

February 2007 E-Update

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1. **Irish transport emissions up 140% since 1990**

Since 1990, Ireland's transport sector emits nearly six times the European average in greenhouse gas emissions according to a report published by the European Environment Agency (EEA). Under the Kyoto agreement the EU agreed to an 8% reduction in its overall emissions levels by 2012, based on 1990 levels. According to the report a 20% increase in passenger transport volume is a major factor in the huge increase. Emissions from other sectors such as energy supply; industry; agriculture and waste management have dropped significantly over the same period. Air transport grew by almost 96%. Transport is responsible for 21% of EU greenhouse gas emissions. Road transport contributed 93% but emissions from international aviation are growing fastest with an increase of 86% between 1990 and 2004.

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/>

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2. **New target for biofuels obligation**

Mr Noel Dempsey TD, Minister for Communications Marine and Natural Resources recently announced that he is introducing a biofuels obligation which will ensure that biofuels represent 5.75% of Ireland's transport fuel market by 2009. The obligation will allow Ireland to achieve the EU Biofuels Directive target a year in advance of the 2010 deadline. He also announced a new 2020 target of 10% market penetration of biofuels which would also be delivered by the Biofuels Obligation. This move will achieve carbon savings of over 700,000 tonnes per year by 2009. This is the equivalent of taking almost 200,000 cars off the road annually. There is also a new incentive for farmers under a new €6 million bioenergy scheme to top-up the EU energy crop premium. Under this scheme introduced by the Department of Agriculture and Food, farmers will receive an additional €80 per hectare on top of the existing €45 premium.

www.dcmnr.ie

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3. **Europe expands wind market by 23% in 2006**

Europe installed 7,588 MW of wind turbines last year, valued at Euro 9 billion, an increase of 23% over the installation

levels of 2005, according to annual statistics from the European Wind Energy Association. The cumulative wind capacity in the EU increased 19% to 48,027 MW, which can generate 100 TWh of electricity in an average wind year. This equates to 3.3% of total EU power consumption. Ireland set a new record with 250 MW, increasing its total capacity by 50%. <http://www.ewea.org>.

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4. **Biofuels for transport**

'Biofuels for Transport' is the first pilot project of its kind between the Irish Department of Transport and the German-Irish Chamber of Commerce. This project will involve the practical use of pure plant oil among key transport operators, such as hauliers and bus companies. The intention of the project is to demonstrate a viable, replicable green transport model for Ireland. It is aimed at increasing co-operation among biofuel stakeholders and creating best-practice localized pure plant oil models in Ireland. The project is open to transport operators, vehicle modification kit installers, farmers, pure plant oil producers, distributors & experts. It aims to have 50 vehicles running on pure plant oil by the end of 2007. 75% funding is available to key transport operators. Informational seminars will take place in May and October to trace progress and provide feedback platforms. For more information go to www.biofuelsfortransport.ie.

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5. **Branson announces prize to save the planet**

Al Gore has teamed up with Sir Richard Branson, whose Virgin planes pump out millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide a year, is offering a £12.8million (\$25m) to the scientist who can extract that same gas from the atmosphere. He hopes to 'save thousands of species and mankind itself'. Branson is calling for a team of research scientists to "scavenge" one billion tonnes of CO2 a year from the sky – a technique that is currently impossible. The idea is based carbon capture and sequestration which involves making the gas from power stations inert so it can be buried underground. However, Sir Richard's challenge to suck it from the atmosphere will be far harder – perhaps impossible – because the gas is in lower concentrations. He claimed there was no conflict between his role as owner of an airline and space exploration company, and his professed ambition to find the answer "to saving mankind".

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6. **County Councils lead the way in energy regulations**

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has decided to set new stringent standards to compel developers to build more energy efficient buildings. This variation of the development plan makes the council the first local authority with tighter energy regulations than national standards. Wexford's County Development Plan is currently out to public consultation on a proposal to introduce a mandatory reduction of 40% in CO2 and energy used for space and water heating along with a requirement that 30% of heating and hot water comes from renewables. From 1 January 2008, developers must now show how they will reduce energy demand and associated CO2 emissions by 40% relating to space heating, cooling, water heating and lighting. They must also show how 20% of space and water heating will come from renewable energy sources, such as heat pumps, solar and biomass.

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7. **Airtricity's US wind turbine plan would fill all Irish needs**

Airtricity plans to build wind energy facilities large enough to supply a million homes with electricity. Wind turbines in Texas will produce energy that, if produced from non-renewable fuels, would cause the release of more than six million tonnes of harmful CO2 emissions into the atmosphere each year. The wind turbines will be connected to a \$1.5 billion (€1.14 billion), 800 mile long "transmission loop" that will also be fed from new gas-fired and coal-fired generating facilities. If one of the generating sources is working at a low capacity, then the others can make up for it. Chief executive of Airtricity Eddie O'Connor said the project, in the Texas Panhandle plains area, "is like constructing a power station greater than the entire generation for Ireland". Airtricity is one of five companies involved in the project, which it is due for completion by 2010. <http://www.ireland.com/newspaper/frontpage/2007/0219/1171575969702.html>

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8. **Ministers discuss renewables in the EU energy package**

EU Energy Ministers met recently at the Special Energy Council to discuss detail of the EU energy package including targets for renewable energies and biofuels, and the possible options for achieving unbundling on the gas and electricity markets. The new Energy Policy proposes a binding target of 20% of overall energy mix to be sourced from renewables by 2020, and a minimum target of 10% for biofuels will supplement this target. The Energy Council proposed that the EU commits to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020. To reach this goal, the EC proposed a number of actions including reduced energy consumption and development of an energy mix based in low carbon technologies. The proposed target of 20% of overall energy from renewables by 2020 will require growth in all renewable energy sectors namely green power, green fuels and green heat. For further details: <http://europa.eu>.

