



SVA AT WORLD FUTURE ENERGY SUMMIT

Switzerland present at WFES

The World Future Energy Summit 2010 again attracted many Swiss participants. Switzerland was officially represented by a delegation led by Walter Steinmann, Director of the Federal Office of Energy, and Jacqueline de Quattro, Minister of Economy of the Canton de Vaud. The delegation included Osec President Rolf Jeker and Daniel Küng, President and CEO of Osec, Rolf Gobet, CEO of OPI, Bertrand Piccard, President of Solar Impulse and Patrick Hofer-Noser, CEO of 3S.

Walter Steinmann took part in a discussion of ministers on the future of energy and energy policies. He noted that Swiss companies are heavily active in energy research, building on first class universities and academic programs in the applied sciences. He called the new Monte Rosa Hut a masterpiece and said the world needs similar visions, like Bertrand Piccard's Solar Impulse, to see what is possible in energy efficient development. Renewable energy is important, he said, but the world can cut waste and conserve resources now. "Energy efficiency is a must," Steinmann said.

Bertrand Piccard and his Solar Impulse plane were stars in Abu Dhabi. He was the first Swiss citizen in the short history of the WFES to give a keynote speech. he delivered an inspiring message about achieving the energy revolution many have called unachievable.

For the first time, too, representatives of Swiss universities chaired sessions. Hans Püttgen, Director of the Energy Center at EPFL, led discussions about the mix of energy sources the world will use in the future. Reza Abhari, Director of the Center for Energy Consumption at ETH Zurich, chaired the plenary forum on research and development.

Crown Prince visits Swiss Pavilion

The Swiss Pavilion, organized by T-LINK, was again a success. Exhibitors included 3S, Belimo, Ciba Expert Services, Enerec, Hofstetter

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Umwelttechnik, Huber+Suhner, KRT Kanalreinigung, Meyer Burger and myclimate. Oerlikon Solar was next to the Swiss Pavilion. Like last year, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, visited the Swiss Pavilion.

For the first time, swisscleantech, the newly founded association of sustainable companies in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, presented Switzerland's energy potential in a special brochure that highlighted the country's potential as a cleantech hub of global importance.

SVA-member BioApply supplied the official, biodegradable WFES bags.



Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, talking to Ruedi Kriesi of Zehnder Group. left: Khaled Awad of Masdar talking to Sultan Al Jaber, CEO of Masdar.

Meeting the Swiss community

The Swiss delegation met members of the [Swiss Business Councils](#) Abu Dhabi and Dubai during the WFES. Rolf Jeker, President of Osec, updated council members on the Swiss Village's progress. The association received 20 letters of intent from companies seeking to rent space in the Swiss Village. Thus, the project has already surpassed its goal: Masdar had asked for ten letters of intent by mid-January. Masdar is an officially declared Free Zone, meaning foreign-owned companies can settle there without local sponsors.

Some local Swiss business people expressed disappointment about Masdar's bidding process. Price seemed to decide tenders rather than quality, they said. Nick Beglinger, President of the [Swiss Village Association](#), acknowledged problems in the first round. He expected the bidding process would improve. As for the Swiss Village itself, Implenia will evaluate the technical part of all bids. Those that do not fit the project's strict quality standards will be excluded, regardless of their price.

Nick Beglinger's presentation for the meeting can be found here: http://www.swiss-village.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18&Itemid=23&lang=en.

The meeting was followed by an Osec-sponsored reception at the residence of the Swiss ambassador, Wolfgang Amadeus Bruehlhart. During the day, members of the Swiss delegation had a chance to visit the Masdar construction site.



Walter Steinmann (center) and Jacqueline de Quattro opening the Swiss Pavilion.
Left: Carl Ziegler of T-Link.

WORLD FUTURE ENERGY SUMMIT: HIGHLIGHTS

Masdar: A game changer

The World Future Energy Summit started two years ago as a sales platform for Masdar. During the Summit's third edition, the ecocity near Abu Dhabi remained at center stage. "Masdar is a game changer", IPCC's head Rajendra Pachauri said. The project illustrates an alternative to urban centers that depend on fossil fuel.

Other cities should be able to learn from Masdar's experiences, said Khaled Awad said, Property Development Director of Masdar. Abu Dhabi will be the first to learn, Awad added. "Abu Dhabi has one of the highest CO2 footprints on earth. It is therefore important that Masdar will not be disconnected from Abu Dhabi." One of the main lessons will be the price of buildings. According to Awad, Masdar's costs will be 10 to 20 per cent cheaper than comparable buildings in the Gulf because of better management.

