

WWEC 2008 - Community power and decentralized investment key for accelerated wind energy deployment

Government of Ontario works on improvement of Standard Offer Programme and considers Green Energy Act

Kingston/Bonn (WWEA June 26 2008) – More than 600 high-level delegates from 40 countries have gathered for the 7th World Wind Energy Conference & Exhibition Community Power (WWEC 2008) at the St. Lawrence College in Kingston (Ontario), Canada. In more than 100 presentations, experts from all sectors of the wind industry discuss recent developments, successful policies and future prospects of wind energy utilization in Canada, North America and worldwide. The conference has a special focus in enabling decentralized and community power investment.

Dr. Anil Kane, President of the World Wind Energy Association: "Considering today's global energy crisis and the steadily increasing energy demand from giant countries such as China or India, there is no alternative for the world community than to shift towards renewable energy and especially wind energy. Communities and other smaller and local investors are the key players in order to achieve the necessary accelerated wind energy deployment on a global basis. We need more policies that enable such investors to invest in wind power."

The newly appointed Energy Minister of the Province of Ontario and Deputy Premier, the Hon. George Smitherman, confirmed the commitment of his ministry and of the Government of Ontario to renewable energy. The Minister underlined the importance of renewable energy in order to help ensure the long-term prosperity of the province of Ontario. He stated that he is open for the proposals to introduce a Green Energy Act that would substitute the current Standard Offer Programme.

Dale Dolan, Chairman of the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association: "It is a delight to hear the openness of the government to discussions of a Green Energy Act. This will allow Ontario to provide leadership in sustainable and therefore renewable energy generation such that we can provide the next generations with a world we can all be proud of. It is time for politicians to make important decisions for our provinces energy future.

Volker Thomsen, Conference Co-chair: "I am delighted and inspired by the appointment of George Smitherman to this new portfolio of energy and infrastructure and the fact that he gave his first public address at this important World Wind Energy Conference. It emphasizes the Ontario Government's commitment to renewable energy. George Smitherman has in the last five years proven to be a doer and our expectation is that he will initiate the next step of policy advancement that will enable renewable energy to become energy mainstream."

Kai Schlegelmilch, representative of the Environment Ministry of the Federal Republic of Germany, demonstrated that the success of the German wind industry has mainly been based on the German Renewable Energy Act, creating more than 80 000 jobs while business is making turnover of about seven billion Euro. He underlined the willingness of the German government to exchange information with other governments around the world to mutually benefit from the rich experiences gained.

David Suzuki, renowned environmental journalist and founder of the David Suzuki Foundation expressed the urgency for governments and communities to act now and go for renewable energy without any further delay. He said that only a feed-in tariff, like that successfully demonstrated in Europe will be able to bring about the desired results.

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