

CURES

Citizens United for Renewable Energy and Sustainability

The NGO network at the Bonn International Conference for Renewable Energies.

Bonn Conference Must Create the Environment For A Sustainable Energy Future

Bonn: 1st June 2004: On the opening day of the world's first intergovernmental conference on renewable energy, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) cautioned Governments and decision makers not to be satisfied with the organisation of the event itself, but to strive for meaningful results that include strong commitments and action.

In the weeks leading up to the Bonn conference events have resulted in a rocketing of oil prices and downgrading of oil reserves. This adds to the need for a radical shift in global energy policy, only then can modern energy service standards be brought to all citizens while also reducing the threat of impending disaster from climate change.

"The conference could become a 'tipping point' for renewable energy resulting in a rapid escalation of renewable energy deployment across the world", said a Cures spokesperson "Such progress is essential both to give an answer to a global environmental crisis- climate change- and to help provide clean, safe and affordable energy services to the estimated 2 billion people who currently have no access to them".

The NGOs welcomed the language of the draft Political Declaration stating that renewable energy *'will become the most important and widely available source of energy'*, but called for a timetable for its introduction - namely by the middle of this century. In order to advance the conference goals environmental and development NGOs are calling for action in a number of specific areas, these include: -

- Governments and other stakeholders must make further announcements of new actions to support new renewable energies (excluding large hydro) and not recycling old commitments.
- It is essential that a process is financed to monitor the new commitments made at the conference and to assist their integration with other international initiatives.

The conference has organised a Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue (MSD) process for non-government sectors. The process has largely confirmed the calls from citizen's groups that Governments must take action to support renewables by setting regional and national targets to increase their use. Specific initiatives, such as reducing the subsidies given to conventional energy sources (fossil fuel and nuclear power) and the internalising of environmental and social costs, were also noted as aiding the rapid introduction of new renewable energy technologies.

"Over the last decade the renewable energy sector has moved from a minor industry to one which holds the key to equality, financial security and global sustainable development. Its further expansion is now only constrained by the vested interests of the traditional energy sector and their Government supporters," said a Cures spokesperson.

The speakers at the press conference are:
Jürgen Maier, German Forum for Environment and Development
Jennifer Morgan, WWF
Marcelo Furtado, Greenpeace
Stephen Karekezi, Afrepren

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