

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY NEWS

Newsletter for **INFORSE** International Network for Sustainable Energy.

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**Theme: New EU Countries
Climate Success & Gender
New INFORSE-Europe Activities**



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Editorial Address:

Sustainable Energy News
INFORSE-Europe
Gl. Kirkevej 82, DK-8530
Hjortshøj, Denmark.
T: +45-86-227000
F: +45-86-227096
E: ove@inforse.org
W: <http://www.inforse.org/>

Editors:

Gunnar Boye Olesen
Judith Szoleczky
Niki Fowler (text advice)

Advisory Board:

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Photo on the front page:

NGOs built a solar system, which will provide hot water for an orphanage in Macedonia. See article on page 4.

EU Structural Funds and the Challenge for the Future

Structural funds are by far the biggest means of distributing EU funds towards less developed EU regions. Approximately 30 billion EUR are available for the new EU member states during the period of 2004- 2006.

Unfortunately, only a tiny part of this sum is used for renewable energy (RE) projects. The importance of RE in EU energy and environmental policy has been declared frequently in major EU documents such as the Communication on Renewable Energy from May 2004, climate-change-related documents, statements of the European Parliament, etc. Nevertheless, the opportunity to redirect energy development from dirty fossil fuels towards clean and sustainable RE has not been taken in the majority of EU member states. This must change; EU's actions need to honor the written promises.

- We need to fulfill the obligations to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.
- We need to secure our energy future and be independent of imports of oil and gas from politically unstable regions of the world.
- We need to create jobs, especially in rural areas.

The new structural fund (SF) period 2007-2013 will be a crucial time in which to secure adequate funding for sustainable-energy projects. Almost one third of the EU budget, or 336 billion EUR (0,41 % of EU GDP), will be allocated to SF in these years.

Six years is too long a time to lose in the critical, difficult effort to establish a solid base for sustainable-energy development. If the EU wants to meet its environmental goals - or even its economic and social targets - renewable energies and energy efficiency should be treated preferentially.

Unfortunately, this cannot happen without clear declaration of willingness in programming documents prepared at the national level. Therefore it is absolutely crucial that the government officials responsible for the preparation of national SF programming documents include RE and energy efficiency (EE) in all priorities and aims of the documents. RE projects should be eligible for funding through the wide spectrum of operational programmes.

It is also important that the governments include NGOs in evaluation committees so that the whole process of fund allocation and project evaluation can be more transparent. If, in addition, the NGOs become eligible for funding, they could also play an important role in information dissemination and in providing various types of support for the local authorities and municipalities. This has been successfully demonstrated in Wales by several local and national NGOs. It could be repeated in SF throughout the EU, not least in the new member countries.

Emil Bedi and Gunnar Boye Olesen
INFORSE Europe



78 Countries Gathered in China for Renewable Energy

By Gunnar Boye Olesen, INFORSE/OVE and 92 Group, Denmark

INFORSE participated when China hosted a world conference for renewable energy in Beijing on November 7-8, 2005.

The conference gathered 78 countries that were officially represented as well as representatives from industry and civil society. China set the tone of the conference by presenting new targets for renewable energy, including a target of 30,000 MW in windpower for by 2020, as well as a new, ambitious renewable-energy law. Unfortunately, China includes large hydropower in its expansion plans, in ways that cause deep concerns among many NGOs for environmental as well as social reasons.

The 78 countries agreed upon increased efforts for renewable energy, nationally and internationally, in the "Beijing Declaration" for renewable energy. Some main points in this declaration are in summary:

- The countries agreed to take further actions to accelerate the market uptake of renewable-energy technologies and to increase investment in research and development, especially by the developed countries.
- The countries agreed that the international community should strengthen its commitment to the scaling up of renewable energy development and use, especially in developing countries.
- The countries urged International Financial Institutions (IFIs), including the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), to expand significantly their investments in renewable energy.
- The UN system can and should play a key role to make renewable energy widely accessible to developing countries with the use of technical assistance, especially to the least developed countries. Its capacity and resources should be strengthened.
- Connecting multi-stakeholders through networks and other initiatives should be done to facilitate exchange of information on renewable energy and

energy efficiency as well as to make information more accessible to developing countries.

- The countries noted that the current global situation provides an unprecedented opportunity to address the strategic challenges of transforming our energy systems and of closing the energy divide between poor and rich.
- The countries invited the Commission for Sustainable Development to consider an effective arrangement to review and assess progress towards substantially increasing the global share of renewable energy. In addition, voluntary reporting can be enhanced through inputs from relevant international organizations and networks.

As part of the CURES network, INFORSE called for:

- increased efforts for renewable energy with ambitious, binding targets;
- establishment of the institutional basis for promoting renewable energies at an international level;
- a fundamental shift in energy lending of development banks towards renewable energy and energy efficiency; and
- increased support for regional and local initiatives in developing countries, with involvement of civil society and local actors.

These are some of the main points of the "Joint Declaration from Civil Society at BIREC2005".



Photo from the NGO meeting in Beijing.

The BIREC conference was organised by China in cooperation with Germany, EU, and UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Read more on www.inforse.org and www.birec2005.cn.