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9. **Live Earth concerts to save the planet**

The Save Our Selves (S.O.S.) Campaign for a Climate in Crisis will host Live Earth concerts in all seven continents on 7/7/07, to be broadcast to over two billion people. Confirmed artists to play at the 'biggest party on Earth' include Snoop Dogg, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, the Black Eyed Peas, Fall Out Boy, Akon, John Legend, Kelly Clarkson, John Mayer,

the Foo Fighters, Sheryl Crow, Lenny Kravitz, Bon Jovi, Damien Rice, Corinne Bailey Rae, Snow Patrol, Keane, Bloc Party, Duran Duran, Melissa Etheridge, Enrique Iglesias, Faith Hill, Tim McGraw, Maná and Paolo Nutini. The Live Earth Concerts, part of the Save Our Selves - The Campaign for a Climate in Crisis initiative launched by Al Gore are aimed at raising public awareness about global warming. The shows, which organizers have said will be bigger than 1985's Live Aid concerts, will take place on seven continents: London, UK; Shanghai, China; Sydney, Australia; Johannesburg, South Africa; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and cities to be determined in Japan, the United States, where two major East Coast cities are vying for the hosting role and Antarctica, the first live concert broadcast from there.

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10. RETScreen claims 100,000 users worldwide

The software that analyses the feasibility of a range of renewable energy technologies has been downloaded by 100,000 users since it was introduced, with the Kingspan Group of Ireland officially recognized as the 100,000th registered user. Demand for the free software is expanding at 500 new users every week and users are registered in 217 countries. The software has saved Cdn\$1 billion in project assessments, according to the federal government which developed the modules originally for wind, small hydro, solar PV, biomass heating, solar air heating, solar water heating, passive solar heating and ground-source heat pumps, but which has expanded to include combined heat & power and district heating. The software can download weather data from anywhere in the world to evaluate energy production, lifecycle costs and greenhouse gas emission reductions for any of the technologies. By the end of 2012, RETScreen expects to have 300,000 users who will save \$8 billion in studies. The software recently released a beta version for refrigeration, to provide a model for assessing the viability of energy efficient arena projects such as skating and curling rinks, with a focus on heat recovery from refrigeration systems. <http://www.retscreen.net/ang/news.php>.

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11. Solid biofuel Supply Chain Seminar in Dublin

The Swedish Trade Council and the Swedish Embassy in Ireland in cooperation with Sustainable Energy Ireland and SVEBIO (Swedish Bioenergy Association) are organising a joint Sweden-Ireland Solid Biofuel Supply Chain Seminar on 27 March 2007 at the Conrad Hotel Dublin, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2. The aim of the workshop is to present and exchange Swedish and Irish experiences within the field of solid biofuels. Presentations will also be held on specific Swedish solutions for cultivation, production and distribution of solid biofuels as well as equipment for production and end usage of solid biofuels. The seminar invitation, including programme and registration form can be found on www.swedishtrade.com/ireland or contact Jesper Öhrn or Hanna Wendel at the Swedish Trade Council: Jesper Öhrn: Tel: 01 474 4422, 087 417 3786, E-mail: jesper.ohrn@swedishtrade.se. Hanna Wendel: Tel: 01 474 4423, 087 740 5301, E-mail: hanna.wendel@swedishtrade.se.

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12. EVENTS

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| 7-8 March 2007
RDS, Dublin | Irish Water,Waste & Environment (IWWE) and Irish Recycling & Management (IRWM) Exhibitions,

This two-day exhibition features a free one-day Waste-to-Energy seminar run by Sustainable Energy Ireland's Renewable Energy Information Office on Thursday 8 March.
All visitors who pre-register in advance will receive a free lunch.
For registration details: http://www.environment-ireland.com/environment07/common/register_now.html |
| 9 March 2007 | Irish Sustainable Energy Summit, Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin
www.energyireland.ie |
| 15 March 2007 | BWEA's Wave & Tidal Energy Conference, London
http://www.bwea.com/events/index.html |
| 27 March 2007 | Solid Biofuel Supply Chain Seminar, Conrad Hotel, Dublin
www.swedishtrade.com/ireland |
| 29-30 March 2007
Hotel, Dublin | IWEC 2007 - the Irish Wind Energy Association's Annual Conference - The Burlington

For further details: www.iwea.com |

13 - 15 April 2007

11th International Passive House Conference - Bregenz, Austria

Sustainable Energy Ireland's Renewable Energy Information Office in conjunction with the Austrian Embassy's Commercial Trade Commission is hosting a study tour to this highly acclaimed event. To register your interest, please email: renewables@reio.ie.

25-26 April 2007

SEI Energy Show, RDS, Dublin

www.sei.ie

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