealth waters off the coast of the Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania. The usual strong representation of release areas on the North West Shelf is well balanced with nine areas along Australia's southern margin in the Bight, Otway, Sorell and Gippsland basins.

The economy and the livelihood of the people of Timor-Leste, are heavily dependent on groundwater resources that are sensitive to climate change. This issue reports on a project, involving Geoscience Australia in close partnership with Timor-Leste Government agencies, which is building a groundwater knowledge base and monitoring capacity in Timor-Leste. The project has delivered a series of reports, national maps, guidelines and monitoring tools, as well as training, which will provide a fundamental knowledge base and practical tools to assess climate change impacts on groundwater.

Australia hosts the largest uranium reserves in the world, boasting 23 per cent of the global total, and is currently the third ranked uranium producer behind Kazakhstan and Canada. To encourage

exploration for uranium, Geoscience Australia researchers undertook dating of selected uranium deposits. Our article outlines the results from the Kintyre deposit in Western Australia and the Oasis deposit in Queensland.

This issue also includes a brief report on the *Australian Gas Resource Assessment 2012* which was prepared in conjunction with the Bureau of Resources and Energy Economics. This assessment builds on the *Australian Energy Resource Assessment* (see *AusGeo News* 98) released in March 2010 and documents the significant changes which underpin the increasing role for gas in the Australian and world energy mix.

As usual we always appreciate your feedback and encourage you to use the email address at the end of each article.



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