



ASIA-EUROPE ENVIRONMENT FORUM 6TH ROUNDTABLE

“The Energy Sustainability Challenge: Fuelling greater cooperation between Asia and Europe”

18-19 September 2008

CONCEPT PAPER

SUMMARY

A roundtable discussion among **40 specially-invited participants from the countries of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)** will be held over 2 days in Dublin, Ireland. The roundtable will focus on the following issues relevant to sustainable energy:

1. What are the implications of increasing energy consumption and economic growth for Asia and Europe? How has each region reacted to calls for greater sustainable energy policies?
2. What opportunities are available for Asia and Europe in ensuring the sustainability of energy while tackling climate change? How can the two regions work closer to promote clean and affordable energy? What are the enabling policies?
3. How could Asia and Europe harness cleaner fuels? In what forms can co-operation take place? How can Asia and Europe work together to tackle the challenges for further co-operation?

This roundtable is part of the Asia-Europe Environment Forum series; co-organised by the ASEF, the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF), the Swedish Environmental Secretariat for Asia (SENSA), the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), the Korea Environment Institute (KEI) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

BACKGROUND

Sustainable Energy

The use of energy is fundamentally essential to everyone everywhere. For lighting, heating, as a source of fuel for appliances as well as transport – energy plays an important role to countries and communities.

Sustainable Energy Society

To address the fossil fuel supply challenges, there is a strong need to begin policies of energy-mix; by promoting the diversification of the energy supply. This can involve the use of other alternative fuels such as renewable energy. For some countries, there has also been a consideration for recourse to civil nuclear technology.

There is a greater motivation to explore wider use of energy resources. For the research sector, the search is on for technology solutions that would reinvent and optimise the ways we consume and supply energy.

As inventive measures develop over the sustainable use of energy in terms of policy and technology, how can stakeholders examine closer the possibilities for cooperation and action on energy sustainability?

The Role of CDM

Increasingly around the world, more people are becoming aware of the effects anthropogenic climate change and the impact of carbon emissions. Under Kyoto Protocol, a mechanism called the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is in place to help economies to meet their carbon emission reduction target. The CDM has mobilized a large number of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

In its draft climate change programme, the EU Commission has proposed a substantial reduction of the import of CDM credits into the EU after 2012. This has already led to a confidence crisis in the CDM market and may stall the development of further CDM projects. An enhanced dialogue between representative of CDM host countries and EU representatives may be able to find solutions that enable the CDM to continue to play its role in promotion of clean energy in Asia.

International Initiatives

The International Energy Agency (IEA) launched in 2007 its World Energy Outlook with a special focus on China and India. In its Reference Scenario, the world's energy needs would be over 50% higher in 2030 than today. In this scenario, China and India would account for 45% of the increase in demand. Similar continued projections of economic growth in the rest of Asia will fuel the thirst of energy consumption.

This projected economic growth would, in turn, bring about greater improvements in standards of living for the population. The IEA calls for countries to therefore promote a transition to a more secure, lower-carbon energy system, without undermining economic and social development. Thus, there is an even greater need for a sustainable energy supply. In the context of Asia and Europe, in what ways could both Asia and Europe co-operate to achieve this? What are the challenges?

In a parallel move, the IEA's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency policies database has just recently been updated. These databases demonstrate the common effort between national governments within the IEA community to concretely co-operate by providing practical information on policy developments to stakeholders. Can Asia and Europe do the same too?

Asia and Europe in Context

Energy has been identified as a major area of cooperation for both Asia and Europe. At the Helsinki Summit in 2006, leaders from the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process reiterated their commitment, through multilateral measures, to promoting stable, effective, and transparent global energy markets.

Demand for energy is set to grow rapidly in the next 15 years. Developing countries such as China and many others in Asia are expected to account for the bulk of this growth in end-user demand as they push ahead in their industrialisation.

Each region has attempted in some way to organise a response to the opportunities and challenges of energy sustainability. Greater synergy can be obtained if both Asia and Europe engage the challenges and opportunities together.

The Asia-Europe Environment Forum (ENVforum) is the main platform for multistakeholder policy dialogue on sustainable development issues between Asia and Europe that has steadily gained recognition among civil society (which is its primary constituency), the business community as well as among governments particularly through the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process.

ASEM is a political process of dialogue and co-operation between the European Union (EU) and East Asia¹, along three pillars: political (the inter-governmental, official dialogue); economic (trade, investment, involving the business sector) and socio cultural (which includes the Asia-Europe Foundation as the process's outreach to civil society).

In order to encourage the sharing of information and experience on sustainable energy practices in ASEM countries, the ENVforum will organise the ENVforum 6th Roundtable in Dublin, Ireland in collaboration with the Institute of International and European Affairs, Dublin.

ENVforum's 3rd roundtable in 2004 examined renewable energy as the key to energy sustainability. This 6th roundtable moves beyond this discussion; exploring other possible solutions by addressing the larger issues on both the supply and demand aspect of energy sustainability.

OBJECTIVES

The overarching objective of the roundtable is the sharing of information and experiences on promoting sustainable energy policies and practices in ASEM countries with the aim to generate practical policy recommendations for central and local governments as well as regional/international networks supportive and relevant to the sustainable energy policy and promotion.

The roundtable shall

1. examine Asia-Europe national and regional policies on energy sustainability
2. analyse the experiences of CDM in fostering co-operation between Asia and Europe
3. investigate the extent to which sustainable energy policies have incorporated climate change measures
4. explore methodologies for good practices to be implemented elsewhere across Asia and Europe

Beyond a paper presentation approach, the roundtable actively seeks to incorporate other possible methods such as

- simulation using data from various sources, including the OECD, on energy supply and projections
- deconstructing/reverse engineer future scenarios in order to identify both positive/negative driving forces

The roundtable will result in a comprehensive overview on the Asia-Europe energy initiatives.

PARTICIPANTS

Approximately 40 high-level participants and speakers representing all 43 ASEM countries from the **research/academia, civil society, industries and governments** involved in various aspects of in the field of sustainable energy policy will be invited, particularly those involved in the following activities:

¹ ASEM member are: Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Myanmar, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, the United Kingdom, Vietnam and the European Commission. The recent ASEM Helsinki Summit welcomes Bulgaria, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, Romania and the ASEAN Secretariat.

- a. *Research/Academia*
- b. *Civil Society*
- c. *Industry*
- d. *Government*

The meeting will be organised as a two-day roundtable involving around 40 ASEM nationals who are prominent experts on the issue of the energy sustainability in Asia and Europe, representing government, civil society and international organisations.

CO-ORGANISERS, DATE AND VENUE

Co-organisers

Asia-Europe Foundation
Hanns Seidel Foundation
Swedish Environmental Secretariat for Asia
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
Korea Environment Institute
United Nations Environment Programme

Host

Institute for International and European Affairs, Dublin

Date | Venue

18-19 September 2008 | Dublin, Ireland