

Writer hits out at energy policy

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By JUSTIN BIANCHINI

AN award-winning author critical of the state government's performance on renewable energy will be in

South Perth this Saturday. ABC journalist Gavin Gilchrist will talk about his renewable energy book *The Big Switch*.

He claims if Australia made the switch, it could have an electricity industry that pollutes less, costs businesses and households less and creates more jobs.

Stuart Morrison, editor of the Australian and New Zealand Solar Energy Society's *Helios* newsletter, said the book would make people angry about successive governments' short-sighted decisions.

"We often aim our ire

at politicians when bad decisions on energy issues are made. But the advisers and experts who want to cling to the coal/gas-driven steam age of power generation should take the blame," he said.

"Traditional energy suppliers have lost sight of the fact that people don't want electricity or gas — they want light, comfort and convenience.

"The surveys quoted in Gilchrist's book show that

people rate the environment ahead of cheaper power and economic growth but the energy industry's planning decisions do not reflect these results."

Gilchrist has been the national medical and science reporter for ABC TV news programmes since 1988.

The Walkley Award winner will speak at the Solar Energy Information Centre, 95 Canning Highway, South Perth, at 10am.

To attend, contact the centre on 367 1318.