

## **From Sky to Switch**

### **Renewable Energy in Germany and New Zealand**

**Auckland, December 2009 — Know-how transfer, meeting point and a lot of opportunities for working together –Germany's Export Initiative for the Renewable Energy Sector offered it all. The New Zealand German Business Association (NZGBA) and eclareon GmbH organized the event with the support of the German Ministry for Economics and Technology (BMWi).**

A one day conference at the Hyatt Hotel in Auckland on November 30 marked the start of the initiative. Experts from the New Zealand and German renewable scene focused on recent developments during their presentations. New Zealand companies interested in learning more about technological developments coming from Germany were invited to attend. Around 80 participants took up this invitation, including the visiting delegation companies Bosch Thermotechnik GmbH, SMA Technology GmbH, Bosch Rexroth, Wolf GmbH, MWM GmbH or their representatives in the Asia Pacific region.

“New Zealand is a rich country with an abundance of natural resources”, said Monique Surges, CEO of the NZGBA and MC of the conference. Eclarion Manager Benjamin Spitzley informed the audience about the German situation and introduced the goals of the export initiative. It is the official aim of the German Government to make a significant contribution to international climate protection.

“To transfer know how into the hands of political decision makers, key opinion leaders and marketing participants is a quintessential goal” said Spitzley. Events such as the conference in Auckland are great, he continued, because they offer first steps to establish a desirable technology transfer.

Mike Underhill, CEO of the EECA, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority, would like to see New Zealand among the world's leaders in renewable energy. The EECA works to implement New Zealand Government strategies for energy efficiency, conservation and renewable energy in both the private and public sectors.

“New Zealand has a huge renewable energy potential and one of the best wind resources in the world, but we have to develop it properly”, Underhill said. However, unlike in Germany, there are no governmental incentives for renewables in New Zealand. Nevertheless Underhill remains positive and optimistic that New Zealand has a lot of strategic advantages when it comes to renewables such as fresh water, clean energy, a good climate and a productive land. His advice to German investors was: “New Zealand is not Europe. Keep in mind the country's unique characteristics and do your research before investing.”

Sylvia Pilarsky-Grosch, Vice President of the German Wind Energy Association (BWE), one of the largest and most powerful associations, presented an overview about the development in Germany. In her opinion 250,000 jobs in the wind energy sector could be created by 2050.

“Up to 2020 a quarter of our energy will be generated through wind energy”, said Pilarsky-Grosch.

Her New Zealand counterpart Fraser Clark from the New Zealand Wind Energy Association informed about the current NZ market status and history, general policy and market environment- and future requirements for new generations.

“New Zealand has significant wind resources, but not all of it is accessible, available, consentable and economically viable”, said Clark. “Making wind work in NZ is one of the main goals”, he continued.

Best practice must be approached to get the wind energy “from sky to switch” said Fraser Clark. He reckons that more communication and information through local councils could help to support the renewable development.

Rilke de Vos from NIWA’s National Centre for Energy Solutions pointed out that 66 percent of all energy in New Zealand comes from conventional sources. He thinks that New Zealand has enough resources to replace them all with renewable energy sources. “We have sufficient resources for electricity and heat, it is transport that is the problem”, he said.

Geothermal projects in Germany were presented in detail by Werner Bussmann, technical writer and president of the Geothermal Energy Network in Germany. He informed about the state of art of a number of projects with in depth details as to how they work.

Bussman said he hope to get into contact with New Zealand companies to introduce them to the fantastic possibilities of geothermal resources.

Intensive networking continued on the following days, with some attending the clean energy summit also held at the Hyatt. The remainder of the week was filled with one on one meetings with some promising collaboration outcomes.

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