

15 January 2009

NEW WEC SECRETARY GENERAL ANNOUNCED

As many of you have no doubt heard by now, Dr Christoph Frei, Senior Director, Energy Industry and Strategy, at the World Economic Forum in Geneva, has been appointed as WEC's new Secretary General. He will join WEC on 1 April, replacing former Secretary General Gerald Doucet, who passed away this past October.

WEC Chair Pierre Gadonneix announced the appointment of Dr. Frei in late December, after an international search was carried out. A Succession Committee chaired by Mr. Gadonneix and comprised of WEC officers Marie-José Nadeau and Asger Bundgaard-Jensen worked with global search firm Korn Ferry to select and interview the final pool of candidates.

The Officers Council was delegated the responsibility for selecting the new Secretary General by the Executive Assembly in Mexico City last November and, based on the recommendation of the Succession Committee and discussion during the course of several teleconferences, approved the selection of Christoph Frei. The officers were very pleased with the number and calibre candidates who applied for the position and are delighted that Dr. Frei will become the new WEC Secretary General.

Many WEC members will know Christoph from his work at WEF, where he was responsible for energy-related activities, focusing in particular on the areas of energy security, sustainable cities, energy poverty, biofuels and anti-corruption.

Christoph has a PhD in Energy Policy and Sustainable Development from Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Switzerland. In addition to his work at WEF, he has also been Professor of International Energy Policy and Strategy at EPFL since 2006. He holds diplomas in econometrics, electrical engineering, energy systems and applied ethics.

TASK FORCE ON BIOFUELS MEETS IN LONDON

The WEC Task Force on Biofuels met in London on 9 January. The meeting was attended by representatives from ten countries and was chaired by Dr. Sergio Fontes from Petrobras in Brazil.

The use of biofuels is growing around the world, and the debate between biofuels supporters and its opponents is intensifying. Biofuels have the potential to become an important part of the global energy mix and to make a significant contribution to meeting energy demand in an economically and environmentally sustainable way. Biofuels production technologies are rapidly improving in both crop production and processing, and today, the volume of biofuels produced in a specific planted area can be several times higher than a few years ago.

There are a multitude of drivers for further development of biofuels for various applications, but since biofuels have a greater impact on transportation, the Task Force members agreed to focus mainly on mobility and provide only a brief overview of other applications. It was also agreed to structure the work around three main principles: security of supply/accessibility, environment and economics. Security of supply is becoming increasingly important, in particular given the recent concerns and uncertainty about the availability and price volatility of crude oil. The world is looking for alternative fuels, and one of the most relevant alternatives is biofuels.

There are many barriers that today constrain world trade in biofuels. Some of the most significant barriers relate to international specifications and standards. Both the quality and properties of final biofuels products must be harmonised and standardised. Moreover, methodologies for measuring these properties should be unified. To address this issue, WEC has partnered with the International Standards Organisation (ISO), whose representatives serve on the Task Force.

The primary goal of developing the biofuels economy is sustainability. Biofuels must be cost-effective and competitive on their own, but over time, they can also create a massive new demand for the agricultural economy. As biofuels production is an agricultural process, the same elements and inputs

contribute to its overall efficiency as for existing agricultural production systems. In all cases, it is essential to strive for the highest productivity, as this reduces the need for land and water. Generally, biofuels are not the cheapest way to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, but taking into account that over 20% of GHG emissions originate in transport and this share is growing rapidly, biofuels provide an attractive way of reducing GHG emissions fairly quickly. Here, compatibility is a key issue -- biofuels need to be compatible with current vehicle design and transport logistics.

Hundreds of studies analysing various aspects of biofuels production and use have been conducted around the world, often with very different outcomes. The mission of WEC's BioFuels Task Force is to develop a balanced and unbiased view on the potential for biofuels and a commonly acceptable framework for measuring their potential, including full life-cycle analysis (LCA).

KAZAKHSTAN APPLIES FOR MEMBERSHIP

By now, your Member Committee should have received via email a notice that Kazakhstan, through its national energy organisation, KazEnergy, has applied for membership in WEC. A "postal" ballot is being conducted between now and the end of February, giving all Member Committees the opportunity to vote on Kazakhstan's application. Ballots are due back to the London office by no later than 17.00 hrs on Friday, 27 February.

If you did not receive your ballot, or if you have questions about the application or voting process, please contact Emily Melton, Director, Member Services, at WEC London (melton@worldenergy.org).

PHOTO ARCHIVE FOR SECRETARYNET

Based on the excellent entries in the 2008 WEC Photo Competition, the WEC Photo Archive will be available on the WEC website from 30th January 2009. Future Photo Competitions will further expand this collection of royalty-free images for use on Member Committee websites and in their publications.

Information is available for each photo in the archive, including the source and copyright information of each the photograph. Access to the archive is via SecretaryNet:

<http://www.worldenergy.org/members/secretarynet/>

If you have any questions about this planned new feature for the website, please contact Paul Benfield (benfield@worldenergy.org) in the WEC London Office.

FULL WEBSITE ACCESS WORK PROGRAMME MATERIAL

A number of members have recently expressed interest in accessing the terms of reference, working papers, draft reports, background documents, rosters, minutes and agendas related to the current work programme and including Standing Committees, study groups, technical committees and regional programmes. In the past, access to this information on the website has been limited only to those members directly involved in the particular work group or activity.

However, in response to your requests, we have now opened up these pages for all members – all you need to access them is your member password. We hope this will allow more members to understand what WEC is doing and how our work programme is progressing.

If you have questions or need further information, please contact IT Manager Paul Benfield (benfield@worldenergy.org) at the London office.

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