

International cooperation key to renewable energy development

By Wang Ying

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The development of new and renewable energy sources will be an integral part of China's future energy policy, a top official said yesterday. "Through international cooperation, China will demonstrate to the global community its determination to explore new and renewable energy sources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build an environment-friendly society," Cao Jianlin, vice-minister for science and technology, said.

He was speaking at an international forum in Beijing on renewable energy, organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology and the National Development and Reform Commission.

Cao said the government is committed to identifying and developing new energy sources and finding practical applications for them. It also wants to promote international exchanges via forums, seminars and joint research centers, and work with foreign counterparts to train high-level professionals.

He said the energy policy will give priority support to five fields - solar power, biomass fuels, wind power, hydrogen energy and natural gas utilization.

"We will soon extend invitations to experts on new and renewable energy from around to the world in a bid to establish a committee to outline key tasks and suggest areas for cooperation," Cao said.

As part of its development plan for renewable energy, launched in June, the government will provide additional funding for research projects and offer preferential tax rates for those involved in the development and use of renewable energy, he said.

The plan aims to increase the proportion of renewable energy to 10 percent of total consumption by 2010, and to 16 percent by 2020, Cao said. It currently accounts for just 1 percent.

"The International Science and Technology Cooperation Program on New and Renewable Energy has set a guideline for cooperation between China and other countries on renewable energy over the next few years," Cao said.

There have been calls for the government to adjust its VAT policy on renewable energy and reduce tariffs on imports of renewable energy equipment.

"New energy is the driving force for the sustainable development of industry," said Liu Zhijia, an engineer with the National Research Center for Clean Vehicles, which is under the Chery Automobile Company.

"In recent years, some domestic carmakers have invested heavily in the research and development of new-energy vehicles," he said.

Over the next five years, Chery will focus on developing fuel cell vehicles, which generate electricity through a chemical process that uses hydrogen fuel and oxygen from the air. (China Daily 11/13/2007 page3)