



## The 'Innovation Union' – a comprehensive strategy for growth

The European Commission has set out a comprehensive innovation strategy for Europe in its 'Innovation Union' communication published on 6 October 2010. This is one of the seven flagship initiatives to achieve the goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy for a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. The Innovation Union covers major areas of concern such as climate change, energy efficiency and healthy living. It also pursues a broad concept of innovation – and particularly eco-innovation – not only technological, but also in business models, design, branding and services that add value for users.

“Innovation is the key to building sustainable growth, and fairer and greener societies. A sea change in Europe’s innovation performance is the only way to create lasting and well-paid jobs that withstand the pressures of globalisation,” said Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science and Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani, responsible for industry and entrepreneurship.

The Innovation Union will use public sector intervention to stimulate the private sector and to remove bottlenecks which stop ideas reaching the market. These include lack of finance, fragmented research systems and markets, under-use of public procurement for innovation and slow standard setting.

Key elements of the Innovation Union for entrepreneurs include:

- Improved access to finance;
- Innovation-friendly rules and regulations;
- Accelerated interoperable standard-setting;
- Cheaper patenting;
- Innovation supported by the public sector;
- Innovation Partnerships to give EU businesses a competitive edge in areas such as health, energy, 'smart' cities and mobility, water efficiency, non-energy raw materials and sustainable and productive agriculture; and
- Easier participation in EU research and innovation programmes.

There will be a particular focus on eco-innovation. By early 2011, the Commission will propose an eco-innovation action plan, an example of smart

regulation to drive innovation. Stricter environmental standards, for example CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for cars, which provide future predictability, provide a major boost for eco-innovation.

The Innovation Union was on the agenda at the Competitiveness Council on 12 October and will be discussed at the European Council in December. Progress will be monitored as part of the governance of the Europe 2020 Strategy. An annual Innovation Convention will discuss the state of the Innovation Union.

<http://ec.europa.eu/innovation-union>

## EBAE winners promoted at Enterprise Europe Network 2010

EBAE 2010 winners were promoted during the third annual Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) conference, held in Antwerp from 13 to 15 October under the Belgian Presidency. EEN was launched in February 2008 and is a key part of the EU Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme, which aims to encourage competitiveness in European businesses. It offers support and advice to more than two million European small businesses, helping them to make the most of international opportunities and start exporting. The network spans 47 countries, including EU Member States and candidate countries, the USA, Russia, China, Mexico and South Korea. Services are delivered through 589 specialist business and technology organisations.

<http://www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/>



## PROCESS CATEGORY WINNER

## Superconductor heating technology cuts emissions

“We integrate the most recent high-tech and top-quality mechanical engineering, a proven success formula for industrial medium-sized businesses. The properties enable industrial customers to immediately implement solutions that reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions; Zenergy Power’s heater also saves businesses significant costs and so drives further profits.”

*Dr Carsten Buehrer, MD Zenergy Power, and Petra Bültmann-Steffing, MD Bültmann*



Superconductor technology enables significant energy savings in metal billet heating

German superconductor specialist Zenergy Power and its machine manufacturing partner Bültmann won the EBAE 2010 process award for a magnetic billet heater, the first industrial-scale application worldwide of superconductor technology. This enables a significant increase in energy efficiency in one of the most power-intensive processes in metals manufacturing with a substantial reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Heating processes in metals manufacturing consume 3% of the world’s total electric power production. Use of superconductor technology has made it possible to increase heating efficiency markedly as, unlike conventional electrical conductors such as copper wire, superconductors transmit electric power with no resistance or energy losses. In addition to the energy efficiency, the new technique generates a homogeneous heat distribution within the metal, so that any local overheating is avoided.

The superconductor heater can handle a wide variety of non-ferrous metals and enables a flexible supply of alloys in modern just-in-time production. Up to now, five units have been sold to customers in Europe.

Germany’s Federal Foundation for the Environment estimates that this new type of heater could save CO<sub>2</sub> emissions equivalent to two coal-fired power plants in Germany alone. Moreover, from an industrial point of view, shorter heating times for aluminium, copper or brass and more controllable heating process present significant advantages. The first enterprise to apply the new magnetic billet heating technology in aluminium processing halved its power consumption and, at the same time, increased productivity by 25%.

<http://www.zenergypower.com>; <http://www.bueltmann.com>

## INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION CATEGORY WINNER

## Supplying drinking water and sanitation in the Serengeti

“This project responds to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals which Ferrovial adopted in 2002. Two of those goals are to involve companies in the fight against poverty and to develop a global partnership for development. As a result, Maji ni Uhai involves direct participation by Ferrovial in a development aid project.”

