

# Port Anthony

[http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Port Anthony](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Port_Anthony)

## From SourceWatch

**Port Anthony** is a small regional port in Gippsland in eastern Victoria. The port, which was developed by [Ancon Australia](#) Pty Ltd, has been proposed as opening up opportunities for brown coal export projects.<sup>[1][2]</sup>

Port Anthony sits on the Corner Inlet in the vicinity of Wilson's Promontory National Park<sup>[3]</sup><sup>[4]</sup> and the Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Parks, which is part of the Corner Inlet Ramsar site that protects the habitat for migratory wading birds and contains seafloor animals and plants which are designated rare and not seen anywhere else in the State of Victoria.

Port Anthony is next door to [Barry Beach](#), which is mainly a service depot for ships transporting food and equipment to the ExxonMobil's oil and gas rigs<sup>[5]</sup> and Origin Energy's gas facilities in the Bass Straight.<sup>[6]</sup> The shipping of supplies to rigs is contracted to Farstad Shipping ASA.<sup>[7] [8]</sup> Farstad Shipping is a major international supplier of large, offshore support vessels. The company's head quarters is located in Aalesund on the North West coast of Norway. The port also acts as a pick-up and delivery depot for small cargo vessels operating between Tasmania and Gippsland. Other interested parties linked to Barry Beach include [BHP Billiton](#) in partnership with [ExxonMobil](#) and [Halliburton](#) who are in partnership with Landmark. Halliburton and Landmark offer supply and instillation of onshore and offshore equipment.

## Geo-Sequestration

In 2008 the Victorian Greenhouse Gas Geological Sequestration Act brought into focus the proposed expansion in coal products using geo-sequestration technologies and this highlighted the future role for Port Anthony with exports of fossil fuels to China expected to increase exponentially. In the 2009/10 Federal Government's Budget allocated \$2.0 billion in new funding and \$2.425 billion overall towards industrial carbon capture and storage projects.<sup>[9]</sup> The Federal Government also established the [Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute](#) to drive the dissemination of CCS technology around the world. There were plans to store the CO<sub>2</sub>s in onshore and offshore aquifers and dried-up oil wells in Gippsland. Transportation would be by pipelines and/or shipping.

On April 21st 2010 the *Yarram Standard* reported a \$30m dollar plant sourcing brown coal from Gelliondale<sup>[10]</sup>, which lies between Port Albert and Port Anthony. [Ignite Energy Resources](#) [IER] planned to mine up to 100,000 tonnes of coal a year from Gelliondale to convert brown coal –or lignite/peat - to oil and biological fertilisers using geo-sequestration. The conversion plant was said to be located either next to the mine or at the port. Ignite Energy's partner [Cougar](#) purchased an old milk powder factory opposite Port Anthony at Toora, seemingly for the project, but the sale fell through after Cougar was forced to shut a gasification plant in Kingaroy, Queensland due to contaminated groundwater.<sup>[11]</sup> The plans for the mine were put on hold and the plant designed to process oils and fertilisers was shifted by Ignite Energy to Yallourn in the Latrobe Valley.<sup>[12]</sup>

## Gippsland and Port Anthony Mooted as a CCS World Centre

In 2009 the Minerals Council of Australia [MCA] [Victorian Branch] produced its Vision 2020 report. The MCA document suggested a lack of infrastructure, [ports, railways, roads and telecommunications networks] had caused Australia to lose its share of the global minerals market, but the minerals market could grow again on the back of new discoveries and new technologies. According to the [MCA] Vision 2020 document the Australian Federal Government wanted to make Australia the world centre of Carbon Capture and Storage and the Gippsland area its hub.<sup>[13]</sup>

Sites for CO<sub>2</sub> storage were compiled by the Australian School of Petroleum and the CO<sub>2</sub> Co-operative Research Centre. The same reports identified the risk of earthquakes in Gippsland up to 5.7 magnitude possibly occurring between the towns of Foster, Morwell, Toora and Welshpool, [the latter two towns being almost adjacent to Port Anthony]. A spokesperson for the Federal Energy Minister Martin Ferguson denied the possibility of geo-sequestration causing earthquakes or that there were risks of contamination to underground water.<sup>[14]</sup> The government stated that in October 2009 the Nirranda project had already stored 65,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>s in south west Victoria<sup>[14] [15]</sup> alluding to its safety.

The government appeared unconcerned about a serious leaking of CO<sub>2</sub>s in the Utsira formation in the North Sea, which in 2008 had been injecting 1 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>s into the seabed, an incident that was reported worldwide by Greenpeace.<sup>[16]</sup> This was the model held up by all governments as being safe and effective.

## CCS Exploration in Gippsland

On the 30th October, 2009 the Victorian Minister for Energy and Resources invited applications for exploration permits to explore for storage formations suitable for geological carbon storage in two areas in Victoria, the Latrobe Valley and the South Gippsland Basin. By mid 2010 many of the exploration licences in the Gippsland area had been taken up and seismic studies began offshore in the Gippsland basin to update data.

Also in 2010 the Department of Primary Industries produced a Regulatory Impact Statement [RIS] Amendments to the Resources Development Regulations 2002<sup>[17]</sup> in relation to the 2007 collapse at the Latrobe Valley's Yallourn open cut coal mine. The RIS warned of another collapse at the mine, which could damage a large section of the interstate highway and other infrastructure as well as put Victoria's electricity supply at risk. Attention then turned to gasification.

