Czech: High Support

On August 1, 2005, the new Czech law on electricity from renewable energy sources (RES) entered into force. It implements the EU Directive 2001/77/EC. Operators are obliged to purchase all electricity from RES covered by the law. Producers of electricity can choose from 2 support schemes:

- **Fixed Feed-in Tariffs:** With fixed tariffs, the electricity is purchased for regulated, fixed prices. The tariffs are fixed each year for one year ahead for each type of RES. They are fixed in a way that the conditions for meeting the indicative national target of 8% renewable electricity by 2010 are met. Stability of the purchase price is guaranteed for a given installation for 15 years. Examples of the tariffs:
  - Windpower 2.46 CZK (8.5 EURc)/kWh, installations after 1/1 2006.
  - Biomass and biogas 2.3-3 CZK (7.9-10 EURc/kWh), depending on fuel.
  - Solar (PV): 13.2 CZK/kWh (45 EURc/kWh), installations after 1/1 2006.

- **Green Bonus:** The producer sells electricity on the market for the wholesale price and receives in addition a premium (the Green Bonus) for each unit of electricity sold. This way, the risk is higher, but the revenue is also higher. For cofiring of biomass and fossil fuel only, the Green Bonus is available as support for the “renewable” part of the electricity.

The Czech feed-in tariffs are among the highest in Europe. It will be exciting to see the development that it will introduce.

Poland: Struggle

The biofuel story: In a country like Poland, it is obvious to use biofuels. With this background, the Polish government proposed in 2001 that vehicle fuel be mixed with 4.5% biofuel. This was the start of 3 years of battle over the law. The battle included fierce opposition from oil and car lobbies and a split of a government. A law promoting biofuels was finally approved and entered into force in March 2004. With the long delays in the introduction of biofuels, Poland lost its opportunities to become a leader in biofuels, as well as the potential increase in employment in the agricultural sector. In spite of these problems, biofuels are increasingly used in transportation in Poland, and the average use of ethanol in petrol has surpassed 1%.

EU Policy Update

**Climate-Change Program**

The EU is reviewing its climate policies and planning new actions. The review was started with a large stakeholder conference on October 24 and will continue with review of climate policy and development of new proposals. A number of working groups are reviewing results of the previous European Climate Change Program, and developing proposals for new areas such as aviation and CO2 sequestration. Results will come after the final sessions of the working groups March - June 2006.

INFORSE-Europe is participating together with CAN-Europe.

**South East European Market**

The EU has signed an agreement with Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Romania, and Bulgaria to establish an integrated energy market.

With the agreement, signed October 25, 2005 the Internal Market for Energy will be extended into the Balkan Peninsula as a whole, and relevant EU legislation on energy, environment and competition will be implemented there. Negotiations are ongoing with Turkey to join.

See more: http://www.inforse.org/europe/eupolicy.htm

1st Central Asian RE Conference

For the first time in Central Asia, more than 100 people met to discuss renewable energy on November 7-8, 2005 in Karaganda, Kasakhstan. Participants from Kasakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Usbekistan discussed development of renewable energy in the region and abroad. They heard about the development of windpower in Kasakhstan, where soon the first 5-MW wind park in the region will be in operation; about biogas in Kyrgyzstan, where a number of biogas plants are in operation on farms; and about the new “Azur Flame” Biogas Educational Center at Ecomuseum in Karaganda.

Speakers also highlighted the political interest in Kasakhstan, which, despite its large fossil-fuel resources, can benefit from renewable energy to provide power locally in remote areas, and to improve the environment; e.g., use of biogas can improve manure management and reduce water pollution.

EU Biomass Actions

On December 7, the EU Commission finally published its Biomass Action Plan, proposing measures that could more than double biomass use in EU by 2010, while respecting environmental limits. This is the kind of development that is needed to reach the target of 12% renewables by 2010, and most likely also the Kyoto Protocol targets. The main measures proposed are:

- legislation supporting the use of biomass for heating,
- reduced VAT on district heating
- stronger implementation of the renewable electricity directive.
- regulation and removal of barriers for biofuels in transport, including ensuring the environmental sustainability of biofuel production.
- a campaign and other measures for promotion of energy crops as part of EU’s agricultural policy.
- increased use of forest residues
- use more recovered materials from waste as energy, including waste from slaughterhouses and meat processing to biogas plants.
- more use of structural funds for biomass and other renewable energy.
- research and development in biomass for fuels, electricity, heating and cooling.

See more: http://www.inforse.org/europe/eupolicy.htm

Read more: www.inforse.org/europe/kz_biogas.htm

The declaration from the Conference calls for cooperation and political support for renewable energy in the region.

The Conference was organised by Ecomuseum in Karaganda in cooperation with INFORSE-Europe, and REA in Kiev as part of the 2-year “Azur Flame” project supported by EuropeAid, Norwegian Society for Conservation of Nature, and HIVOS. Read more: www.inforse.org/europe/kz_biogas.htm