



EXPERTS SEEK TO ACCELERATE CLEAN ENERGY DEPLOYMENT

MANILA, PHILIPPINES (26 June 2007) – More than 300 experts are meeting in Manila this week to find ways to scale up the deployment of clean energy across the world's fastest-growing region.

"Asia faces a particularly daunting challenge in securing the energy it needs to support growth and poverty reduction in a responsible, sustainable manner," Asian Development Bank President Haruhiko Kuroda said Tuesday at the opening of the three-day Asia Clean Energy Forum at ADB's headquarters in Manila.

The conference, attended by government officials, the private sector, development organizations and other groups, comes less than a month after the United States Agency for International Development released a report warning that emissions of carbon dioxide, the most common greenhouse gas, will more than triple from Asia's six largest developing nations by 2030. USAID is co-hosting the forum with ADB.

The report identifies viable and cost-effective clean energy options which, if scaled up, could reduce annual emissions of carbon dioxide in these countries by 3.5 billion metric tons. This would represent a 25 percent from projected increases above current levels.

"Action must be taken now," said Oliver Carduner, mission director for USAID's Regional Development Mission for Asia. "If not, it will become much more costly to take action in the future."

About 70 percent of Asia's energy needs are dependent on fossil fuels – a primary source of greenhouse gases. Asia now accounts for one-quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

"Clean energy, including energy efficiency and renewable energy, needs to be actively promoted," Mr. Kuroda said. "Developing countries should be encouraged to explore possibilities for renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar, and bio fuels."

He urged Asian countries to start planning "for the inevitable worsening of climate change," warning that greenhouse gases remain in the atmosphere for many decades.

Last year, ADB announced its intention to increase its spending on its clean energy program to \$1 billion a year. Mr. Kuroda said that while this was "only a small fraction" of the region's needs, he was confident ADB's contribution would catalyze significant additional resources.

One of the challenges to be addressed at the conference is how best to get clean energy technology to be broadly rolled out across Asia. Another issue to receive attention is the need for a regional approach to clean energy promotion.

Finding ways to pay for clean energy is also a major concern. The cost of renewable energy projects, while falling, remains higher than those for conventional energy. Delegates were expected to discuss ways to overcome this obstacle, including whether carbon emissions trading schemes should be better harnessed to promote clean energy.

About 1 billion people in Asia do not have access to modern forms of energy. It is estimated that the region will need \$4 trillion to \$5 in trillion new energy infrastructure between now to 2030. Based on current trends, most of these investments will be directed toward electricity, primarily coal-fired power plants.

The recently released Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change suggests that the current trajectory could result in an increase in global mean temperatures of 1.1 to 6.4 degrees Celsius by the end of this century – an increase that would have a devastating impact on natural environments and populations in Asia and around the world. Given this potential impact, issues surrounding energy security and sustainable development are central to the future of Asia and the world.

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