

SOARING ENERGY PRICES & CLIMATE CHANGE SPUR CALLS FOR CLEAN ENERGY FINANCING

MANILA, PHILIPPINES (3 June 2008) – Energy experts, policymakers, financiers, and project developers from across Asia-Pacific called for massive new investments in clean energy amid spiraling costs for oil and coal and the growing threat of climate change.

More than 500 experts are meeting in Manila this week to scale up investments in clean energy solutions that enhance energy security and address global warming.

“The challenges we face today, soaring fuel and commodity prices, threats from climate change, and growing problems of poor people having limited access to energy, all point to the need to take action,” Ms. Ursula Schäfer-Preuss, Vice President of the Asian Development Bank, said Tuesday at the opening of the three-day Asia Clean Energy Forum, which is taking place at ADB’s headquarters in Manila.

The international forum, attended by government officials, the private sector, development organizations, civil society organizations, and other groups, is taking place as energy prices, particularly oil and coal, hit record highs. Some analysts have argued that a “super spike” in prices may be just around the corner.

“Given the cost of oil and its impact on the climate, there is no better time than now to take action,” said Mr. Winston Bowman, Regional Environment Director at the U.S. Agency for International Development, a sponsor of the Asia Clean Energy Forum. “If action isn’t taken now, it will be much more costly to do so in the future.”

The region is estimated to need up to \$6.4 trillion in new energy infrastructure by 2030 and unless there is a move away from the dependence on oil and coal, countries will continue to be vulnerable to price hikes in these commodities and will further contribute to climate change.

The worldwide clean energy sector is already attracting significant investments – about \$148 billion last year – but much of that is being used in Europe and other developed regions, while relatively little is reaching Asia because of a lack of supportive government policies and legislation. Policymakers have a critical role to play in establishing the right regulatory, policy and institutional frameworks needed to attract investment at the scale required.

Ms. Schäfer-Preuss announced at the conference that the ADB this week had already achieved its annual target of \$1 billion in investments in clean energy for Asia and the Pacific, and expected to surpass it by 50% by the end of 2008.

Another focus at the energy conference is the need for a new approach in many Asian cities to urban transport. Transport patterns need to change, with greater reliance on alternatives to cars and trucks such as railways and other public transport systems.

One of the key speakers at the forum was Enrique Peñalosa, former Mayor of Bogotá and the architect of a bus rapid transit system that has revolutionized urban transport in the Colombian capital.

Visit <http://www.adb.org/Documents/events/2008/ACEF/default.asp> for more information on the forum.

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