In September 2010 [Icon Energy](#) announced it had acquired onshore acreage in Gippsland Basin (Gazettal Block VIC/G-10-5), to be known on award as Petroleum Exploration Permit 170, it includes the township of Darriman, in the north of the permit, and the township of Woodside, in the south, and is proximate to Port Welshpool, which, according to Icon Energy, could potentially be used as a location for future export facilities.<sup>[18]</sup> [Port Welshpool is almost adjacent to Port Anthony]. The acreage has potential for both oil and gas and now forms part of Icon Energy's portfolio of prospective gas tenements in Queensland, South Australia and Victoria. Icon Energy Energy has entered into an MOU to supply Shenzhen

SinoGas with 40 million tonnes of liquefied natural gas (LNG) over a 20-year period.<sup>[19]</sup> Notwithstanding, the role for Port Anthony remains unknown.

## Ignite Energy Dreams of government-funded port upgrades

[Ignite Energy Resources](#) (IER), a small Melbourne based company which holds [EL 4416](#), has grand plans for the development of an export brown coal-to-liquids project in the Latrobe Valley. A March 2009 article about IER's coal-to liquids dreams with EL 4416, stated that "IER's long term plans will see the export of liquid and solid products from Ignite Energy. The ports under consideration for this export activity are [Barry Point](#) in South Gippsland and the [Port of Hastings](#) in Western Port. The Barry Point area has been used for many years as the marine supply base for the offshore Gippsland Basin oilrigs. Currently, the Barry Point terminal can handle ships up to 5,000 tonnes in capacity. IER plans to develop a larger marine terminal around Barry Point to handle much larger ships. As for the deep water Port of Hastings, the Victorian Government is planning significant upgrades to its infrastructure to allow bulk material exports. However, the Victorian Government would need to develop appropriate rail infrastructure to allow transportation of the bulk products from the IER projects from South Gippsland to Hastings. Meanwhile, liquid exports would require pipeline infrastructure." A map with the article showed notional transport infrastructure options as being to export via the port of Geelong, on the far side of Melbourne, or via Barry Point or the Port of Hastings. The article did not specifically mention Port Anthony but given its proximity, it is obviously one of the available options.<sup>[20]</sup>

## Articles and resources

### References

1. ↑ South Gippsland Shire Council, "[Port Anthony vital to regional growth](#)", Media Release, July 20, 2009.
2. ↑ Matthew Murphy, "[Gippsland clean coal port could bring back jobs](#)", *The Age*, August 17, 2009.
3. ↑ Parks Victoria, "[Wilson Promontory National Park](#)", Parks Victoria website, accessed March 2011.
4. ↑ Gippsland Ports, "[Corner Inlet and Port Albert - About the Port](#)", Gippsland Ports website, accessed March 2011.
5. ↑ ExxonMobil, "[Barry Beach Marine Terminal](#)", ExxonMobil website, accessed March 2011.
6. ↑ Department of Primary Industries, "[Oil & Gas](#)", Department of Primary Industries website, accessed March 2011.
7. ↑ Farstad Shipping ASA, "[Annual Report 2009](#)", Farstad Shipping, March 2010, page 71.
8. ↑ Farstad Shipping ASA, "[Far Scandia](#)", Farstad Shipping website, accessed March 2011.
9. ↑ Department of Primary Industries [Victoria], "[Earth resources in Victoria](#)", Department of Primary Industries website, accessed March 2011.
10. ↑ "Coal Mining Just a Year Away Mining Millions", *The Yarram Standard*, April 21st 2010, page 3.

11. ↑ Department of Environment and Resource Management, "[Cougar Energy ordered to keep its UCG Kingaroy plant closed](#)", Media Release, July 15, 2010.
12. ↑ "[The High Price for Coal's Holy Grail](#)", *The Age*, November 4th 2009.
13. ↑ ACIL Tasman, "[Vision 2020 Project: The Australian Minerals Industry's Infrastructure Path to Prosperity: An assessment of industrial and community infrastructure in major resources regions](#)", Minerals Council of Australia, May 2009.
14. ↑ <sup>14.0</sup> <sup>14.1</sup> "Quake Risk", *Yarram Standard*, January 13th, 2010.
15. ↑ Process Group, "[CO2CRC Nirranda South, Victoria: CO2 Geosequestration Package](#)", Process Group, 2008.
16. ↑ Greenpeace, "[Leakages in the Utsira formation and their consequences for CCS policy](#)", Greenpeace Norway, February 2009.
17. ↑ PriceWaterhouse Coopers, *Regulatory Impact Statement [RIS Amendments to the Resources Development Regulations 2002]*, Department of Primary Industries, May 2010. (Pdf)
18. ↑ Icon Energy, "[New Drilling Program for Icon Energy](#)", Media release, February 25, 2011.
19. ↑ Icon Energy, "[Icon Energy expands gas focus to Victoria's Gippsland Basin](#)", Media Release, September 24, 2010.
20. ↑ "[Australia: Victoria's lignite reserve to drive local port development](#)", *Baird Maritime Magazine*, March 11, 2009.