

GREEN ELECTRICITY WATCH*

Media Release

Make the switch to greener energy! *2nd annual consumer guide released*

EMBARGOED to Sunday September 14, 2003

Electricity consumers can now make an informed switch to a more environmentally friendly electricity company, with the release of the 2nd annual Green Electricity Watch* scorecard. Australian Inland Energy and Origin Energy topped the green list, but there were disappointing results from some of the nation's largest retailers.

All 14 electricity retailers in Australia were surveyed for the scorecard and 13 agreed to take part. The questions were designed to gauge:

- their energy efficiency programs;
- their support for policies to reduce greenhouse pollution; and
- the Green Power products they offer.

Anna Reynolds of WWF Australia said, "Australian consumers are more aware than ever before of the impact their choices have on the environment. But it's often difficult for them to get all the information they need to make informed choices. Green Electricity Watch provides the consumer with the best information they need to make informed choices about their electricity provider."

Frances MacGuire of Greenpeace said, "The reality of climate change means that we have to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas by investing in clean, renewable energy like solar and wind and in energy efficiency. Those companies that seize these opportunities will be the success stories of the 21st century as consumers vote with their feet."

The leading companies showed a strong commitment to responsible environmental policy, along with actual investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency. They also offer Green Power products which exceed the accreditation requirements. Most companies, however, did not reach this threshold

Jeff Angel of the Total Environment Centre said, "In this era of green marketing it is essential that consumers have credible advice about products to prevent weak or fake green products from gaining a stranglehold. The scorecard will help consumers who can make the switch to more environmentally friendly electricity companies and products. Where that switch is not possible, as in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, we encourage consumers to use the scorecard to encourage their retailers to improve their environmental performance."

Full details of the survey are available at www.electricitywatch.org

CONTACT:

WWF communications officer **Jacqueline McArthur** on (02) 8202 1214 or 0408 626 780

Greenpeace communications officer **Tim Hollo** on (02) 9263 0357 or 0411 032 375

Total Environment Centre director **Jeff Angel** on (02) 9299 5680

*Green Electricity Watch is: Australian Conservation Foundation; Greenpeace; WWF Australia; Total Environment Centre; Friends of the Earth; The Wilderness Society; the Conservation Councils of NSW, South Australia, Western Australia, South East Region and Canberra, Queensland and Victoria, the Arid Lands Environment Centre, Northern Territory and Tasmanian Environment Centres; Climate Action Network Australia; and the Alternative Technology Association.