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## VICTORIA'S NEW GEOTHERMAL ATLAS TO ATTRACT INVESTMENT

The Brumby Labor Government has launched a ground-breaking new map highlighting Victoria's geothermal energy potential, with areas in the state's north and west looking promising.

Mr Batchelor said the geothermal atlas showed there was high heat flow in an area bordered by Stawell, Horsham, Ouyen and Mildura, as well as an area from north-west of Melbourne to Castlemaine and Ballarat.

"We need to find ways to cut carbon pollution when we make energy, and geothermal has a strong potential to play a key role in helping us do that in Victoria," Mr Batchelor said.

"Geothermal energy is a clean and green renewable energy source generated deep beneath the earth's surface, from naturally occurring heat in hot rocks and hot water aquifers.

"This new map is designed to attract and drive investment in geothermal energy production.

"The map has been created from measurements of the natural geothermal heat flowing through the ground at over 100 different sites across much of southern and north-western Victoria – this is over ten times the number of sites that had previously been published."

Most of the new data was collected by taking advantage of the existing network of groundwater.

Over the last year, government geologists took new measurements from bores throughout the Murray and Wimmera areas, around towns including Mildura and Echuca, along the southern coast near towns such as Portland and Colac, and in the Latrobe Valley area of Gippsland.

"This new heat flow map presents a regional view of data over much of the state for the very first time" Mr Batchelor said.

"The new map shows that large parts of Victoria have high heat flow values - values as high as those found in South Australia, which has attracted much geothermal exploration activity. "

The Brumby Labor Government allocated \$500,000 to develop the atlas, with GeoScience Victoria leading a large collaborative effort across government, academia and industry.

In addition to developing the map, new data gained from the Geothermal Atlas project is helping to develop a new 3D model of the state under the Brumby Government's \$2.5 million *Rediscover Victoria 3D* initiative, which also being carried out by GeoScience Victoria.

Mr Batchelor said that until now most geothermal energy data in Victoria had been compiled from temperature data collected during previous petroleum drilling. However, the picture was incomplete, with large sections of the state where no such data had been collected.

"Heat flow mapping is a more precise process for understanding geothermal energy, and will help government and industry make investment decisions," he said.

The geothermal atlas heat flow map will be made available for free download on [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/minpet/geovic](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/minpet/geovic)

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