Preparations to UN CSD 2006-07

International Focus on Energy for Sustainable Development



INFORSE is participating in the preparations for the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD)'s sessions on energy, 2006-2007, that will focus on energy for sustainable development.

This includes supplying written inputs as well as participation in the Beijing Renewable Energy Conference and in some UN regional preparatory meetings, such as the meeting for the European conference held December 15-16, 2005 in Geneva. In this activity, INFORSE cooperates with other NGO networks such as European Eco-Forum, NGO Energy Caucasus to CSD, and ANPED.

The NGOs are not the only ones that prepare for CSD; all sectors and many partnerships are preparing their inputs to CSD. In particular, the energy partnerships from Johannesburg World Summit for Sustainable Development and the Renewables2004 conference will be active. That includes the Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition, the REN21 - Renewable Energy Policy Network, and several others. Experience from previous sessions of CSD show that lobbyists for fossil-fuel and nuclear energy will be very active as well, trying to maximise promotion of their unsustainable technologies.

INFORSE will continue to work for the best possible international framework for a global transition to sustainable energy, including:

- phase-out of harmful subsidies;
- changes in international energy lending and technical assistance to support renewable energy and energy efficiency; and
- actions by international institutions to prioritise sustainable energy, in existing institutions as well as with the creation of a new international institution for that purpose.

Read more about the CSD preparations, and INFORSE positions at www.inforse.org.

INFORSE-Europe New Directions at the Seminar and Annual Meeting 2005

By Gunnar Boye Olesen and Emil Bedi, re-elected coordinators



At this year's sustainable-energy seminar, August 12-17 in Romania, participants from 14 countries discussed successes and lessons learned on sustainable energy, participating in workshops on future activities and in the 2005 Annual General Meeting of INFORSE-Europe.

The workshops and the Annual Meeting addressed a number of issues that INFORSE-Europe will work on in the future:

- follow and influence EU policy, including an emphasis on structural and cohesion funds.
- monitor energy subsidies, both good and bad.
- develop sustainable energy visions for more countries.
- strengthen NGO activities for introduction of sustainable-energy issues in education.
- develop sustainable-energy exhibition and educational materials, in particular working models.
- organise international field trips to highlight successes.
- develop internet education (DIERET) further, improve the tests, and make the material widely available as a CD.

The Annual Meeting amended the bylaws of INFORSE-Europe, adding a board as part of the structure. The INFORSE-Europe members have received the Action Plan that was approved by the Meeting.

Read more at:
www.inforse.org/europe.

Participants from 14 European countries at the Seminar in Romania. Photos by Aurel Duta.



The board members, elected for two years, are: (see on the photo from left to right) Andrei Konechenkov, Renewable Energy Agency NGO, Ukraine; Ion Zamfir, Prietenii Pamantului/Earth Friends, Romania; Marija Jankovska, Eco-sense, Macedonia; Ursel Beckmann, Wohnhof Braamwisch, Germany (chair); Pete West, West Wales Eco Centre, UK. Alternates (not on the photo): Krystina Kubica, Polish Ecological Club; and Elitsa Grancharova, Za Zemiata, Bulgaria.

European Seminar, September 3-8, 2006 Solta, Croatia

In 2006 INFORSE-Europe will hold a seminar, in cooperation with Green Action Zagreb, at the new "Solar Academy" that is under development on the island of Solta in the Adriatic sea near the Croatian town of Split. The seminar will highlight:

- political developments and strategies for sustainable energy in Europe and the world, and
- practical work with demonstration models for renewable energy and energy efficiency for education and exhibitions.

Read more at www.inforse.org/europe.

INFORSE-EUFORES-EREF Policy Seminar March 29, 2006, Brussels

Once again INFORSE-Europe invites its members and other interested parties to a one-day seminar on highlights in sustainable energy policies. The seminar will feature discussions among NGOs, politicians, EU officials, and experts. There will be sessions about EU policies on renewable energy and on energy efficiency, about subsidies, and about sustainable energy visions. The seminar is being organised in cooperation with the European Renewable Energy Federation (EREF), EUFORES, and others. Reserve a place early, starting now, by email to ove@inforse.org.

Read more at www.inforse.org/europe.

South East European NGOs Discuss Politics and Build Solar Heating System in 2005 & 2006

Following the South East European NGO Seminar for Sustainable Energy in Croatia (see Sustainable Energy News # 50), NGOs from South East Europe met again in November in Macedonia.

In addition to engaging in political discussions, the group also built a solar heating system. This time it will provide hot water for an orphanage with 100 children.

One of the organisers, Slavjanka Miladinova from the Macdonian ProAktiva (member of INFORSE), sees solar as an important future energy in a country with 250 sunny days per year. Compared with electric heating with coal-based electricity, it is both cheaper and very much cleaner to use solar water heating.

The seminars were organised in cooperation with the Norwegian Association for Nature Protection. The NGOs plan to meet again August-September 2006.

Building solar heating system in Macedonia.



