



17th European Biomass Conference & Exhibition

From Research to Industry and Markets

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Bringing you all the news and highlights from the Conference!

Available Monday to Friday at the registration desk and in the exhibition hall

Opening Session 29th June 2009

Giovanni Federigo De Santi, Director of the Institute for Energy, European Commission, Director General Joint Research Centre, welcomed the conference delegates as Conference Chair at the Opening Session.



‘Die Zeit laeuft uns weg...’

The Secretary of State at the German Federal Ministry for the Environment Michael Müller on behalf of the host country Germany delivered a sober message to the delegates on reconciling energy and raw materials. Time is running out he stressed as CO₂ emissions are rising globally but he sees energy efficiency and renewable energies as solutions and key technologies of the next decade, that all economies need to promote.

“National Action Plans Crucial for the Success of the Renewables Directive”

Fabrizio Barbaso, European Commission, Deputy Director General for Energy and Transport, gave a positive outlook for the role of bioenergy in meeting the 2020 targets. On the Renewables Directive, Barbaso stated that the national action plans “are crucial for the success of the policy and will enable the Commission to enforce the Directive throughout the period leading up to 2020.” The template for the national action plans will be adopted this week by the Commission and the national action plans must be completed by all Member States by June 2010.

“Biomass to become the major renewable energy source by 2020”

Jos Delbeke, European Commission, Deputy Director General for Environment, speaking at the opening session reminded the delegates of the negotiations in Copenhagen, he is enthusiastic of the solid results across the globe in this perspective and saw Renewables at the source of what the EU is going to achieve in the next decade, with biomass to become a major renewable source by 2020. “We have the sufficient biomass resources available in Europe,” he stated.

“Sustainability is a complex Issue”

All the EU representatives spoke on the sustainability issue. De Santi as Conference Chair spoke on the role of the scientific community in responding to this policy issue. The JRC put in place a Biofuels Thematic programme to address and provide the European Commission with more reliable data on a broad range of parameters. He pointed out the Commission will come out with a methodology for indirect land use change (iLuc factor),

and the JRC are coordinating an internal interservice group in the Commission to provide answers in this respect to their colleagues. Delbeke sees iLuc as one of the most difficult implementing measures of the RES Directive that needs to be set up. The Commission will report by Spring 2010 on indirect land use change. The recent EC stakeholder consultation on a sustainability scheme for biomass for all energy purposes indicated that citizens want a binding scheme for biomass, this was highlighted by both Delbeke and Barbaso. The Commission within the RES Directive are requested to come forward with a report by December 2009 on the requirements of such a scheme. Mueller reiterated that biomass will contribute to the targets if measures are taken to reach a sustainable production. The creation of an effective certification system will be one of the biggest challenges facing the Biomass energy Sector. Delbeke highlighted that biomass for heat and power application deliver much higher GHG savings over entire life-cycles compared to biofuels and the most cost effective which needs to be kept in mind when extending the scheme to all biomass.

A global perspective on biomass

José Moreira, Director CENBIO – Brazilian National Biomass Reference Centre sees the biggest challenge for biomass to become a global commodity in the current debate on sustainability. Regarding the state of play on land use change and N₂O emissions, in this field he purports that “regulations are ahead of science” he sees that much more attention should also be put in the improving the technology as a solution rather studying on the potential impacts in the scientific field.

Prioritising Next Generation Biofuels

Valri Lightner, Biomass Program Manager at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) outlined the overarching priorities of Secretary Steven Chu in the DOE namely science & discovery, clean secure energy, economic prosperity and climate change, and this is applied to the biomass programme. The US Biomass Program is focused on next generation biofuels. Within the biomass programme, the US DOE is funding three bioenergy research centres (BRCs) targeting breakthroughs in next generation technology. They are currently supporting and validating four commercial-scale biorefineries, and hope to fund 15 pilot and demonstration biorefineries from a 480 million dollar pot to pave way the way for commercial operations.

The message from Russia was delivered by Sergey Mazurenko, Head of Federal Agency for Science and Innovations Russia (FASI), responsible for Russian Bioenergy R&D Programme, who presented the Russian targets for renewables and gave informative examples of projects they are working on funded under this programme at the FASI.