Masdar has learned, as well. Its sources of energy have changed slightly, for instance. Wind won't play a role anymore, whereas solar will make up 77 per cent of its energy, according to Rainer Gegenwart, CEO of [Masdar PV](#). Even geothermal power will play a role. Reykjavik Geothermal, an Icelandic company, is planning to establish a branch in Masdar.

Building a city takes time, of course. The first phase will be completed after 2013, with some saying it could be finished as late as 2016. The city will reach a "critical mass" by 2020 and be completed only in the following years. Thus, the whole project is scheduled to take roughly a decade.

Ecocities: Masdar is not alone

Masdar is an outstanding ecocity project. But it is not the only one of its kind. Songdo, near Incheon in South Korea, is similar to Masdar: This newly built city will eventually house 75000 inhabitants and employ 300000. Around 16,5 billion USD is being invested in Songdo. It will be part of a free trade zone. Unlike Masdar, Songdo will house skyscrapers: The second tallest building in the world shall be completed there in 2013. It will stand more than 600 meters.

China is taking a different direction. After abandoning the ecocity project of Dongtan near Shanghai, Beijing is working – with others – on the ecocity project of Wanzhuang near Longtang. It is building on 15 existing villages with 100000 inhabitants, adding another 300000 inhabitants by 2030. For the first time, Chinese villagers are being included in the planning process, notes Steffen Lehmann, UNESCO-Chair in Sustainable Urban Development for Asia and the Pacific in Newcastle, Australia. Planning takes existing structures, as well as landscape, into account.

Urban planners in industrialized countries might look to Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm for a model ecocity. The abandoned industrial area was envisaged as playing a role in the 2004 Olympic Games that were unsuccessfully proposed for the Swedish capital. The neighborhood will house 25000 inhabitants by 2017. Hammarby Sjöstadt reduced its ecological footprint by 30 to 40 per cent, compared to similar developments, according to Erik Freudenthal, head of the information department of Hammarby Sjöstadt. This was not as much as planned, but enough to make Stockholm the first "Green Capitol of Europe" for 2010. Of the 4,5 billion Euros invested, only 200 million came from the City of Stockholm. Private investors paid the lion's share.

The planning process and the habits of people living and working in the ecocities, rather than new technologies, make the difference in shrinking carbon footprints. "The focus needs to move away from technology to how we do it", Gerard Evenden said, senior partner at Foster and Partners. "We are talking about PV and about heating. But the position and the orientation of a building have more impact on the sustainability of a building."

Renewable yes, but what else?

The future of energy will be renewable: This is one of the main ideas expressed during the World Future Energy Summit 2010 in Abu Dhabi. "Oil is running out", Hasan Younes, Egypt's Minister of Energy. "The only question is when. We do not have a choice." It's no wonder that more countries are lining up to join the new International Renewable Energy Agency to be headquartered in Abu Dhabi's ecocity, Masdar. According to H el ene Pelosse, the agency's director general, it had 142 member states by mid-January, with Saudi Arabia soon to join.

National strategies are different. China, the biggest emitter of CO₂, is also the biggest producer of solar energy. It aims to be the biggest producer of wind energy by 2012. The country simply needs renewables to satisfy its growing appetite for energy in general. Fast-growing India needs renewables for an additional purpose: 40 per cent of its people are not connected to the grid. Locally produced renewables could help. In Germany, solar energy could reach grid parity by 2013, State Secretary J urgen Becker said. "This will be the breakthrough."



The Masdar Institute of Science and Technology in the making.

However, even if the European Union reaches its ambitious goal of producing 20 per cent of its energy with renewable sources, it will have to produce the remaining 80 per cent with fossil sources, as Dutch Economy Minister Maria van der Hoeven has pointed out. The same applies to almost all economies in the world. Natural gas will play a major role. Gas-rich Qatar will soon be the biggest producer of liquefied natural gas, selling to countries like China, India and South Korea. Neighboring Abu Dhabi has just ordered four nuclear power plants from South Korea, as it does not have enough natural gas. Other participants pointed to coal: "The 21st century will be the century of coal again, as it was in the 19th century. China will not hesitate to burn its vast amounts of coal."