The Issue is: Communication

INFORSE-Europe's Education Project 2005



By Sharon Bannister, West Wales EcoCentre UK (left), and Judit Szoleczky (right) INFORSE-Europe

Projects

During the second half of 2005, five worthy projects from as many countries secured full or partial funding to pursue their educational work:

- Building more practical models or demonstration kits for sustainable energy solutions, by Prietenii Pamantului (Earth Friends) in Romania.
- A publication about climate change and sustainable energy solutions, by Mediterranean SOS Network in Greece.
- Two films about biomass and small hydro power, by the Polish Ecological Club's Upper Silesian Branch.
- Translation and introduction of 25 practical one-page descriptions of energy- and climate experiments from EKA/E-misszio in Hungary.

The original 45-page material were developed and used with success by the Danish School Forum and the Danish Organisation for Renewable Energy. Of these, 25 were translated to English, previously, and 15 were translated to Romanian in 2004.

- Continuation of the West Wales Eco Centre's activities, which since the start in 2004, have reached 2644 people from 24 schools and 3 colleges. In 2005 there were: 3 teacher-training, and 3 child-focused events like: the Eco Center's 25th anniversary, and the "Into the Future Festival"

Among the activities were: Tailored presentations, poster competitions, visits of the Eco Centre's mobile exhibition unit, and the help provided to those schools aiming to achieve Sustainable Schools Award.

Exhibition

In June 2005, INFORSE-Europe presented an exhibition as part of the EU Green Week. INFORSE's web site of school resources, including the review of Spanish material, was a big success and was featured on Spanish television.



Web site

The INFORSE-Europe school resource web site was redesigned with new categories. Besides INFORSE members' activities, other valuable resources were added, including English review of Spanish, French, and Hungarian materials.

Workshop

September's INFORSE meeting in Constanta/Agiea, Romania provided an ideal opportunity to examine the issue of energy within current national curricula and the issues NGOs face in trying to develop educational material.

The National Assembly of Wales has put sustainable development at the heart of its operation; however, translating rhetoric into meaningful change is proving problematic. At the September workshop, Sharon Bannister, Education Manager of West Wales Eco Centre, asked the question, 'Is education leading us to sustainability?'. Her presentation suggested that, in reality, education currently reproduces an unsustainable world in which social and environmental issues are not given priority equal to that of economic growth. Educational systems and practices need to change if the sustainability of the Earth is really to be taken seriously. Change from current lifestyles is vital; however, the limited support for organisations that are trying to facilitate these changes is evidenced in the issues raised in the workshop:

- Omission of sustainability and energy from the curriculum;
- Lack of engagement from teachers, who don't have to teach about sustainability or about energy use, so no time is allocated to them;
- Lack of basic awareness of energy issues within schools;
- No money for resources;
- Lack of time to reach all schools who request help;
- Inadequate teacher training;
- Language barriers.

Pictures from Wales: Eco Centre's mobile unit, experiments and posters.



However, the workshop wasn't all about the negatives. It was great to hear all about successes; e.g., good collaboration between NGOs and effective kindergarten activities in Macedonia; a planned renewable-energy centre in Georgia; structured teacher training sessions in Turkey; energy seminars and workshops in Armenia; and established programmes in Germany and Denmark.

Now you know that these are taking place! *This is the issue: communication.*

Many NGOs have produced a wealth of very good resources, but unless others know about their existence, new materials are devised and funding is allocated to reproduce what has already been done. Surely it would be more cost-effective to translate existing good materials into other languages as needed. This is where resources like the INFORSE-Europe education website, among others, can play a role.

Contact us

Let us know what you are doing. Write a short summary of your activities / resources / in your own country and email to sharon@ecocentre.org.uk and to ove@inforse.org for inclusion in the INFORSE-Europe education website.

Renewable Energy in the New EU Countries

Last year EU increased its membership from 15 to 25 countries. Of the new countries, only Cyprus is a leader in renewable energy (in solar heating); the past decade's strong development of renewable energy in Western Europe has only given a weak echo in the new EU countries in Central Europe. There are good reasons for this, such as little development of energy infrastructure because of overcapacity, and priority of energy efficiency. There are also bad reasons, such subsidies for fossil fuels, and an energy establishment opposing cleaner energy solutions. In any case, the rationale for renewable energy is at least as good for Central Europe as for Western Europe: Central Europe is even more dependent on energy imports than Western Europe, and has large, unused renewable energy potentials, in particular in biomass. This, together with EU membership, is likely to change the picture in Central Europe. It is certainly possible that within a few years some of the Central European countries will become leaders in development of renewable energy.

This theme gives some examples of new legislation for renewable energy, which is crucial for the development, including very interesting developments with high feed-in tariffs for renewable electricity in Hungary and Czech Republic. It also includes two examples of less favourable developments, in Poland and Estonia. In addition, we include an article about Slovenia that shows the complexity of development in just one country. It has not been possible, in the limited space of this newsletter, to give a full picture of renewable-energy development for all ten new, very diverse EU countries.

From the editors, we hope that you enjoy the theme.

Slovenia: Something is Going on ...



By Andrej Klemenc,
Slovenski E-Forum;
se-f@siol.net

With about 9 % of renewable energy in its primary energy supply, Slovenia is well above the EU average, and among top EU countries considering the share of renewable energy sources (RES) in general.

