

Dear members, dear friends,

Please find below the 8th edition of the AER Newsletter on Energy informing you on recent developments, AER foreseen activities and upcoming events in Europe

If you have any comment or if you wish to know more about our activities in the field of energy, don't hesitate to contact us.

We wish you a very good reading!

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AER NEWS ON ENERGY

- Working group meeting on energy, Amaro, Friuli Venezia Giulia, 21st March 2007

The meeting was chaired by the Region of Norrbotten and was an occasion to discuss all the ongoing and forthcoming AER projects and activities in the field of energy. Among others, were discussed the Energaia Fair, planned in December (see below), a project of wood fuel heating, a possible event in 2008 on geothermic energy in Poland and an opportunity for collaborating with Fuel Cell Europe on a common project.

The complete report of this meeting is available to AER members under:

<http://www.a-e-r.org/events/regional-policies-committee/2007/amaro.html#c7096>

- Kent Ögren met Commissioner Piebalgs on 17 April

Kent Ögren (Vice-president of the AER energy group) took part in a round table discussion with Mr Piebalgs (Commissioner for Energy) within the framework of the Renewable Energy Regions Network. Kent Ögren also had the opportunity to invite Commissioner Andris Piebalgs to the energy seminar planned in Norrbotten in 2008 which will provide a platform for all continued EU work on a joint strategy for energy issues and will constitute a step in preparation for Sweden's EU presidency in 2009. Kent Ögren concluded by urging the creation of a common and sustainable energy policy. <http://www.a-e-r.org/main-issues/environment-sustainable-energy.html>

- Declaration of the Regions for Renewable energies and Energy Efficiency

Today, 77 Regions have joined the now famous Declaration of Regions for Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency, jointly promoted by the AER and FEDARENE. The AER strongly recommends to the Regions who have not done so yet to sign this Declaration and commit to a series of targets to improve their energy situation.

The Declaration can be downloaded under: <http://www.fedarene.org/>

- Energaia, International Fair of Renewable Energie, 6-8 December, Montpellier, Languedoc-Roussillon (F) – Subscribe to receive the Energaia Newsletter!

As announced in the previous newsletter, this fair will gather professionals and members of all levels of government to present innovations and find solutions to energy issues. The AER is co-organising this event and will hold a conference on energy efficiency on this occasion.

We are still looking for possible speakers and stakeholders interested in holding a stand: please contact us by the end of April if you are willing to take an active part in this Conference.

In addition, please note that you can now subscribe to receive the Energaia Newsletter. This newsletter will be first issued on 1st May and will provide you with detailed information on the stakeholders who will take part in the exhibition, the organisation of the different Conferences and the evolution of the programme.

To subscribe or to find further information on the event, please go to:

<http://www.energaia-expo.com/>

NEWS ON ENERGY – RECENT EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS

- **European spring summit: Heads of States backed Commission's proposals (8-9 March)**

The European Council endorsed an ambitious energy and climate-change policy. European leaders agreed on a binding target of 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (or even 30% if other industrialised countries, such as the US, take similar steps). In addition, they set up a legally binding objective to have 20% of the EU's overall consumption coming from renewables by 2020 with a 10% minimum target on biofuels. However the binding nature of the biofuels target is "subject to production being sustainable " and to "second-generation biofuels becoming commercially available". The Council also reminded the importance to achieve the Commission's objective of saving 20% of the EU's energy consumption.

Now, these political commitments have to be turned into legislation. Negotiations are open, and aim at dividing the 20% targets on RES and greenhouse gases between member states.

- **Financing and Taxation**

In addition to the "burden" share, the EC has to face another problem: how to finance these measures, since a study by the consulting firm McKinsey evaluated their cost at €1,1 trillion over the next 14 years. The European Investment Bank has already announced that it will spend €800million a year of lending for renewable energy projects between 2007 and 2010. The 2009 EU budget review should include these new expenses and taxation can be used as an incentive. The EC will modify soon the 2003 energy taxation directive to take into account the environmental aspects of energy. Commissioners Dimas (environment) and Kovacs (taxation) suggested the introduction of an energy tax and an environmental tax to indirectly promote cleaner energy sources. Environmental taxes could be used to cut other taxes, especially the one on labour. Moreover, the EC published a draft proposal to harmonise the minimum duty on diesel at 0,359€/litre in 2012 and 0,38€/litre by 2014 so as to stop "fuel tourism". (Source: *Euractiv.com*)

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/transport/eu-seeks-higher-tax-diesel-fuel/article-162446>

- **Unbundling and other foreseen texts**

The summit made little progress on the internal market for gas and electricity. EU leaders approved "effective separation of supply and production activities from network operations, based on independently run and adequately regulated network operation systems". However, they decided that any steps towards unbundling should take into account the specific characteristics of the gas and electricity sectors and those of national and regional markets. The EC will probably present legislation on unbundling in June or September 2007 as well as a directive on the use of renewable energy and other initiatives in the field of environment.

