

Brussels Declaration
On the New Role of Renewable Energy Sources
for a Sustainable, Secure and Competitive Energy Future
for Europe

Conclusions and Recommendations from the EU-Policy-Conference

The European Renewable Energy Policy Conference, which convened more than 800 participants from 29th to 31st January 2007 in Brussels,

Emphasising the need not to exceed the temperature target of 2 degrees above pre-industrial times

Recognizing the Commission's proposal for an international agreement which should lead to a 30% cut in greenhouse gas emissions from developed countries by 2020 compared with 1990,

Considering the increasing dependency on imported fossil fuels from politically unstable countries/ regions and the growing risk of energy supply crises resulting in a vulnerable European energy supply situation,

Acknowledging the strong contribution of renewable energy (today and in the future) to climate protection, energy security and independence, job creation and economic development, particularly in rural areas,

Taking into account the dynamic growth of renewable energy in Europe (which has grown by 55% since 1997) and worldwide and the innovative character of the industry,

discussed the future role of renewable energy in the context of the three energy policy goals of sustainable development, security of energy supply and competitiveness and came to the following conclusions which serve as input to the ongoing policy debate on the new Energy Policy for Europe as well as at international level:

1. Renewable Energy is an integral part of an integrated European Energy and Climate Policy to combat climate change, enhance energy security and increase job opportunities and economic growth both in the European Union and worldwide.
2. It has the potential to grow much faster than any other energy source and therefore offers special opportunities which should be taken by governments and industry. Stable policy framework conditions and a level playing field where market prices reflect the true costs including externalities of various forms of energy would provide much needed investment security.
3. The Conference underlines the considerable potential that renewables have to reduce Europe's dependency on energy imports, to diversify energy sources

and to boost distributed generation, thus widening the scope for solidarity in the EU.

4. The Conference strongly supports a legally binding target of at least 20% for renewable energy's share of energy consumption in the EU by 2020, to be achieved through national binding targets for renewable energy's share, as proposed by the Commission, taking into account different national circumstances and the potential of each Member State. These national overall targets should be achieved through sectoral targets and consistent measures. The Conference insists that legally binding targets are both appropriate and necessary to ensure energy policy goals are reached.
5. To this effect, the Conference calls for long term policies and measures and invites the Commission to submit proposals for coherent legislation for the use of renewable energy resources in the three sectors of electricity, heating & cooling, and biofuels as soon as possible. Such legislation should not only build on, but strengthen existing instruments and legislation.
6. The Conference particularly underlines the need for the large scale promotion of biofuels, paving the way for "second generation" biofuels. In order to attain this objective the Conference supports the Commission's proposal of a minimum target for biofuels of 10 % of transport fuel consumption for 2020. The Conference agrees that the promotion of bioenergy must avoid unintended negative effects on the environment (e.g. deforestation of primary forests) and calls for initiatives at the European and international levels to develop criteria for sustainability and systems of certification for the cultivation and use of biomass designated for bioenergy.
7. In addition, the Conference urges member state governments to accelerate the implementation and enforcement of existing legislation as well as the overcoming of barriers that still exist in some cases, in particular in the field of planning and authorisation procedures, in order to achieve existing targets.
8. Integrating large amounts of renewable energy into the grid will require an intelligent Europe-wide grid infrastructure. In particular the increasing share of wind energy from offshore sites will boost the need for a new transmission grid as a nucleus for power supply that will serve neighbouring Member States. In addition, Conference participants call for a fully liberalised energy market, where transmission system operators have an interest in connecting renewable sources as well as combined heat and power generation.
9. The Conference agrees that concerted global action to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency is needed. Cooperation on the optimisation of national support schemes, exchange of best practices and technical progress through initiatives and partnerships such as REN 21¹, REEEP², MEDREP³,

¹ REN21 – Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century

² REEEP – Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership

JREC⁴, GEEREF⁵, REEGLE⁶ and the IEA Implementing Agreement on RE Technology Deployment and IEE⁷ are important in this matter.

10. The Conference recognizes the need for significant financial resources, both public and private, to be invested in renewable energy. This should include the use of innovative financing mechanisms and market-based instruments. Conference participants are committed to creating a positive investment climate to attract private capital for renewable energies.
11. Overall, the Conference emphasises the need for the EU to strengthen its leading position in the field of renewable energy technology and to increase the contribution of renewable energy to the “Lisbon Strategy” by creating new jobs and guaranteeing economic growth in the EU, in particular through export opportunities.

By implementing the policies and measures outlined above, renewable energy will become the cornerstone of a sustainable, secure and competitive European energy strategy. Raising the share of renewable energy to 20 % in 2020 in the EU will result in approximately:

- 600 – 900 Million Tons of avoided Greenhouse gas emissions. This could be a major element in implementing an ambitious future EU reduction target;
- A threefold increase in employment in relation to current figures of more than 300.000 highly skilled jobs as well as an annual turnover of 20 billion Euros, placing European industry in an excellent position in the booming world market;
- Savings of 200 Mtoe (equivalent to 55 billion Euros⁸) for the European economies due to lower energy imports to the EU, thereby increasing energy security and solidarity;
- Achieving the target of 20% by 2020 would also be advantageous for long-term levels of economic growth and social welfare, since, as noted in Sir Nicholas Stern’s report, delaying action to mitigate or cope with climate change is likely to prove more costly overall.

The conference participants therefore call on the European Council to concur with the European Parliament on the need for a clear strategy and an ambitious energy action plan at the European Council spring summit, endorsing the ambitious binding targets for increasing the share of renewable energy proposed by the Commission.

Brussels, 31st January 2007

³ MEDREP – Mediterranean Renewable Energy Programme

⁴ JREC – Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition

⁵ GEEREF – Global Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Fund

⁶ REEGLE – Information Gateway for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

⁷ IEE – Intelligent Energy – Europe Programme

⁸ Based on the assumption of \$48 per Barrel