However, it is still relatively far away from its 2010 energy goals: increased share of RES to 12 %, of RES generated electricity from 29,9 % (in 1999) to 33,6% and of bio-fuels from currently less than 1% to 5,7% (all by 2010).

Main problems in the field are fast-growing demand for energy, particularly for electrical energy (in average between

2 - 3% a year); over-complex administrative procedures; low awareness and insufficient access to information on the part of customers; and insufficient domestic capacities for production of bio-fuels.

Unclear Priorities of National Policy

After a long process that for the first time attempted, but basically failed, to include environmental and nature protection NGOs in the work of defining main challenges and measures of national energy policy, the Slovene parliament adopted its Resolution on National Energy Programme (NEP) in the spring of 2004.

It consists of many favourable goals and measures for renewables and energy efficiency: increased energy efficiency and

shares of heat from RES in building sector, increased share of renewable electricity.

In spite of this, the NGO "Coalition for better NEP" heavily criticised it because of lack of clear priorities of its (too many) goals and objectives as well as for the lack of any distribution of responsibilities for achieving the goals.

The coalition claimed that the document is indeed not addressing the structural power of supply-side monopolies that, together with the policy of targeting low inflation by artificially restricted energy prices for "captured customers" and for fossil fuels, is leading toward further increase of energy consumption in the country and is not providing a feasible general economic framework for energy efficiency (EE) and RES.

Improved legal frameworks for Renewable Electricity

- **1999:** At the end of 1999, the *Energy Law* introduced the concept of »qualified producers of electrical energy« and assure them the access to the grid and guaranteed purchase at feed-in-based prices. Producers of electricity with high transformation ratio to final energy (i.e., CHP) or from RES were defined as »qualified producers« (QPPs). The Energy Law from 1999 also introduced the condition that any municipality needs to provide an energy concept in order to be eligible for state aids and subsidies on energy.

- **2001:** The *Decree on defining terms for status of QPPs* from the year of 2001 introduced distinctions of qualified power plants according to their size (micro: up to 36 kW, small: from above 36 kW to 1 MW, middle: from above 1 MW to 10 MW, large: > 1 MW).

- **2002:** The *Decree on rules for setting prices for QPP* excluded large hydro, large industrial and municipal heat (CHP) plants and large power plants that would use municipal wastes from the feed-in scheme.

- **2004:** The amendments to the law brought more precise definition of RES-generated electricity, defining as »renewable« also RES share of electricity generated in power plants that are using both fossil and renewable fuels as well as RES electricity that is used for hydro storage power plants (however not the electricity from the hydro storage). In addition, the operator of the grid is obliged to purchase all generated power from qualified producers under non-discriminatory and transparent conditions. The Amendments also provided considerably reduced complexity of administrative procedure. A more precise definition of »biomass« was also introduced.

In March of 2004, the Government issued a

Decree on feed-in tariffs for QPP that are guaranteed for 10 years; however, their adjustment to annual inflation is not automatically provided but is left to the government. See the tariffs in the Table:

Type	SIZE	Price Eur C/KWh
Hydro	< 1MW	6,15
	1-10 MW	5,93
Biomass	< 1MW	6,95
	1MW <	6,74
Wind	< 1MW	6,06
	1MW <	5,85
Geothermal		5,85
Solar	< 36kW	37,36
	36kW <	6,44
Other (biogas)		12,07
Combined on RE		6,69
Municipality Waste	< 1MW	5,31
	1- 10 MW	4,95
District Heating	< 1MW	5,80
	1-10 MW	5,58
Industrial Heating	< 1MW	5,36

Main barriers

Increased energy consumption and only slightly improved (high) energy intensity of the country are considered by NGOs as the main problem of increasing the share of RES in the country. Within the ongoing increased demand, there is little chance to convince nature protectionists that it is worth taking some risks and/or to "spoil" some pristine landscape because there is not any proof that this is leading toward overall improvement of the "energy environmental footprint" of the country. Thus, not only should EE and RES go hand in hand, but for the time being the emphasis should be given to energy efficiency.

- **Wind:** The first larger wind-farm plans are facing strong opposition from nature- and landscape protectionists. This is due to the high biodiversity of this small country, with its small and fragile habitats, low population numbers of rare and endangered species, lack of quality data in the field, landscape protection, etc. Other contributing factors include conflicts of energy and tourist uses of the space, oversized ambitions of investors and bad experiences with a »small hydro boom« from early 1990s. Last but not least on the list of barriers is the NIMBY effect.

- **Bio-fuels:** In the field of bio-fuels, the first small-scale production in the country started this year, but the main challenge remains how to stimulate domestic harvest of bio-fuel plants and reduce the imports of the fuel in order to increase domestic value added. In addition, quality control should be improved, since this year some drivers experienced problems with engines of their cars because low quality bio-diesel was mixed with diesel fuel.

- **Biogas:** The same might happen to investments in biogas plants, which just started with construction of the country's first modern larger biogas plant that will sell electricity to the public grid. The ambitious plans to construct about half a dozen biogas plants within the next three years with total capacity of about 10 MWe might be challenged with social acceptance issues. This potential resistance would be due to insufficient information on biogas to inhabitants, fears about dangers of possible inappropriate handling of high-risk animal wastes, and mistrust of the effectiveness of state control and sanction capacities in the field of hazardous wastes.

