

International Conference for Renewable Energies, Bonn 2004



Summary

**First session of the
National Advisory Committee
26 May 2003, 11:00-14:45
BMZ, Berlin office**

Introductions by the German government

The chairmen of the meeting, Mr Hinrichs-Rahlwes (of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment - BMU) and Mr Michael Hofmann (of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development - BMZ), greeted the members of the National Advisory Committee (NAC) on behalf of the German government. The underlying thinking for the conference and the current status of preparations were presented to the members (see Annex).

The position papers and contributions of NAC members were presented in the form of a round table in the morning session and an open discussion in the afternoon.

Statements and input by NAC members

The various measures of the German government for national and international promotion of renewable energy (invitation to the conference, national legislation, pledges made by the German Chancellor in Johannesburg) were applauded by numerous members of the NAC. Existing international agreements as a point of departure, on-going political processes and the documents they produce (primarily the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), the policy declaration of the Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition (JREC) "The Way Forward on Renewable Energy", and the development goals of the UN Millennium Declaration found broad support among the members. A number of statements emphasised that the Conference constituted an opportunity:

- to give concrete form to existing bilateral, multilateral and global agreements on environmental and development-policy themes
- for the better implementation of existing goals

1. Conference parameters

It was stressed that environmental and climatic issues cannot be separated from development issues.

Individual representatives saw a need to further stress during the preparation process the connection between the Conference and the international activities mentioned above, particularly those of the JREC.

The idea of an "expanded governmental conference" found broad acceptance. Several members indicated their readiness to play an active role in the multi-stakeholder process.

The representatives of the private sector and civil society called for inclusion of this concept. Almost all members expressed their readiness or their express wish actively to support preparations for the Conference, for example by forming the framework program and arranging side events and exhibitions.

The planned preparation process was expressly welcomed. The parliamentary representatives present called unanimously for even greater stress on the legislative bodies as part of the preparation process, since in all countries in which the promotion of renewable energy had made some progress, the political parties and parliamentarians had played an important role as initiators and promoters. Particular reference was made to the resolution of the *Bundestag* (the German federal parliament) to hold an international parliamentary forum within the framework of the Conference.

The formation of an International Steering Committee (ISC) was welcomed and the desire expressed to smooth the way for communication between the NAC and the ISC.

2. Main topics of the Conference

Numerous remarks and comments identified the following areas as important topics for the Conference:

- political framework conditions
- developing strategies for stepped-up use of renewable energy
- financing issues
- best practices, countries at the fore in renewable energy, model projects, lead markets for the further development of renewable energies
- aspects of market development
- capacity-building, training

In addition, the following topics were proposed:

- potential and opportunity for renewable energy
- specific energy sources and technologies (e.g., geothermal energy, water power, biomass, solar heating, wind energy)
- the environmental compatibility of the advancement of renewable energies

Conflicting views were expressed on:

- the degree to which energy *efficiency* should be taken into account. It was suggested that emphasis on energy efficiency might dilute the focus of the Conference. Besides, it had already been recognised in Johannesburg that this Conference should make renewable energy a clear priority. The view of the German government was that energy *efficiency* would as a matter of course be accorded due attention, but that there should be a clear focus on *renewable* energy.
- the confining of invitations to selected countries. The fear was expressed that the ambitious goals pursued by especially actively-engaged countries might be weakened by less actively-engaged countries. The German government made clear that all UN member countries were being invited and that it was desirable that as many countries as possible participate – that all countries ought to be given the opportunity to carry out their ideas within the realm of what was possible for each one.

3. Possible desirable outcomes

In the opinion of the NAC members, the following possible outcomes would be of particular significance:

- development of strategies to increase the use of renewable energies

- regionally and/or nationally differentiated strategies and aims for expansion
- determination of concrete plans of action and implementation measures
- bilateral agreements, creation of international networks
- follow-up for permanent pursuit and institutionalisation of Conference outcomes

4. Further preparations

The first meeting of the International Steering Committee takes place June 11-12 in Bonn.

The German government is involved in talks with the organisers of international government conferences on renewable energies in order to carry out regional preparatory meetings within the context of these:

- September 17-19, 2003, Denmark: The Danish government has offered to hold a preparatory meeting on the occasion of the European Council for Renewable Energies in Sonderborg, Denmark.
- October 28-29, 2003, Brazil: Regional preparatory meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean
- India: The German government is currently maintaining contact with the Indian government in regard to holding an Asian-region preparatory meeting.
- Kenya: Energy- and environmental ministers in Kenya have offered to hold a regional preparatory meeting for Africa.
- January, 2004, Berlin: Regional preparatory meeting for the European countries (not including CIS) on the occasion of the conference for the implementation of EU guidelines (organised by DG-TREN and EREC)

5. National Advisory Committee

The eagerness of the members of the NAC to engage actively and in many diverse ways in preparations for the Conference was applauded by the German government and will contribute decisively to the Conference's success. It is important that NAC members bring their international contacts and activities into play, so that they thus function as multipliers for the Conference.

The Conference secretariat will inform NAC members about the various opportunities for active involvement in the Conference.

*The next session of the National Advisory Committee is scheduled for **December 3, 2003**. The Conference secretariat will see that NAC members receive invitations to this session well in advance.*

The second meeting of the International Steering Committees is scheduled for December 15-16, 2003, in Berlin.