- **MEPs launched a new Energy Efficiency Watch (EEW)**

On 6th March 2007, MEPs presented the new EEW which is a coalition of politicians, NGOs and industry associations, which aims at accompanying and monitoring developments in energy efficiency and offering best-practices advice. It also provides a website for energy efficiency communication (<http://www.energy-efficiency-watch.org/>). MEPs made several recommendations to improve energy efficiency, especially strengthening the Commission's capacity and staff to deal with the issue.

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/meps-launch-energy-efficiency-watchdog/article-162262>

- **MEPs adopted a report in favour of Euratom**

On 27/03, the European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy approved a report by Eugenijus Maldeikis on Euratom for the 50th birthday of the treaty. The report stated that despite "serious imperfections", the Euratom treaty is an "indispensable legal framework". Improvements are requested though, i.e. to give a say to the EP on Euratom and to place common safety and security issues at the centre of nuclear activities. The report is not yet available.

- **Energy Globe Awards**

On 11th April, the European Parliament building in Brussels hosted the Energy Globe Awards. This annual competition promotes clean energy technologies by awarding best practices. The overall winner is John Maina from Kenya who increased harvests of small farmers by 50%, using solar power. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/051-5218-101-04-15-909-20070412STO05217-2007-11-04-2007/default_en.htm

- **Call for proposals for actions in the field of energy under the 'Intelligent Energy — Europe' Programme**

This programme aims at funding action which improve energy savings and encourage use of renewables. Proposals can be submitted until the 28 September 2007. €52 million will be made available in the 2007 IEE2 call. National information days will be organized in different European countries.

Calendar and other information:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/events/infodays_en.htm

- **United Nations Security Council held its 1st debate on impact of Climate Change, 17 April**

Called by the UK which chairs the Council, this debate aimed to examine the relationship between energy, security and climate. If some countries praised the initiative, others like China or Pakistan speaking on behalf of developing countries argued that the Security Council was not the proper forum to debate on Climate Change and that the primary duty of the Council was to deal with peace and security issues. However, many delegations called for the United Nations to urgently convene a global summit on the issue.

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2007/sc9000.doc.htm>

- **Public consultation on the "European Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan)"**

The EC launched a consultation on the SET-Plan, which aims at accelerating the market introduction and take up of low-carbon and efficient energy technologies. The first plan is expected at the end of 2007. You can give your opinion until 13th May on

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/consultation/setplan_en.htm

- **EU/G8 Conference on "Energy Efficiency – Shaping Tomorrow's World", Berlin, 20-21 April**

The conference focused on strategic issues related to the greater promotion of energy efficiency and energy conservation and on energy efficiency issues in the electricity, buildings and transport sectors. The conference showed that it is possible to further decouple worldwide economic growth from energy consumption and enhancing energy efficiency is the key to achieving this, said Mr Glos, German federal Minister of Economics and Technology.

- **Interregional renewable energy network**

On 17 April, 6 European regions launched the Renewable Energy Regions Network (RENREN). The objective of RENREN is to exchange best practice and information between regions but also to favour co-operation between private companies and raise public awareness on renewable energy via educational programmes. Involved regions are Oberösterreich (Austria), Schleswig-Holstein (Germany), North Sweden, Wales (UK), and two small states: Cyprus and Iceland.

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/european-regions-launch-renewable-energy-network/article-163270>

- **Jacques Delors advocates the creation of a European Energy Community**

Jacques Delors thinks that a European Energy Community would contribute to create a feeling of unity among Europeans and thus help to solve the current political crisis since, according to Delors, climate change, low carbon energy and a green future are underlying values shared by many citizens. Energy is at the basis of the way our society works and by rethinking our behaviour towards energy, we are forced to rethink our productive, economic and social relations on, at least, a European scale. <http://biopact.com>

INTERESTING CONFERENCES / SEMINARS / EVENTS

- **Sustainable Regions and Municipalities 2007, 8-10 May, Växjö (SW)**

Local and regional representatives will discuss opportunities and difficulties offered by EU policies and directives on Energy and Transport. The objective is for them to foster new ideas and inspiration on how to work towards sustainable regions and municipalities. Several EU projects financed under the IEE and INTERREG III B and C programmes will be presented in the discussions and experience and knowledge will be shared. Training for energy agencies and local and regional representatives is also included in the programme.

Further information under: http://www.transporteko-so.se/pages/cgi-bin/PUB_Latest_Version.exe?allFrameset=1&pageld=318&templateEnd= energi

- **15th European biomass conference and exhibition, 7-11 May, Berlin (G)**

This conference, entitled "From research to market deployment. Biomass for Energy, Industry and Climate Protection", will address different topics such as sustainability criteria, bio-refineries and international biomass trade. It will also review the latest developments in industry, technology, research and education. Workshops, forums and a social programme will accompany the conference. More information and registration on: <http://www.conference-biomass.com>

- **3rd European Solar Thermal Energy Conference, Freiburg (G), 19-20 June**

This conference organized by the German solar industry association, is closely linked with InterSolar, the largest solar trade fair in Europe, which will take place in Freiburg too, from 21st to 23rd June 2007. The conference will focus on market development of solar energy, its opportunities and challenges as well as policies for solar thermal, especially at the European level. The 2nd day will be devoted to workshops including national examples of best practices.

