

Press Release

EU to work harder to make low-carbon energy future a reality

Urgent action is needed to enable Europe to make the transition to a low-carbon energy future and remain a frontrunner in climate change. This was the overarching message of today's Eurogas Annual Conference.

The 2012 Eurogas annual conference – *Gas: Fuelling Europe's Future?* – gathered energy experts from across a range of sectors including academia, administration, banking, business, environment and politics to debate the future of gas in Europe's energy mix.

While Europe is wondering what its energy and climate policy should look like, other countries such as the United States and China are forging ahead, securing investment and transforming their energy mix with gas playing a key role. So what is stopping Europe from doing the same and what can we do to ensure the EU doesn't miss out?

Frequent or radical changes in the political direction, lack of harmonisation among Member States or indecision at national and EU levels are all making investors think twice about putting their money into low-carbon energy technologies. Current investment decisions also seem to favour coal and this coupled with the low carbon price (7–8 euros per tonne of CO₂) continue to act as a brake on further investments in low-carbon technologies.

"We need to implement the appropriate policy in Europe to make [energy transition] a reality," stated Jean-François Cirelli, President of Eurogas and Vice-Chairman and President of GDF SUEZ in his opening address at today's conference. He then called on those present to: *"take the right decisions to make the transition to a low-carbon energy future for Europe in which gas has a key role to play."*

So what are these decisions?

Eurogas believes that energy and climate policy should focus on a technology neutral approach with the Emissions Trading System as the key driver within the EU objectives of sustainability, security of supply and competitiveness. Furthermore, higher CO₂ prices are needed to recognise the environmental friendliness of gas over higher CO₂ emitting fuels.

Irrespective of whether those present at the Eurogas annual conference believe the energy system of the future should rely on renewables alone or whether it should comprise a diverse mix of technologies, one thing is clear – a predictable policy framework is essential to boost the much-needed investment in the energy sector today, so that we can secure the energy that European consumers want tomorrow.

Note to Editors: Eurogas is an association representing about 50 companies and associations engaged in the wholesale, retail and distribution of gas in Europe. Eurogas provides data and information relevant to EU decision makers and opinion formers in making the right policy choices.

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