



These were the World Sustainable Energy Days 2012

Conference Review

The World Sustainable Energy Days, held in Wels/Austria, offer a unique combination of events on sustainable energy and are one of the largest annual conferences in this field in Europe. The 2012 event, which was held from 29 February to 2 March, attracted more than 750 participants from 52 countries.



The conference programme

The conference programme 2012 covered two main topics – biomass and energy efficiency.

In the biomass field, the following conferences and events were offered:

- European Pellet Conference
- WSEDnext! – Biomass (a conference for young researchers)
- Biomass Partnerships
- Site-visit: Pellets & Wood Chips

The topic energy efficiency was covered in the following conferences and events:

- Energy Efficiency Watch Conference
- Nearly Zero Energy Buildings Conference
- WSEDnext! – Energy Efficiency (a conference for young researchers)
- Stakeholder Meeting "NZEB: A Vision for 2020"
- Site-visit: Nearly Zero Energy Buildings

European Pellet Conference

Pellets are a clean, CO₂ neutral and convenient fuel with growing market shares worldwide. The European Pellet Conference 2012 in Wels/Austria was once again the meeting place for the global pellet community, presenting the latest technology trends, updates on policy, standardisation and research. It offered inspirational case studies and site-visits, the work of young researchers and innovative business models. With more than 600 participants every year, the European Pellet Conferences held in Wels have become the largest annual pellet event in the world.

The European Pellet Conference 2012 offered a range of interesting sessions and events and started with a plenary session on recent developments of EU-policy for bioenergy and an overview on global bioenergy trends. In the second session, a range of issues relating to pellet business development, including scientific challenges and sustainability regimes were presented.

New elements in 2012 were the World Pellet Business Forum and the Pellet Academy. Torrefaction, one main topic of the World Pellet Business Forum, met with high interest as well as the part on business models and product innovation, where e.g. the use of agropellets or a pellet boiler with a stirling engine for electricity production at home were presented. In the framework of the Pellet Academy, two interactive training sessions on the "ENplus Pellets in detail" and on how to develop regional pellet markets were held.

Country reports on market updates and outlooks on European and global pellet markets completed the programme of the European Pellet Conference. Representatives of Germany, Russia, Spain, France, Denmark, India, Kyrgyzstan, Argentina and China presented current developments in their countries.



WSED next – a conference for young researchers

For the first time, a conference for young researchers was organised. Based on a call for papers, young researchers from all over the world, submitted papers on the two main conference topics: energy efficiency and biomass. A scientific committee consisting of 40 scientists and members of the sustainable energy community selected around 30 projects for an oral presentation and about 20 papers for poster presentations. The oral papers were presented in two parallel sessions, one on biomass and one on energy efficiency. The innovative projects presented by the young researchers met with high interest from the conference participants.



Biomass Partnerships Conference

Biomass Partnerships, a conference presenting successful business models and partnerships for biomass heating, including contracting, district heating and supply chain co-operation projects, was organised as a part of the Intelligent Energy Europe Project FOREST (www.forestprogramme.com). The presentations included topics such as success factors and quality criteria of biomass partnerships as well as successful partnership examples. The examples covered among others the Spanish contracting programme, pellet contracting in Polish schools, contracting for industry, district heating in an Italian region as well as the development of a wood chip supply chain in Great Britain and Ireland.

Site-visit "Pellets & Wood Chips"

The full-day trip "Pellets & Wood Chips" offered the opportunity to visit a leading manufacturer of biomass boilers (wood pellet, wood chips, log wood boilers), a company specialised in pellet trucks for bulk delivery, a pellet production plant, a new passive-school in timber construction with wood chip heating system and the biomass combined heat and power plant (8.9 MWe_{el} and 21 MW_{th}) supplying district heating and innovative hot water storage in Linz. The participants welcomed the opportunity to gain first-hand information and to discuss specific questions and concerns with responsables on site.