Further information on: <http://www.estec2003.org/2007/index.asp>

- **Energy in Regional development – Learning from Best Practices, Cornwall (UK), 29 June 2007**

This conference will provide examples of best practices from regions which have implemented successful programmes to support the local economy. Different regions will take part in the event including Navarra (Spain), Samsø (Denmark), Güssing (Austria), Apeldoorn (Netherlands) and Gothenburg (Sweden). http://www.managenergy.net/events_me.html#0706cornwall

- **Energy for development 2007, Beja (P), 10-12 October 2007**

This conference is dedicated to stakeholders willing to present potential contributions for new research, technology and innovation projects in the field of energy. It will tackle different topics such as bio-energy clusters, energy services; carbon economy, energy citizenship or energy and regional development. If you wish to present your own project, a call for papers is open until 30 June. Further information on: <http://www.energyanddevelopment-2007.net/pages/summary.php>

- **The case of energy autonomy: Storing Renewable Energies (IRESII), Bonn (G), 19-21 November 2007**

This conference organised by EUROSOLAR and the World Council for Renewable Energy (WCRE) aims at addressing projects that have already addressed electrical and thermal storage solutions. Different topics will be dealt with like storage solutions, renewable energy hybrid system or individual and joint non-grid connected solutions for a complete provision through renewable energie. Call for papers is opened until the 1st of May. <http://www.eurosolar.de/en/>

PUBLICATIONS & RESEARCH PROJECTS ON ENERGY

- **"Contributing to an integrated approach on Competitiveness, Energy and the Environment policies" 3rd report of the High Level Group on Competitiveness, Energy and the Environment, 27 February 2007**

The HLG was launched by the EC in February 2006. It gathers Commissioners, Ministers, MEPS and relevant stakeholders. This report focuses on incentives, innovations and technology policies

able to help energy intensive industries adapt to climate change and energy challenges. It also provides practical advice to policy-makers and relevant stakeholders. The High Level Group makes several recommendations gathered in 3 overall priorities: public support frameworks, technology leadership and innovation. Read the report on:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/environment/hlg/doc_07/third_report_27_02_2007.pdf

- **“Attitudes on issues related to EU Energy Policy” Eurobarometer, March 2007**

This survey shows that Europeans back the EC energy policy. 83% think that the EU should set a minimum percentage for renewable energies and 62% think that the European level is more relevant than the national one to tackle energy-related issues. Moreover, over 70% of EU citizens agree that their energy consumption habits will have to change in 10 years time. About nuclear issue, 61% of EU citizens think that the share of nuclear energy should be decreased as it poses safety problems. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_206_slides_en.pdf

- **“Energy Security and Climate Policy” by Nicolas Lefevre**

Nicolas Lefevre is an analyst at the International Energy Agency (IEA). In this book he states that fight against Climate Change and energy security will become “determining drivers” of national energy policies and policy-makers should consider these two priorities jointly since they have effects on each other. Using a quantitative method, he analyses which policies will maximise realisation of the two objectives. This book aims at enlightening policy-makers on new energy challenges: www.iea.org/books

- **“Renewable heating: Action plan for Europe” by EREC**

This Action plan is based on dozen of case-studies on specific policy support schemes. It proposes some guidelines for best practices and some suggestions on avoidable mistakes. The plan tackles 5 issues: verifiable targets for Renewable Energy Sources-Heating (RES-H) that is to say market monitoring and statistics, quantifying the energy delivery of individual RES-H installations, regulations, financial incentives and innovative RES-H applications.

http://www.erec-renewables.org/documents/K4RES-H/RES-H%20plan%20action%2012_01_07.pdf

- **Eurelectric Position Paper on the European Commission’s approach to market development (10th January Energy Package), March 2007**

In this report, Eurelectric calls for faster Energy Market integration and a European approach to regulation. In addition, it asks for action to develop properly-coupled, liquid wholesale markets, reinforce the functioning of retail markets, close the gap between the development of electricity and gas markets; and better integrate renewables into the electricity market. <http://public.eurelectric.org>

- **“Climate change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability” by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 6 April 2007**

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have established the IPCC in 1988 to understand and evaluate consequences of Climate Change. This report assesses threats posed by climate change continent by continent and examines in which way human beings can adapt to changes. It highlights the fact that vulnerability not only depends on Climate Change but also on development pathway and specifies that sustainable development can reduce vulnerability to Climate Change but at the same time sustainable development can be impede by Climate Change.

Read the report on: <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

- **“Where will the Energy for Hydrogen Production come from?” brochure by the European Hydrogen Association**

This study covers the issue of availability of raw energy materials in the coming decades. It states the supply situation for each resource including renewables and proposes energy scenarios for the next 20 to 50 years. In addition, it deals with the problem of costs and highlights the need for further research and innovation.

<http://www.h2euro.org/index.html>