



INDIA AND EU TO STRENGTHEN CO-OPERATION IN RENEWABLE ENERGY RESEARCH

India and the European Union have agreed to strengthen co-operation in the area of new and renewable energy on the basis of common interest and mutual benefit under the EU-India Science and Technology Co-operation Agreement. Both sides attach high priority to sustainable development of energy systems to jointly meet the challenges of energy security and climate change. At a Workshop held at New Delhi, the two sides identified strategic areas and topics for research and technology development co-operation in solar photovoltaics, solar thermal power generation, wind energy, biomass and waste-to-energy. Apart from these areas, the Indian side also expressed interest for cooperation in hydrogen, fuel cells and biofuels.

Science and Technology co-operation in the renewable energy sector would include joint studies and research; technology and product development; setting up of pilot demonstration units; capacity building covering testing, standards, best practices, exchange of information and experts, training etc. Mechanisms and instruments for co-operation could include participation of India in the EU Framework Programme, Technology Platforms for Renewable Energy, European Industrial Initiatives and Specific International Co-operation Actions.

The Framework Programmes are the main instrument of the European Commission for funding research. Energy, including renewable energy, is an important focus area. Under the Seventh Framework Programme which runs from 2007 to 2013, it has been decided to issue an India-EU Call for Research and Technology Development proposals in renewable energy in the areas identified at the Workshop. Co-operation between research institutions in various EU countries and Indian research institutions would be on the basis of co-investment of resources, including funding to the tune of Rs.30 crores each by the European Commission and the Government of India.

The Workshop was organized by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in association with the Directorate General Research of the European Commission and the Department of Science and Technology. It was attended by scientists and experts and delegates from leading institutions who are active in renewable energy research and technology development, apart from officials from both the sides.