This puts energy efficiency on the agenda. Peter Terwiesch, CTO of ABB, called it the biggest source of energy. "80 per cent of energy gets lost between production and end use." Only 20 per cent is really used. ABB-technologies alone can double that percentage. Eicke Weber, director of the Institute of Solar Energy in Freiburg i.Br., pointed to co-generation of heat and energy. "This is a bridging technology. It can save up to 30 per cent."

As for oil as a source of energy: "Burning oil is the least intelligent way to use it", said Colin Harrison, director of Corporate Strategies for Smarter Cities at IBM.

Climate: Business action needed

Future energy sources will have an impact on climate change negotiations. These negotiations ended in a mixed result at Copenhagen: While industrialized and emerging countries unilaterally stated their climate goals, for now there will not be internationally binding obligations to meet those goals. The industrialized countries are ready to pay 30 billion USD until 2012 to help developing countries to fight and to weather climate change.

In a keynote speech at the WFES, Ed Miliband, the British minister for climate change, called the Copenhagen accords "progress, not failure". He urged countries to go further. Industrialized countries should set ambitious targets, he said. To that end, financial help must flow soon. For Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr St ore, Copenhagen was just a start. The gas-rich kingdom is the industrialized country pushing hardest to reach a binding agreement. It unilaterally set its climate goals higher. While it started with the same goals as the EU and Switzerland – 20 per cent less CO₂ by 2020 and 30 per cent if other countries improve – Norway now promises 30 per cent in any case and 40 per cent if other countries join.

Mashad Ahmed bin Fahad, the UAEs Minister of environment, pointed to one of the weak points of the Copenhagen accords: Nobody knows by now how the promised billions will be organized and how they will be paid out.

Even if an aid regime is structured soon, governments alone will not guarantee success in climate negotiations "The nation state will not be able to act unless he is under public pressure", said Rajendra Pachauri, head of the IPCC. Business and industry should be integrated in the political process. "If they are on board, than half of our work is done."

Much of the work will be done in the countries themselves rather than in diplomatic negotiations. "It depends on national policies what will happen in the private business", Tom Curtis of Deutsche Bank Climate Change Advisors said.

Electric car: Not yet there

The success of the electric car is not yet guaranteed. “The next three years will see the breakthrough or the failure of electric mobility”, said Jörg Kruhl, head of new technology at Eon. He envisions major challenges. The production of electric cars cheap enough for mass consumption and powerful enough for long drives is one hurdle. The adaption of the grid is another, the integration of the cars into the grid yet another. Kruhl estimates that, in Germany alone, 20 million electric cars could be sold. Private households could use them as a second car. Commuters would be another potential target group. Companies could use them in their car fleets.

Jan-Olaf Willums, the investor behind Think, the Norwegian electric car, does not want to wait until industry produces sufficiently cheap batteries. Instead, he promotes a car-sharing scheme that would make use of the longer life cycle of new, more efficient — but more expensive — batteries. Thus, financing would stretch over a longer time, making use cheaper for customers. “Consumers do not need a car, they need mobility.”

Alan Lloyd, president of the International Council on Clean Transportation, is more skeptical about changing consumers. “The average distance in Los Angeles is 20 miles. But drivers would not easily trade their gasoline-driven cars for electric cars.”

Electric cars will not solve all the world’s climate or energy problems, even if they might eventually replace gasoline-driven cars. “An electric car emits less CO₂, but it still causes a traffic jam”, said Gerard Evenden, senior partner at Foster and Partners.



Here the Swiss Village will be built.

MASDAR NEWS

Investments over the next decade

Masdar plans to conclude a number of venture capital deals this year and will expand its solar power and wind energy business over the next decade to become a major player in clean energy, its executives say. However tidal-energy or bio-energy projects will not be invested in at all.

The Abu Dhabi clean energy company expects to make several of these investments in the UAE to help the country achieve its national goal of generating 7 per cent of total power output from renewable energy by 2020, or 1,500 megawatts, enough power for nearly 2 million homes.

The firm, which is wholly owned by Mubadala Development, the strategic investment arm of the Abu Dhabi Government, closed a US\$265 million (Dh972.5m) clean technology fund last week with global banks and technology firms. The manager of the Masdar Clean Tech Fund, Alex O’Cinneide, said the company was seeking to make “medium-sized” investments in start-ups that were well managed.

