

DAILY NEWS to Members: 28/03/2008 by Francisco Zuloaga

### EURELECTRIC PUBLISHES THIRD ENVIRONMENTAL STATISTICS REPORT

Following Environmental Statistics reports in 2004 and 2006, EURELECTRIC today unveils the third edition - *Environmental Statistics of the European Electricity Industry: Trends in Environmental & Sustainability Performance 2005-2006*<sup>o</sup>. It illustrates trends in the industry's sustainability performance and describes what electricity companies are doing to identify, manage and reduce negative impacts on the environment.

"Whilst electricity is essential for the well-being of society, it also has impacts on the environment", the report's overview acknowledges. While environmental issues are still paramount in this third edition, the authors, EURELECTRIC's Environmental Management & Economics group, have set out to broaden the strictly environmental focus of previous editions towards more comprehensive sustainability reporting - mainly by including recent trends in indicators on the industry's social and economic performance. Good examples from electricity companies in these two areas complement the numerous environmental best practices reported.

The 48-page report shows that the industry has reduced its CO<sub>2</sub> specific emissions in the EU from over 700g CO<sub>2</sub>/kWh in 1980 to a mere 400g CO<sub>2</sub>/kWh in 2005. The report goes on to examine the causes of this downward trend, concluding that it is a consequence of two main factors: switching to fuels with lower carbon content (such as natural gas instead of coal); and improvements in efficiency in both old and new power plants. These conclusions closely mirror those of a recent report from the European Environment Agency - *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trends and Projections in Europe 2007: Tracking Progress Towards Kyoto Targets* - which shows European trends in emissions of greenhouse gases. Examples of actions from electricity companies, not only on fuel switching and efficiency improvements, but also on electricity generation from renewable sources, are provided throughout the text.

Emissions of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), two air pollutants that contribute to acidification of ecosystems and have negative health effects, have also been drastically reduced. "Between 1980 and 2005, emissions of SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> were reduced in the EU-15 by 80% and 53% respectively, while overall electricity production increased by 82%."

A section of the report is dedicated to communication with stakeholders. The report also highlights the *Agreement on Promotion of Efficient Lighting* which the electricity industry signed in January with manufacturers and retailers of light bulbs at European level\*.

The report ends by emphasising the importance of people in the drive to sustainability: "We believe that technology is nothing without the people behind it. Fresh, creative innovative ideas are needed if we are to meet the challenge of creating sustainable societies. Future generations have an extremely important role to play in bringing cleaner, safer, more secure and affordable electricity to society," the authors conclude.

<sup>o</sup>Now available on website [www.eurelectric.org](http://www.eurelectric.org); \*See DN 28/01/2008