

PRESS RELEASE

**New sources of energy in France:  
France is Europe's 1st leading producer of sustainable energy**

**Paris, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008** – Control of energy and the development of renewable energy in France has resulted in a sector with a turnover of 33 billion euros in 2007 and created 220,000 jobs according to the French Environment and Energy Management Agency ADEME. The EU objectives established in March 2007, fixed a target for renewable energy sources to comprise 20% of total primary energy consumption by 2020. The fight against global warming is the main priority for the French EU presidency, as determined by the French government during the **Grenelle Environment Round Table**.

France's electricity production from sustainable sources was estimated at 13% of total domestic consumption in 2007, according to the "Observatoire de l'Energie". **Hydraulic power** remained the leading source, accounting for approximately 88% of total electricity production. Electricity produced by **wind power** significantly increased to 6%. **Wood energy** remains stable at 2.2%. **Solar photovoltaic and thermal energy** are increasing rapidly: the capacity of solar collectors connected to the grid exceeds 11,000 kW in 2007 (compared with 6,100 kW in 2006 and 3,075 kW in 2005). Energy from urban waste recycling accounts for 2.5%. The production of **geothermal energy** is due to develop as a result of the continual increase in the cost of fossil fuels used for domestic heating. Added to this is energy from heat pumps and also agricultural waste and **biomass** sources.

Sustained industrial activity supports equipment efforts, particularly for the photovoltaic and wind power industries. This is driven mainly by **EDF Energies Nouvelles** and numerous small investors. In order to integrate environmental challenges within the economy, the French government has launched its **Ecotech 2012** plan, entrusted to the **Eco-industry Strategic Committee**.

Foreign companies based in France include, for wind parks: **Gamesa (Spain), Vestas (Denmark), General Electric (USA), and for wind energy and photovoltaic systems: AS Solar (Germany), SMA (Germany), HaWi Energies Renouvelables (Germany), Silpro (Netherlands), Photowatt (Canada), and Apex BP Solar (United Kingdom)**.

France actively supports this sector by encouraging households and companies to install energy saving equipment and use energy from renewable sources, by means of a **tax credit** enabling up to 50% of the equipment investment to be recovered. Twelve regions in France have clusters dedicated to energy sources.

Philippe Favre, President of the Invest in France Agency, says, "*France is the location of choice for these kinds of industries: the tariff buyback program is one of the most attractive in Europe and France has high-skilled labour in the electricity network domain and significant potential in wind power. Thanks to the ambitious program of the next 12 years, there are great opportunities for sustainable energy in France*".

**Invest in France Agency (IFA)** promotes and facilitates international investment in France. The IFA network operates worldwide. IFA works in partnership with regional development agencies to offer international investors business opportunities and customized services all over France. For more information, please visit [www.investinfrance.org](http://www.investinfrance.org)

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