

PRESS RELEASE

Hanover, February 4, 2009

The European biogas industry joins forces

European Biogas Association Formed

Eleven national biogas associations formed the European Biogas Association (EBA) at the 18th Annual Conference of the German Biogas Association on February 3, 2009. The target of the new Association is to promote sustainable biogas production in Europe. The founding members represent Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Poland, Rumania, Switzerland, Spain, the Czech Republic and Hungary. The headquarters of the new Association are in Brussels.

Arthur Wellinger, managing director of Biogas Forum Switzerland, was elected president; vice presidents are Harm Grobrügge (Fachverband Biogas) and Franz Kirchmeyr (ARGE Kompost & Biogas, Austria). Other members of the Executive Committee are Jan Štambaský of the Czech Biogas Association and Pietro Gattoni of the Italian Biogas Association.

„Now that the European Association has been formed, the efforts of the national associations can be bundled and the information transfer optimised. The countries whose growth curve is beginning to show an upward trend can take advantage of the experience gathered by the advanced biogas countries“, Wellinger said. One of the aims of the new Association is to press for the interests of the national biogas associations and represent them on the European level. The Association intends to be involved in the forthcoming legislative processes in Brussels to further the Association's aims. Further national associations, e.g., those of Sweden, France, Denmark and the Netherlands, are expected to join in the next few months.

The formation of the European forum is well-timed. The number of biogas production systems is growing substantially throughout Europe. In addition to Germany with about 4,000 and Austria with over 300 systems, the boom is also beginning in the East European countries. For example, totally 40 new systems were built in the Czech Republic last year alone. This makes biogas a labour market of the future in which many local and regional jobs will be created. The industry is convinced that it can survive the economic crisis.

Anaerobic fermentation is the only technology which produces renewable electricity and fuel as well as renewable heat. At the same time, the substrate from which biogas is produced is turned into valuable fertiliser, contributes to carbon sinks and decreases the emission of NO_x, mainly in farming.

More information is available from Sebastian Stolpp, EBA Secretary General +49(0)8161-984677, stolpp@biogas.org