

## **WIREC 2008 Update – Thursday, March 6, 2008**

WIREC 2008 closed today with a presentation of findings from yesterday's discussions. Representatives from each of the four focal themes detailed conclusions and next steps in Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Development; Market Adoption and Finance; Technology, Research, and Development; and State and Local Governments.

Following that, Assistant Secretary of Energy for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Andy Karsner laid out the United States pledges for the Washington International Action Program (WIAP).

The United States pledged to continue its leadership in renewable energy through efforts coordinated by multiple agencies. The Department of Agriculture will work on the development and cultivation of switchgrass for the production of cellulosic ethanol, and drive up markets and demand for woody biomass and biobased products. USDA also committed to producing or saving 682 kilowatt hours of energy in FY 2008.

The Department of State will work through the Asia Pacific Partnership to add at least 48 megawatts of clean renewable power in India by 2013. The Department of Energy, in addition to making wind and solar energy cost-competitive, will issue \$10 billion in loan guarantees for renewable energy and energy efficiency systems. The Department of the Interior will conduct a comprehensive national assessment of geothermal resources.

The Environmental Protection Agency will work to increase the amount of renewable fuels used in the U.S. to 36 billion gallons by 2022. They also expect to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from 560 landfills by 24 million tons by 2012 through the Landfill Methane Outreach Program.

The Overseas Private Investment Corporation has pledged to invest up to \$100 million in private capital funds that invest half of their capital in companies or projects in renewable energy or environmental sustainability sectors. OPIC expects to award funding to between four to six finalists, representing a total financial commitment of up to \$600 million.

Finally, the U.S. government—the single greatest energy consumer in the world—has pledged that 7.5 percent of its electric energy use will come from renewable resources by 2013.

Following the U.S. government pledge, ministers and representatives from countries with ambitious commitments shared their pledges with the conference. Highlighted countries included Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cape Verde, Denmark, Germany, Jordan, New Zealand, and Norway. A full list of pledges can be viewed online [here](#).

WIREC 2008 will be accepting pledges for the WIAP until April 4, 2008. Our partner agency, REN 21, will be monitoring the status of pledge implementation and providing reports periodically.

At the close of the conference, Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky announced that India had been chosen to host the next International Renewable Energy Conference.