“We’re definitely interested in investing in the region,” he said. “I think we will look at probably making approximately five to six investments this year. That would be good for us.”

Frank Wouters, the associate director of Masdar Power said Masdar’s renewable energy division has spent the past six months mapping its 10-year investment programme in renewable energy. “We want to grow and become a substantial worldwide player in several fields. For now, we have chosen solar and wind as the focus.”

Masdar Power was not considering investing in tidal-energy projects or bio-energy, although it would closely follow the study of micro-algae at the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology, he said.

Masdar’s focus on solar power rests with two technologies, photovoltaic panels and concentrated solar power, or CSP. The firm is expected to open a 100mw CSP plant in Madinat Zayed next year which could be scaled up significantly in the future.

While the potential for wind power in the UAE is limited, Masdar will pursue projects in Al Gharbia region and in Fujairah amounting to less than 100mw, said Mr Wouters.

Some of Masdar’s biggest investments in renewable energy have been in Spain, where the government has created a “feed-in tariff” that guarantees solar power producers long-term contracts to sell their electricity to the national grid. But the US remained an attractive target, Mr Wouters said.

UK-UAE partnership

The UK’s Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) is joining with Abu Dhabi’s Masdar Institute of Science and Technology to provide USD1.6m in funding for research into renewable energy policy.

The research will support the work of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) to help nations implement renewable energy legislation. The pair will also team up on a larger partnership which aims to support small businesses in deploying low carbon energy sources.

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) will also receive help from the UK-UAE collaboration, in the form of a private and public sector partnership set up to help them find low carbon solutions to their business needs.

Potential investments worth up to £2 billion could be generated by the scheme, according to estimates from London-based sustainable financiers Earth Capital Partners.

Private firms and government bodies are to work together to support and guide companies looking to exploit the huge potential of low-carbon energy sources across their operations. "These two new collaborative projects are examples of exactly the type of global collaborative effort that we must encourage to tackle climate change problems," said climate change minister Ed Miliband.

Dr John Perkins, Provost of the Masdar Institute, said there was excitement about working with leading thinkers, researchers and officials.

"A key part of our mission is to help translate ideas to the market, and working with SMEs from the UK and the UAE to grow and be successful is essential in establishing a thriving renewable energy sector in both our countries," he said.



Bertrand Piccard in one of his many interviews.

Masdar CCS

Abu Dhabi state-owned Masdar has announced its first carbon capture and storage (CCS) project would be cutting greenhouse gas emissions in the United Arab Emirates by the end of 2012.

Masdar is developing one of the world's most ambitious large-scale CCS projects. The CCS network will capture carbon dioxide from power plants and industrial facilities and then transport it via a UAE-wide pipeline network for injection into Abu Dhabi's oil reservoirs for Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR). The first phase of the project is currently in the front-end engineering and design stage and upon completion in late 2014 will capture 5 million tonnes of CO₂ per year.

The first CCS project would capture emissions from a new UAE steel plant, said Sam Nader, director of Masdar's carbon management unit.

"The first capture is 800,000 tonnes from the Emirates Steel plant in 2012," Nader said. "A contract will be awarded this year for the first capture."

By 2014, Masdar would have captured a total of five million tonnes of CO₂, he added.

Masdar aims to set up a network of pipelines in the UAE to pump carbon from emitting sites to oilfields, where it would be injected into reservoirs to maintain pressure and increase oil recovery. The network should be completed by 2015, he said.

The first phase of the plan is to capture CO₂ from industrial units such as the Emirates Steel plant and from power plants.

Masdar is working closely with state-run Abu Dhabi Company for Onshore Oil Operations (ADCO) to transport and inject CO₂ into its oil reservoirs. ADCO runs the onshore crude fields for the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC).

Other emitters that Masdar is targeting for carbon capture are the Emirates Aluminium plant, a gas-fired power station run by the Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Authority and also a planned hydrogen power plant it is building with BP.

Carbon captured would back carbon credits sold under the UN's clean development mechanism, which allows developing countries to sell emissions reductions from energy intensive industry to help rich countries offset their own contribution to climate change.

The UAE embarked on a CO₂ emission reduction programme in 2007. Abu Dhabi aims to slash the emirate's CO₂ output by about one-third by 2020 and in doing so to free up more oil for exports. During the World Future Energy Summit (WEFS) held in Abu Dhabi in January, Masdar and the Ministry of Energy of the Government of Alberta, Canada, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for government-to-government cooperation on carbon capture and storage (CCS) initiatives.

