

## Press Release

### **Europe's largest biomass congress has started today in Valencia**

**Valencia, 2 June 2008. The 16th European Biomass Conference and Exhibition is Europe's largest international biomass event. On the agenda of the five-day congress that takes place in the Convention and Exhibition Centre in Valencia are biomass resources, biomass conversion and biofuels as well as market and policy issues. More than 1,300 participants have registered.**

During the Opening Session of the 16th European Biomass Conference and Exhibition on June 2, the official speakers of the supporting agencies, ministries and associations emphasized the key role of bioenergy to meet the future energy demands of the world. "Our projections tell us that two thirds of all renewable energy will come from bio-energy in 2020", Alfonso Gonzalez-Finat from the European Commission said.

Compared to other renewable energy resources, biomass is an all-rounder: It can deliver not only heat and electricity, but also fuels and plastics. Biomass is the only renewable energy source that can directly replace all fossil energies. Moreover, biomass is available all over the world.

"Energy recovery from biomass offers not only a high energy potential but also a multiplicity of possible applications", said the Chairman of the 16th Biomass Conference, Professor Dr.-Ing. Jürgen Schmid, when he officially opened the congress. Enrique Jiménez Larrea, General Director of the Spanish Institute for Energy Diversification and Saving, added that biomass "fosters the maintenance and diversification of the agricultural sector, thus contributing to the development of employment, especially in rural areas."

During the five-day conference, scientists, industry, suppliers, funding bodies and decision makers will discuss new developments and progress in all biomass related topics. There is still a lot to be done: "With regard to the supply of electric power, a certain degree of maturity has so far been achieved only by the fermentation of agricultural products and wastes in conjunction with motor-driven generators", Professor Schmid said. "The gasification of biomatter and plastic wastes would unlock a far greater potential and also considerably improve the recovery rates", he added.

### **Spain promotes biomass on a large scale**

Spain has recognised the importance of biomass and is promoting it on a large scale. The Spanish Renewable Energies Plan establishes that in 2010, biomass will involve 57 percent of the global contribution of renewable energies. This amounts to 12.6 percent of the primary energy consumption, Jiménez Larrea said.

The Biomass Industry Day on Tuesday, June 3 (organized by the European Biomass Industry Association) and the Jornada Biomasa on June 5 (organized by the Spanish Institute for Energy Diversification and Saving) will give the floor to discuss business projects and collaborations within the 16th Biomass Conference.

The use of bioenergy, however, does not only offer opportunities, but also entails risks. "One of the key problems is the competition for land with food production, especially in developing

countries”, Schmid said. Availability of biomass will therefore be a key issue for the coming years.

“We need policies to ensure a predictable, long-term policy framework to encourage development of long-term sustainable biomass supply for both energy use and other uses, without damage to our eco-system”, Gonzalez-Finat underscored. Besides scientific and market topics, policies will play a major role in the biomass conference, too.

### **The 16<sup>th</sup> European Biomass Conference and Exhibition**

The 16<sup>th</sup> European Biomass Conference “From Research to Industry and Markets” is taking place from 2 to 6 June in the Feria Valencia Convention and Exhibition Centre. It is organised by the renewable energy enterprise ETA-Florence Renewable Energies, based in Florence, in collaboration with the Munich-based renewable energy institute WIP-Renewable Energies. Both the conference and the accompanying exhibition are supported by the European Commission, the Spanish Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Commerce, the Institute for Energy Diversification and Saving, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, the Valencia Agency for Energy, the Regional Government of Valencia, the World Council for Renewable Energy, the European Biomass Industry Association, the Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign 2005-2008 and the Community Research and Development Information Service.

**Print free of charge. Voucher copy requested to the media contact. We will be glad to send you additional material (statements of the speakers, news from the exhibitors, biomass related pictures) upon request.**

**Pictures of the 16th Biomass Conference & Exhibition will be available for download from the web page [www.conference-biomass.com](http://www.conference-biomass.com) at 1 p.m.**

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