*Biogas plant under construction in Slovenia .
Photos by Slovenian E-Forum.*



Biomass district heating plant in Slovenia

- **Wood:** In the field of wood biomass, the main progress was made this year by opening (with support of UNDP-GEF) two biomass-based district heating systems and with the startup of the first pellets production line. The main challenge is how to make better added value of the pellets within the country rather than selling all to high-demand neighbouring markets.

Administrative Barriers

In general, over-complex investors, unfriendly administrative procedures, and low awareness of environmental benefits, as well as risks related to use of renewable energy, remain among the largest barriers, especially for increasing numbers of small investors and entrepreneurs. Thus, there is much to be done to make administrative procedures smoother while improving the rule of the law as well as in the field of awareness-raising, outreach, and active participation of the citizens.

Local Energy Agency; but ...

Luckily, the first local energy agencies are emerging that should play considerable roles in moving local municipalities and inhabitants toward more energy efficiency and renewable energy. Unfortunately, the former government, at the end of its mandate in 2004, dissolved the national energy efficiency and renewable energy agency; and the new government is hesitating to follow the Resolution on NEP with its claims for substantial increase of budget funding of EE and RES.



Hungary: Promising

The 2001 Electricity Act offers the possibility for independent electricity producers using renewables with a capacity above 100 kW to benefit from a feed-in tariff. The Act entered into force on 1 January 2003.

The tariff is the same for all renewable energy sources and is adjusted annually for inflation. It is paid by the main electricity producer (MVM), when a power plant is connected to the transmission network, or by the local service provider if the independent producer is connected to the distribution network.

The tariff is regulated by the Ministry of Economy and Transport. The price changed five times since 2003. With the latest adjustment (August 2005), the average price is increased from 17 HUF to 23 HUF (9 eur c)/kWh*, and the period in which the price is guaranteed is increased to 25 years from 5 years.

Now it is one of the best feed-in tariffs for wind power and biomass in Europe.

* The price consists of different prices for different parts of the day, which is favourable for flexible CHP plants that can concentrate production in periods with high prices and less favourable for wind power, which does not have this opportunity.

Estonia: Uncertain

Sometimes no news is the best news. That's the very situation in Estonia concerning renewable energy. Everything is very uncertain. The old energy law has been invalidated, but the new one has not yet been inaugurated. The only regulating act stipulating the use of renewable energy is the Electricity Market Act. Unfortunately, this act is not very generous towards renewables. Purchase obligation is fixed to 0.81 EEK (5.2 EUR cent)/kWh, which is not too bad for the moment. But the new draft energy law that has been prepared by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications is to fix this price for the next 15 years! As to the use of biomass for heating, the situation is stable. The wood resource is sufficient and it is entering the market on a commercial basis.

*Tõnu Lausmaa,
Re-En Center TAASEN,
Email: tonu-lausmaa@mail.ee*

Czech: High Support EU Policy Update

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 co-firing 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 with unused agricultural capacity and no domestic oil source, the use of biofuels for transportation is an obvious choice. With this background, the Polish government proposed in 2001 that vehicle fuel should 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%.

Read the full story at: www.inforse.org/s_e_news.php3

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>

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

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, Kazakhstan. Participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan discussed development of renewable energy in the region and abroad. They heard about the development of windpower in Kazakhstan, 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 Kazakhstan, 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.



Photo by Gunnar B. Olesen, INFORSE-Europe

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

Success in Climate Talks



The first conference of the Kyoto Protocol Countries was a success.

At the end of the Conference that was held in Montreal from November 28 to December 9, 2005, the countries had agreed to more than 40 decisions on the Kyoto Protocol and the Climate Convention, including:

- a compliance regime for the Kyoto Protocol;
- the formal start of Joint Implement and Clean Development;
- a five-year action plan of adaptation to climate change and the modalities of a fund to help the least developed countries adapt to climate change;
- the start of “a process to consider further commitments” for developed nations beyond 2012. A working group will start to work on this in May 2006. More than 150 countries participate, but not USA. The mandate of the group unfortunately lacks a clear end date for negotiations; as such, 2008 was proposed by many NGOs;
- in parallel, an exploratory global “dialogue” on future steps to combat climate change without “negotiations leading to new commitments.” USA will participate in this dialogue.

One of the key issues during the negotiations was the reluctance of the USA to make any meaningful commitments on emission reductions. While the solution was the above-mentioned double approach, another possible way around the “US problem” would be to expand the Kyoto Protocol to include cities, states and other non-status actors such as multinational corporations. This was discussed at the conference, but no formal agreement was made.



Canada Welcomes the World

Read more at www.climatenetwork.org.

Montreal Marked a “New Era” for Gender and Climate

Report sent from Montreal by Ulrike Roehr (left) and /Minu Hemmati (right).

Gender & Climate exhibition booth in Montreal.



Learning from experiences at COP 10 in Buenos Aires, when two side events on gender and climate change did not attract as much as interest as anticipated, this year’s women’s events at UNFCCC COP11/MOP1 marked a ‘new era’.