The MoU sets out a strategic agreement between the two governments for the sharing of research and evaluation and analysis on non-confidential CCS projects and technologies.

"The importance of developing CCS technology cannot be underestimated. Global warming is directly related to the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere; therefore, it is imperative that we work with other leading energy organisations to develop cost effective processes for the capture and storage of CO₂" said Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, Chief Executive of Masdar.

"The Province of Alberta is rich in energy and mineral resources including natural gas, conventional oil, oil sands, petrochemicals, electricity and coal," said Ed Stelmach, Premier of Alberta. "We understand well the importance of CCS and are delighted to have signed this agreement with Masdar, which like us, is committed to reducing carbon emissions both locally and globally through the

management of clean fossil fuel power and greater industrial energy efficiency.”

Masdar hydrogen plant

A \$2.2 billion hydrogen power plant and a linked carbon capture and storage (CCS) project in the United Arab Emirates should be completed in 2014, according to a senior executive.

The Hydrogen Power project is a joint venture between the UAE's renewable energy initiative Masdar, BP and Rio Tinto. It could be the world's first large-scale CCS project. The plant would split natural gas into hydrogen and the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO₂). The hydrogen would fire a 500 megawatt power plant, while the CO₂ would be injected into oilfields. The plant itself would consume around 100 MW, leaving 400 MW to be sold into the UAE's power grid.

The injection of the gas under an oilfield would at the same time store the greenhouse gas and help boost oil output by maintaining underground pressure. Hydrogen Power expected to tender engineering and construction contracts and look for finance this year, David Binnie, general manager of Hydrogen Power said.

The project could be the first of its type - separating carbon dioxide before combustion, producing power with low carbon emissions, and capturing carbon.

Some 1.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide would be captured per year. Natural gas for the project would be supplied by state firm Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC). The power generated would be sold to the state-run Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Authority (Adwea). The financing for the project would be a combination of debt and equity. “We are looking at commercial bank financing for the debt portion,” said Binnie. The project would also have a small-scale desalination plant for the firm's own use.

Abu Dhabi's Masdar owns 60 percent of the Hydrogen Power project, while Rio Tinto and BP each hold 20 percent.

Eco construction deal

Bayer MaterialScience, a division of Bayer AG and a global provider of materials used in the building industry has signed a strategic partnership agreement in sustainable construction with Masdar, the Abu Dhabi-based wholly-owned subsidiary of the Mubadala Development Company focused on developing sustainable and renewable energy solutions.

The agreement focuses on developing Bayer MaterialScience EcoCommercial Building (ECB) Program through the proposed construction of an EcoCommercial Building prototype in Masdar City.

Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, CEO of Masdar, said: “This cooperation represents a significant step forward in our collaborative efforts with leading industry partners... As a one-of-a-kind test bed, Masdar City is uniquely suited to host such sustainable programs.”

The Masdar City ECB prototype aims to be a model for energy efficient and economic construction, incorporating state-of-the art design for a subtropical climate. On completion, the Masdar City ECB prototype is intended to house the Middle East EcoCommercial Building Program organization from Bayer MaterialScience, and will serve as an interactive communication, exhibition and training platform for a broad range of stakeholders with an interest in eco-commercial construction.

The EcoCommercial Building Program, part of the Bayer Climate Program, combines high-tech products and expertise from Bayer MaterialScience and qualified partner companies to facilitate tailored solutions for the construction of energy-optimized commercial and public buildings that range from low-energy and passive construction to zero-emission buildings.

“The chemical industry offers real solutions for sustainable construction – Masdar city is a perfect example. Today's agreement is testament to Bayer's commitment to climate protection and to reducing the environmental impact of construction,” said Patrick Thomas, CEO of Bayer MaterialScience

SWISS BUSINESS COUNCIL DUBAI

The potential of being cleantech

The Swiss Business Council Dubai has launched an Environmental Group in October last year. Its main aim is to position Switzerland as an environmentally knowledgeable country, says its president, Till Stoll. Swiss companies can offer what the Gulf region need to become greener and cleaner.



Q: Swiss Companies will form a Swiss Village in the ecocity Masdar. Are Swiss companies already active in terms of environmental protection and cleantech in the Emirates?

