

PRESS RELEASE

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Partnership Targets Energy Poverty in Africa

World Economic Forum and World Energy Council join forces to promote sustainable energy supply and use in Africa

Geneva, Switzerland, Wednesday 14 November – The World Economic Forum and the World Energy Council signed an agreement today to cooperate on reducing energy poverty in Africa. The overall objective of the agreement, signed during the World Energy Congress 2007 in Rome, Italy, is to pool resources from the two institutions to promote a sustainable supply and use of energy in areas with little or no access to electricity.

The World Economic Forum and the World Energy Council view energy poverty as an important development issue. As both institutions work with many of the same member companies on energy poverty, it was recognized that a partnership is beneficial to develop a shared expertise of the topic. As part of the agreement, the two institutions will jointly work on the [Energy Poverty Action](#) (EPA) project.

EPA is a private sector initiative which delivers business expertise and best practices to reduce energy poverty by developing innovative, scalable and replicable electrification projects. It was initiated at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2005. One key concept is empowerment of local user groups to take charge of, and responsibility for, the management of local energy systems.

“The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can only be achieved if people have basic access to energy,” said **Christoph Frei**, Senior Director, Head of Energy Industries & PACI, World Economic Forum. “Partnering with the World Energy Council further strengthens the brand and visibility of EPA. This is important to get the right attention of many more potential donors and financiers.”

“The World Energy Council’s goals are defined as the three As: Accessibility, Availability and Acceptability,” said **Gerald Doucet**, Secretary-General, World Energy Council, London. “For us it is key to promote the sustainable supply and use of energy for the greatest benefit of all people.”

The three initiating partners of EPA, British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (Canada), Eskom (South Africa) and Vattenfall (Sweden) are committed to developing two initial projects in Lesotho and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The EPA objective is the successful completion of the first projects and the replication of business driven alliances with commitments to new projects by involving additional business partners. At this year’s World Economic Forum on Africa, the Development Bank of Southern Africa commenced hosting of the EPA Management Unit (EPAMU) to promote this objective. EPAMU, in collaboration with the Forum, acts as a matchmaker between leading companies, governments, local entrepreneurs and communities, national and international finance institutions and donors to enable project financing and execution to address the challenges of energy poverty.

The CEOs of the three initiating partners, namely Bob Elton from British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority, Jacob Maroga from Eskom and Lars Josefsson from Vattenfall have welcomed the partnership with the World Energy Council. “This collaboration will help to scale up our efforts by gaining access to many more organizations whose objectives are to reduce energy poverty in the developing world,” said Lars Josefsson.

Note to Editors:

Further information on the Energy Poverty Action Project (EPA) can be found at:
www.weforum.org/en/initiatives/EnergyPovertyAction/index.htm

Further information on the World Economic Forum’s activities in the energy sector can be found at:
www.weforum.org/energy

About the World Energy Council: The World Energy Council (WEC) is the foremost multi-energy organization in the world today. WEC has Member Committees in over 90 countries, including most of the largest energy producing and energy consuming countries. Established in 1923, the organization covers all types of energy, including coal, oil, natural gas, nuclear, hydro and renewable, and is UN-accredited, non-governmental, non-commercial and non-aligned. WEC is a UK-registered charity headquartered in London. WEC Services Limited was established in 2001 as the incorporated trading subsidiary of WEC.

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