A variety of different activities were organised to draw more attention to gender aspects in climate change. This strategy was based on three pillars:

- Awareness-raising and disseminating information via an exhibition booth ‘gender - justice - climate’ and two ‘Climate Talk’ events,
- Women’s meetings to build capacity and strategise on how to integrate gender, and
- A research workshop aiming to develop a future research agenda and to initiate a gender-and-climate-change network.

Awareness-Raising

A growing interest in gender aspects of climate change became evident at the booth: many participants took away lots of material. Not all, but some of them were really interested in learning more, asked in-depth questions and engaged in discussion. Although there are some gender-differentiated results of research and experiences, e.g., from climate-change adaptation projects and especially from community-based disaster management, there is a conspicuous lack of good practise. Therefore, one of the ‘lessons learnt’ from these discussions should be to work towards a compilation of good practises/projects. As the article is written during the COP, reactions to the ‘Climate Talk’ events cannot be reported yet. They will take place at the second to last day of the conference. ‘Climate Talks’ are web-cast via the UNFCCC website and are intended to explain specific issues to the broader public. This year’s common theme for all talks is “Time for Action”. In our view, this can be interpreted as a call for gender mainstreaming into the negotiations. And that’s why we asked for



two slots. One talk was to be given by the authors of the article focusing on some examples of why it makes a difference to address gender in climate change. The other one, given by the chairs of the ‘Network of Women Ministers for the Environment’ (Swedish Minister for the Environment, Lena Sommestad, and South African Deputy Minister for Environment and Tourism, Rejoice Mabuda-Fahsi) about actions in their countries.

Capacity-Building and Strategising

The strategy meetings also generated a lot of interest. In the first meeting, participants expressed their need for clarifying details of the UNFCCC process, and we focused on discussing the basics of the UNFCCC process and explaining some of the decisions that were on the agenda at COP11/MOP1. The lesson learnt from this situation is that a capacity-building workshop should be held before or at the very beginning of the next COP. However, by the second strategy meeting in the beginning of the second week of the conference, we worked on recommendations and demands that women would want to put to negotiators. Issues raised included the need to broaden the debate and place it firmly into the context of sustainable development, peace and justice, as well as raising the numbers of women on delegations and in decision-making positions. The group decided to work on a brief statement / position paper. For the next COP, we are planning to ask for a room for daily Women’s Strategy Meetings.

continues on p. 10

continued from p. 9

Research Agenda

One starting point of the women’s activities at COP11/MOP1 is that there are considerable gaps in research on gender and climate change that impact the ability of the global community to integrate gender aspects appropriately and effectively into developing policies and instruments for climate-change mitigation and adaptation.

The workshop was meant to bring together researchers working on gender and climate change and related issues to develop a research agenda that can be pursued over the coming years.

Because participants came from very different areas - not only research, but also from practise and from policy advocacy - it wasn’t easy to find a common language and understanding of the problems. Some of us, having been involved in UN processes (CSD) for years, felt that gender is already sufficiently mentioned in the UN documents and that the great gap is in implementation. However, although gender is mentioned in many UN documents, it is completely absent in the UNFCCC as well as in the Kyoto Protocol.

In addition, gender is often only mentioned in a very general way and as such doesn’t help to argue why it makes a difference to take gender into account, especially not in climate-change policies. Of course we know that poverty and domestic / reproductive work are the basis for most inequalities between the sexes, but this awareness is not enough. We have to link it to the particular situation, to the specifics of the issues. Hence, what we need to know and need to provide are ‘hard facts’ and in-depth case studies relating the real-life ‘stories’. This information should convince those dealing with climate change that they will not succeed in mitigating climate change or in appropriate planning for adapting to climate change if they don’t address gender aspects adequately.

The most needed types of data include gender-differentiated information from North and South about consumption behaviour (energy use and emissions) as well as impacts on health, and in relation to risks. Participants were aware that much of this information is already available – but ‘hidden’ in reports not primarily dealing with gender or climate.

The group concluded that it would be extremely useful to conduct a survey obtaining a comprehensive overview of available research relating to gender and climate change.



From the gender & climate meeting in Montreal.

Numerous questions for future research were raised during the workshop. They may serve as the basis for a ‘bank of research questions’ to link questions developed in practical projects to research projects to be developed by academia.

The questions discussed include: What’s the impact of education on behaviour relevant to climate? What are the differentiated impacts of economic incentives vs. awareness-raising and education? What are the gender aspects of these different behaviour-change instruments?

Next Steps

Workshop participants agreed on several next steps: among others, requesting that the IPCC produce a report about existing research on gender and climate change, and the request for a comparative evaluation of mitigation and adaptation measures in different regions from a gender perspective.

Participants agreed that growing the network further with gender- as well as climate-change experts and researchers was useful. They also agreed that such a network could only survive with

- a) network members’ continued active participation, and
- b) coordination / service to the network.

Participants committed to participate actively in a growing network on gender and climate-change research, and they welcomed the organisers’ commitment to provide the services required. LIFE e.V. will explore additional means for exchanging references to gender- and climate-change-related research – e.g., a web site and a mailing list providing space for exchange and discussion. A workshop report will be available soon.