Energy Efficiency Watch Conference

The Energy Efficiency Watch Conference was organised as a part of the IEE-project "Energy Efficiency Watch 2" (www.energy-efficiency-watch.org) which aims at facilitating the implementation of the "EU-Energy Services Directive". The conference gave an update on the implementation of the EU energy efficiency policies. Conference topics included energy efficiency policies in the EU and the progress in energy efficiency policies in the EU member states. Inputs from the member states Slovakia, Austria and France completed the conference programme.



Nearly Zero Energy Buildings Conference

The coming years will see a sharp increase in the market uptake of highly efficient buildings throughout Europe: by 2018, new public buildings must be nearly zero-energy buildings, by 2020, this will apply to all new buildings. According to the European Buildings Directive, a "nearly zero-energy building" is a building that has a very high energy performance and the very low amount of energy required is covered to a very significant extent by energy from renewable sources. Member States must draw up national plans for increasing the number of nearly zero-energy buildings, covering both new construction and renovation.

Due to this policy framework, a conference on Nearly Zero Energy Buildings was included in the conference programme of the WSED12. It discussed how to achieve "high-energy performance" buildings in new construction and renovation.



The conference started with an opening session on the question "What are Nearly Zero Energy Buildings?". The practical implementation of NZEBs with presentations on the implementation in the commercial sector or the Swiss approach were another element of the conference programme. The second conference day focused on technology innovations, as for example air tightness as a key challenge for NZEBs. Topics as smart grids, user motivation or contracting for public buildings were presented in a project flash.

Stakeholder Meeting "NZEB: a vision for 2020"

Experts of the "CA-Concerted Action", an initiative in the frame of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), took the opportunity of the World Sustainable Energy Days to hold a stakeholder meeting. The CA-EPBD Stakeholder Meeting focused on the discussion of the national definitions of NZEBs and on the practical implementation of the cost-optimal regulation. The two meeting sessions were introduced by a keynote speech each. Country reports from UK, Germany, Slovenia and the Netherlands as well as stakeholder statements and discussions after each presentation resulted in an active meeting.

Site-visit Nearly Zero Energy Buildings

The conference programme was complemented by a site-visit to NZEBs in the city of Wels. It included visits to the new exhibition hall of the tradeshow ground, a building in nearly zero energy and partly passive building standard in timber construction and equipped with a large solar thermal installation (3,600 m²). Further sites were a school retrofitted to nearly zero energy standard, a kindergarten and a nursing home in passive house standard. The participants also had the opportunity to see an energy efficient LED street lighting.



Further programme elements of the World Sustainable Energy Days 2012

Poster presentation

During the World Sustainable Energy Days, the poster presentation offered companies and organisations the opportunity to display before a professional audience successful initiatives and projects on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. About 60 companies and organisations participated.



Voting

An interactive element, "the voting", was included in the conference procedure. During the sessions the audience was invited to answer questions on their opinions about the energy future. The results of the voting can be found on the conference website www.wsed.at

Energie-Star 2012

The 8th "Energie-Star 2012" – the Upper Austrian award for successful sustainable energy projects – was awarded within the frame of the World Sustainable Energy Days . An overview of the winning projects (in German) is available at: www.energiestar.at



Energiesparmesse

In parallel to the World Sustainable Energy Days, the Energiesparmesse, an exhibition and trade show dedicated to renewable energy sources and energy efficiency, was held from 29 February to 4 March. It attracted around 100,000 visitors and about 1,600 exhibiting companies. The O.Ö. Energiesparverband presented its services at a large exhibition stand where more than 100 energy advisers were available for any information on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. A special attraction at the exhibition stand of the O.Ö. Energiesparverband was the presentation of a LED-stand. The visitors used the possibility to see latest technologies around LEDs on site and to learn about the growing number of using LEDs. Additionally, an LED lighting of 500 Euro was raffled. Furthermore, the O.Ö. Energiesparverband organised in cooperation with Messe Wels a special exhibition on very high energy efficient household appliances (fridges/freezers, washing machines, dryers, dish washers and TVs). The appliances presented were raffled at a lottery.