Linneborn Prize 2009

The Johannes Linneborn Prize 2009 was awarded to Professor Byran M Jenkins, Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering, University of California, Davis, USA. Professor Jenkins was awarded this top honour for his work in research on biomass and his role in leading the California Biomass Collaborative involving academia, companies, environmental organizations and governments at regional level. Professor



Jenkins was presented with the award by the Linneborn Prize Committee Chair, Wim Van Swaaij, University of Twente. Accepting the award, Professor Jenkins spoke of how the efforts made for collaboration from his experience on regional level are relevant to global cooperation and this cooperation is especially needed on indirect land use change, as countries try to enforce standards on sustainability across the world, sustainability calls for flexible adaptive strategies and sustained and concerted research efforts.

Plenary Session

The first plenary session of this week was chaired by Heinz Ossenbrinck, Joint Research Centre & Joseph Spitzer, Joanneum Research Centre, who had the pleasure to welcome the delegates to the start of the technical programme.

Challenges and opportunities of an innovative energy source

Dr Christine Rösch, Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis, Karlsruhe presented microalgae as an energy source that can produce a broad range of products spanning from different biofuels, high value products for animal feed and food and services such as wastewater treatment. She continued that microalgae offers a broad range of opportunities as their deployment is not in competition with food production. Nevertheless there are challenges at technical, economic and environmental level to commercialise microalgae. She concluded that to exploit the big potential of algae the high value of co-products and services from microalgae production need to be exploited. Microalgae production is not economically feasible at present, long term R&D in biotechnology and mass cultivation techniques are needed to commercialise this energy source.

What is a biorefinery?

Gerfried Jungmeier, Joanneum Research Centre gave an informative and technical presentation on the Classification of Biorefinery Systems which formed the basis of work on Biorefinery systems in the IEA Bioenergy Task 42 Biorefineries. According to the classification of the IEA Taskforce, a biorefinery must be oriented towards the production of big volumes of biofuels, and combined co-production of marketable secondary products (food, fodder, base chemicals etc.), through a complex interaction of processes. Jungmeier remarked that until 2020 biofuels will be the primary products of biorefineries but in the future will see a growing importance of co-products. He applied his classification system on various examples of demonstration plants in Denmark, Austria, and Norway. The end result of the classification system was that there are many different biorefinery systems, which can be integrated, and there is a need to identify and evaluate the most promising systems in order to meet the targets of 2020.

Quo vadis liquid biofuels?

Dr. Kyriakos Maniatis, DG TREN, European Commission gave an overview of the European prospects on liquid biofuels. Maniatis emphasised the FP7 strategy for the biofuels calls between 2007 and 2010, and announced the next call on algae foreseen for July 2009. He introduced the European Industrial Bioenergy Initiative (EIBI), one of the measures of the broader European Strategic Energy Technology plan, that is currently under preparation, with the coordination of the European Biofuels Technology Platform and other biomass associations. It is the Commission's opinion that the current project portfolio of the FP7 will form the basis of the Industrial Bioenergy Initiative, and that this tool, supported by the new political framework of the RES directive, will ensure the market development of 2nd gen biofuels. In this initiative, Industry will play the leading role in the definition of the technological development programs. Seven main value chains were already identified under the Biofuels Technology Platform, with a total recommended budget in the range of 8 billion euro. Incidentally, Barbaso in the official press conference did comment, that these value chains would not exclusively form the basis of the EIBI.



Schmack Biogas AG honoured with EUBIA Industry Award 2009



The 7th EUBIA Industry Award was delivered this year during the exhibitors' reception to Schmack Biogas AG for its "outstanding contribution to the development of the Biomass Energy Sector." The prize was officially awarded on the 29th June by Tord Fjallstrom, EUBIA President to Mr. Michael Wittmann, Spokesman of Schmack Biogas AG. Schmack Biogas AG has been chosen this year for its activity as a pioneer in biogas development in Germany and in Europe and, moreover for its commitment to modern and industrial scale production of biogas.

Remember the Side Events Tuesday 30th June

Workshop COMPETE Bioenergy for Rural Development in Africa and Asia (jointly organized by COMPETE and RE-IMPACT projects); will take place in Hall C1/2.

New Biomass Co-firing Concepts (by IEA Bioenergy Task 32). will take place in Hall C3/4.



Exhibition

The exhibition opened on Monday morning and welcomed the delegates at a successful networking reception in the evening. Remember to visit the Exhibition Hall opening hours from 8:30. – 18:30.

This issue is written and edited by Maurizio Cocchi and Eibhilin Manning. The digital editor is Valentina Davitti.
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