Contact: *Ulrike Roehr/Minu Hemmati, genanet – Focal Point: Gender, Environment, Sustainability LIFE e.V., www.genanet.de, roehr@life-online.de*



World Council: Human Right to Renewable Energy

The World Renewable Energy Assembly (WREA) 2005 in Bonn/Germany adopted a communiqué, “The Human Right to Renewable Energy”, on the last day of the Assembly, November 30, 2005. The assembly, invited by the World Council for Renewable Energy of which INFORSE is a member, brought together 450 participants from parliaments, industries, NGOs, and others.

INFORSE was represented by Raymond Myles South Asia Coordinator, INSEDA, India.

Some highlights of the communiqué are:

- Energy is the fundamental prerequisite of every life. The availability of energy is a fundamental and indivisible human right.
- It is an experience of the 20th century that the established systems of energy supply, ..., are not in a position to provide this human right to everybody.
- UN organisations and multilateral development banks were either not willing or were unable to shift their priorities towards renewable energy.
- The Kyoto Protocol falls far short of its requirements to limit climate change.
- Today and in the future, the low costs of renewables allow a sustainable, cheap and sufficient energy supply for everybody.
- Any further postponing of the transition to renewables is irresponsible.
- WREA welcomes the official plan of the new German Federal Government to take the initiative for the creation of an International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). This initiative will be successful if its creation is by a group of like-minded governments...
- Our guiding model is the stimulation and promotion of local initiatives instead of waiting for any further international agreements.

More: <http://www.wrea2005.org> and <http://www.wcre.org>.



Switching to Renewable Power: A Framework for the 21st Century

This book analyses strategies for promoting renewable energy within the context of a rapid energy transition, using case studies from different countries over the past 30 years. Having described the global context in detail, covering oil and gas depletion, climate change, third world development and the potential for renewable energy, the authors evaluate support mechanisms at national and international levels, offering readers a clear understanding of the regulatory framework and an opportunity to promote renewable energy effectively. This book is to researchers, energy policy makers, renewable energy professionals, energy consultants and students.

Edited by Volkmar Lauber. Among the authors are professors of leading European universities, and Giulio Volpi from WWF-Europe.
 ISBN 1-84407-241-X
 263 pages, £50.00, 2005
 Published by Earthscan /James & James
 Contact: www.earthscan.co.uk



Arrested Development Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in the Balkans

Regional outlook of the South Eastern European energy sector, and country overview of Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia. Authors: INFORSE members: Terra III, Romania; Eco-sense, Macedonia; and FoE Bulgaria; CEU, Hungary; Young Researchers (YRBL), Bosnia and Herzegovina; CEKOR, Serbia. Published by Stability Pact Watch Group, Public Participation in the Reconstruction Process in the Balkans established in 2002 within the CEE Bankwatch Network. 73 pages, May 2005
 Contact: www.stabilitypactwatch.info



European Renewable Energy Islands
 DVD, 52-minute film
 Languages: English, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Danish, Swedish.

The film includes interviews with several engaged actors from islands, where different type of renewable energy technologies have gained substantial successes. Shots of beautiful nature and hands on technology from islands all over Europe: Samsø (Denmark), Gotland (Sweden), Crete (Greece), Sardinia, Canaries, Sicily. Produced by Miljø Media, Denmark as part of an ALTENER project in 2005.

Contact: www.europeanreislands.net
 Can be ordered FREE from INFORSE-Europe as long as copies and funds available to cover postage costs.
 E-mail: ove@inforse.org



Clarity: Climate Action for Climate Protection
 CD-ROM.

Produce your own exhibition at low cost

Global warming: What are the causes? How does it affect us and our world? How can we contribute to climate protection? The answers are on 17 exhibition posters, ready for digital printing, plus backup material, web links.

Languages: English, Italian, Spanish, Slovenian. Target group: 12-18 years
 Produced by Climate Alliance of European Cities, Spanish National Education Center, and the Slovenian E-forum. 2005. Supported by EU DG Environment and the Spanish Ministry of Environment.
 Contact: www.climatealliance.org



On the Launching Pad – Chances for Renewables

DVD, 20-minute
 Languages: English & German.

Step by step, renewables are to replace fossil sources of energy. But how can renewable energy sources be tapped? What are the technologies behind them, and what is the current state of development? Answers and perspectives. Produced by the German Federal Environment Ministry. 2005. Can be ordered online FREE at: www.bmu.de/english/renewable_energy/doc/6923.php



Growing Energy on the Farm
 “Farmers Become Energy Producers”
 DVD 30-minute film plus interviews
 Languages: German and English.

The European agriculture in crisis! But there is a large new potential in cultivating renewable resources and energy plants. This opens up a whole new market beyond food production. The film shows the advanced possibilities that lie in the conversion of agricultural enterprises to biogas farms.

Through a whole year the story exemplarily follows a farmer in Lower Saxony while he converts his farm into a bio energy farm. The film discusses the potential and the economical and ecological advantages, answers technical, agricultural, financial and other practice-oriented questions for all farmers that wish to convert their farms to biogas.

