

For Immediate Release

WE HAVEN'T GOT TIME TO WAIT FOR THE NEXT WORLD SUMMIT - SAYS HEAD OF UNITED NATIONS OZONACTION PROGRAMME

Edinburgh, 24 January 2011, Rajendra Shende last Friday warned delegates at the 14th European Conference on *The Latest Technologies in Renewable Energy, Heating and Cooling Applications*, that there is not enough time to wait for new policy as a driver for taking action against climate change. Instead he urged local initiatives to create their own grass roots-type summit by strengthening collaborative, cross-sector partnerships between business and academia.

The conference in Edinburgh (UK) - organised by the European Energy Centre EEC, TERRE Policy Centre and the United Nations Environment Programme UNEP - at which Mr Shende attended as a keynote speaker, brought together university and industry experts who are already responding to his challenge through innovation and business in the latest renewable heating and cooling technologies.

Several technologies were presented at the conference to help the sustainable production of energy. Photovoltaic, Wind and Solar Cooling are only few of the renewable energy solutions which were presented at Heriot-Watt University, at the 14th European Conference run by the EEC, TERRE, UNEP and the International Institute of Refrigeration IIR.

Delegates from 11 countries including from the Indian Subcontinent attended this full-day event, which provided an opportunity for exchanging practical and concrete solutions for the heating and cooling technologies using renewable energy.

Yet, other panelists at the conference fear that the renewables industry will struggle to gather enough speed if the drastic shortage in trained installers and technicians is not addressed soon. "Heat pumps have received a lot of bad press recently due to a poorly trained workforce who don't have the skills to work with the latest specialist equipment" explained Graeme Fox President of the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration European Association, AREA, "customers end up thinking that their new equipment can't perform as well as stated in the product specification, when really it's just down to bad installation", he also added, "training providers such as the European Energy Centre is what we need".

The same story was told by other industry experts at the conference who presented their latest advancement in a spectrum of impressive energy saving devices throughout the day. "Advancing technology is offering huge potentials in renewable energy – but we have to face the fact that there is a shortage of technicians," said Paolo Buoni who is director of the European Energy Centre EEC, which provides training to renewable energy companies. "We have a bank of experienced trainers who want to share their knowledge, however more investment in training is required from the government".

Shende too admitted that more financial support is needed for this to happen, "Whilst I think that change needs to come from business and academic partnerships, the whole industry still needs a lot of help in the form of tax rebates, tax holidays and other incentives to make it a reality. This, in turn, would benefit the local economy as well as the planet."

In a reflective speech Mr Shende referred to the recent bail out by governments of commercial banks around the globe and asked what would happen if governments did the same for the

renewable industry to help it grow. Whilst it's unlikely that we see an answer to that question in the near future – what was clear from the European gathering in Scotland was that, the spirit of innovation is in no short supply and the determination to achieve a low carbon economy will not be quelled.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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