Till Stoll: They are. The Swiss Business Council, the official representation of Swiss companies, started an environmental committee in Dubai in October 2009. The aim is to position Switzerland as an environmentally progressive and knowledgeable country in the UAE.

Q: What is the committee doing?

Till Stoll: We are developing a program to educate people. Everybody is “green” right now, it is fashionable in the UAE. This is great. But we realized that people do not really know what the main issues

are. We see the great potential in showing them what “clean” and “green” is about and to educating people: What is carbon emission? What is biodiversity? Why do we need to recycle? Why do we need to save water. We do it for our members. We can do it for others.

Q: Who are your partners in the Emirates?

Till Stoll: First we have the two Business Councils in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Then we have the Swiss Business Hub in Dubai; the antenna of Osec, the official Swiss foreign trade promotion organization, covers the Gulf Council member states. Then we have the Swiss embassy and the consulate. As Swiss business council we made a final agreement with the Emirates Environmental Group last year whose director is Habiba El Murashi.

Q: Where do you see the biggest needs and the greatest potential?

Till Stoll: We want to start with basic explanations and basic description. When people do not know why they shall recycle or why they should save water, then it does not make sense to tell them how they can do it.

Q: Do you restrict your activities to the Emirates?

Till Stoll: We have had an informal meeting with the Environmental Center for Arab Towns. They have 420 members from Syria over the Gulf region down to Yemen. I am sure we will be able to conclude a partnership. So our initiative has a great potential and especially a great business potential.

Q: Which additional value do Swiss companies have to offer?

Till Stoll: The first thing is to position Switzerland as an environmentally knowledgeable country. When we talk about cleantech especially in the UAE then normally German companies get the contract. Hardly anyone here knows about Switzerland’s environmental services and its cleantech companies. Osec launched a Swiss cleantech export platform in October. But if Switzerland wants to export, then the local markets need to know what they can expect of Swiss Cleantech and where they get environmental services. They need to know, that Switzerland knows a lot about environment, and they need to know what Swiss companies have to offer. This is the reason why we started our initiative.

Q: Your company Green Destinations is helping to make buildings in the Emirates more sustainable. How can buildings made more efficient?

Till Stoll: The biggest problem in the Emirates is insolation. There is almost no insolation in the region. If one starts here, then he would get more than half of the rent. If the governments and the municipalities would give constructors more information then this would be resource efficient.

Till Stoll has started [Green Destinations](#) in Dubai four years ago. The Swiss national has studied in Oxford and Harvard, before working for

the United Nations Environmental Program and for the [World Bank](#). He is member of the Swiss Business Council in Dubai and president of its Environmental Group.

SVA NEWS

Architects and consultants to be chosen

A delegation from Masdar visited Zurich at end of January. Led by Chris Wan, department manager of Design, the delegation helped select Swiss architects and consultants for upcoming work. Eight architects and six consultants—for structural questions, mechanical/electrical/plumbing work as well as sustainability—will be chosen by mid-February. While Masdar will make the ultimate decision, SVA, Implenia and OPI take part in the selection process according to a catalogue of criteria.

Price for SVA-member

The Swiss Environmental Prize was awarded at the [Swissbau](#) trade show in Basel on the 12th of January 2010. The winner in the category “Technical Innovation” was [Cobix Technologies AG](#). The Swiss Environmental Prize is one of Switzerland’s highest environmental distinctions. Sponsored by the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, it is awarded on a biennial basis by the Pro Aqua-Pro Vita Foundation.

Prof. Dr. Rainer Bunge, president of the jury, said Cobix Technologies AG’s ecological performance, innovative nature and the professional implementation impressed judges.

Cobix technology contributes to climate protection and helps governments attain their CO2 reduction levels. Concrete carbon reductions thanks to Cobix “void formers” have led to increased resource effectiveness and 20 percent cuts in the toxicity of conventional concrete slabs. In Switzerland alone, the potential annual CO2 reductions resulting from using Cobix products amounts to about 60’000 tons.

Nowadays, about 50 percent of global energy consumption and related CO2 emissions are due to buildings. With an assumed average live span of 50 years, building operations consume about 60 percent of this energy volume. The remaining 40 percent is linked to the building’s structure. The potential to further optimize the ecological footprint of concrete structures is huge.

Internet: www.cobix.com, www.umweltpreis.ch

Impressum

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