Thus the film develops an alive, colourful picture of a modern, successful enterprise. At the end the viewer realizes: What this farmer can do, I can do too.

Produced by Fechner Media for VRD Stiftung für Erneuerbare Energien., 2004.
 Price: 22 EUR/ DVD or 19 EUR/ VHS
 Contact: www.fechnermedia.de



The New Power: Renewable Energies in Europe
 DVD, 50-minute film
 Languages: German and English.

Full solar energy in Europe: An Utopia?

Maybe not, maybe this is a realistic prospect and a vision for a brighter future, based on renewable energies.

Sun, wind, water, biomass and geothermal- these are the resources. What it takes now is brave pioneers, who believe in the New Power.

It is a fascinating documentary, which gives a convincing overview of tomorrow's Europe.

Shot in 45 days all over Europe and the world- traveling from Iceland to France and even California.

Produced by Fechner Media for EDF in cooperation with ARTE in 2004.
 Price: 27 EUR/ DVD or 23 EUR/ VHS
 Contact: www.fechnermedia.de

Contents

Editorial p. 2:

- EU Structural Funds and the Challenge for the Future

INFORSE/World p. 3

- 78 Countries Gathered in China for Renewable Energy
- Preparations to UN CSD 2006-07 International Focus on Energy for Sustainable Development

INFORSE-Europe News 4-5

- INFORSE-Europe New Directions at the Seminar and Annual Meeting 2005
- European Seminar, September 3-8, 2006 Solta, Croatia
- INFORSE-EUFORES-EREF Policy Seminar, March 29, 2006, Brussels
- South East European NGOs Building Solar Heating System in 2005 & 2006
- DIERET online education
- The Issue is: Communication, Overview of the INFORSE - Europe Education Project 2005

Theme: New EU Countries p. 6-8

- Slovenia: Something is Going on ..
- Hungary: Promising
- Estonia: Uncertain
- Czech: High Support
- Poland: Struggle

Europe/ Central Asia p. 8

- EU Update
- 1st Central Asian RE Conference

World & Gender 9-10

- Success in Climate Talks
- Montreal Marked a "New Era" for Gender and Climate
- World Council: Human Right to Renewable Energy

Publications p. 11

Back Page p. 12

- First Annual Conference Marked the start of the Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign 2005-2008

Sustainable Energy News

INFORSE-EUROPE
International Network for Sustainable Energy

www.inforse.org/europe

First Annual Conference Marked the start of the Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign 2005-08, 28 - 29 November 2005

By Judit Szoleczky, editor

Sustainable Energy News was invited to participate in the First Annual Conference of the EU awareness campaign for sustainable energy to change the energy landscape forever. In addition, Emil Bedi participated on behalf of INFORSE-Europe.

The conference was attended by about 300 participants in Brussels; and about 600 through the internet.

The main theme of this first conference was energy efficiency as a major European challenge. The energy commissioner, Andris Piebals, held a press conference and opened the event. We learned that the commissioner is deeply committed to the awareness-raising campaign. His answer for a question from the audience about how much he himself has been more aware of his own energy consumption since the campaign started gave a personal touch to the conference.

Presentations from DG TREN and from the European Parliament explained the legal framework and the expected results of the campaign.

Successful examples were given of commitment at various levels, along with discussions of how to formulate successful plans and proposals. Examples of success included some from committed municipalities (e.g., Stockholm, changing to clean vehicles), consumer and industry associations (e.g., labelling refrigerators, washing machines), and NGOs (WWF rating products, Energie-Cities spreading good practice, and advice how to make energy a little more "sexy" subject).

The audience had also proposals: e.g., recycle rather than reuse old inefficient washing machines and refrigerators, labelling smaller kitchen machines such as toasters, and making the industry provide information on the electricity consumption of VHS, DVD recorders and players as well as of television sets. It raised the question of how much the market will do voluntarily and how much must be made compulsory.



More on the EU campaign:
www.sustenergy.org.



Energy Commissioner Andris Piebals at the press conference

Who can be partner?
Presentation of the Campaign



During the conference, the educational material of the ManageEnergy Kids Corner was also presented, which is planned to be translated in all European languages.

During the debate, INFORSE tried to highlight:

- The positive roles of NGOs in organising local events, and school efforts. The advantages of synergy with other school efforts made by INFORSE, ISES and others.
- The possible positive effects involving more women to begin compensating for their often underrepresentation in energy issues and among decision makers. Women's input is all the more vital because often they are more environmentally conscious, more positive on green energy, and more worried about consequences of a nuclear accidents. Often, too, they are the ones who use the kitchen appliances.

From INFORSE, we find that the EU Campaign is an important step. If there is a real political will that succeeds in engaging politicians as well as municipalities, the EU Campaign could make a big difference. We look forward to being a partner in this effort and encourage INFORSE-Europe members to get involved in, e.g., organising Energy-Efficient Day. The Danish Samsø 100% renewable island initiative is already a partner and appears in the November Newsletter of the campaign as a showcase example.

More on Samsø see DVD,
on the publication list.
It can be ordered
FREE from
INFORSE-Europe.