*Íñigo Meirás, CEO of Ferrovial*

Spanish infrastructure company Ferrovial won the EBAE 2010 International Co-operation Award for the Maji ni Uhai (Water is Life) project. This involves the construction of sanitation and water infrastructure in five municipalities of the Serengeti district of Tanzania.

Ferrovial is co-operating with African NGO AMREF on this project to supply drinking water to more than 50 000 people – 40% of the Serengeti population, according to the World Health Organisation. The goal is to improve health and living standards in local com-

munities by providing them with safe drinking water and sanitary installations, and teaching good hygiene practices.

The project includes the construction of infrastructure in Tanzania which will promote sustainable economic development in the region. Ferrovial and AMREF are working in parallel to enhance women’s skills and train local communities. When the project is completed, the company will have trained 131 water and health technicians and almost 1 300 people – half of them women – in good hygiene and health practices.

Tanzania’s government is promoting infrastructure development to improve the supply of drinking water in rural areas. Ferrovial’s initiative will increase access to drinking water in the area from 23 to 40%. Maji ni Uhai, which represents co-operation between the local authorities, a local organisation and a private company, will be completed in 2011.

The project model is innovative in that Ferrovial is not only funding the project involving €1.8 million over three years,



Members of the local community drawing water from one of the first of the project’s wells

but also providing technical and technological expertise. Company specialists are participating through the corporate volunteer programme; 23 volunteers have participated.

<http://www.ferrovial.com>

## Integrated waste management a winner – Austria

Austrian participants in the EBAE management category at European level are selected from the winners of the Austrian Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) award, organised annually by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management. The Austrian EBAE 2010 participant was AEVG, which won the Austrian EMAS award in 2009. The company received its award during the EMAS conference in Linz in June 2009. AEVG



From left to right: Walter Sattler, technical director, and Ralf de Roja, environmental manager, of AEVG with Ulrike Schwarz, delegate of Lower Austria's provincial parliament, Eduard Pesendorfer, director of Lower Austria's regional administration, and Andreas Tschulik, director of the environmental technology division at the Federal Ministry

is responsible for the treatment, recycling and disposal of domestic waste from all households and public institutions in Graz, the second largest city in Austria. In 1998, the publicly-owned company started implementing integrated municipal waste management, ensuring continuous improvement and ecological sustainability. Recent improvements in-

clude installation of one of the largest solar plants in Europe, consisting of nearly 5 000 m<sup>2</sup> of solar collectors providing 2 GW of energy to the local district heating system, and the operation of one of the most advanced recycling centres in Austria.

<http://www.lebensministerium.at>

## Making an impact at European level – Spain

Fundación Entorno-BCSD Spain has organised the EBAE awards in Spain since 1997 due to its experience and leadership on sustainable development for business. EBAE is seen as the most prestigious award on this subject in Spain and an important social recognition for companies. 110 projects competed in 2009/10. Their Highnesses the Prince and the Princess of Asturias, and the Minister of Environment, preside over the ceremony in recognition of the efforts that Spanish companies are making. More than 350 people from business, academia and different organisations attended the ceremony in March 2010, which received wide TV and print media coverage. Ms Cristina Garcia-Orcoyen, Chief Executive of Fundación Entorno-BCSD Spain, was President of both the Spanish and European juries this year and highlighted the quality of Spanish projects competing in Europe, including



Juan-Miguel Villar Mir, President of the OHL construction group, receives the Spanish EBAE process award from His Highness the Prince of Asturias

Ferrovial – winner of the International Co-operation Category (see page 2). The next Spanish edition will be launched in May 2011 with the Awards Ceremony in the first quarter of 2012.

<http://www.fundacionentorno.org/>

## Six national winners for Europe – Finland

The last Finnish national EBAE competition took place between May and September 2009, with the award ceremony in Helsinki on 25 November 2009. Finnish Environmental Minister Ms Paula Lehtomäki presented the awards. There were a total of 12 entries in 4 categories:

- **Management (1)**  
**1st prize:** SITRA - The Finnish Innovation Fund: Natural resources strategy for Finland
- **Product (6)**  
**1st prize:** ST1 Biofuels Oy – sustainable ethanol biofuel for flexifuel cars;  
**2nd prize:** Preseco Oy – biocarbon to substitute use of fossil coal; and  
**3rd prize:** Bio-Teho ltd – ecological solutions for the future.
- **Process (4)**  
**1st prize:** Biolan Oy – closed greenhouse management system
- **International Co-operation**  
**1st prize:** Nokia Oyj, WWF and IUCN – connect2earth online community

Six entries were nominated for the European competition. The next Finnish national EBAE competition takes place in summer 2011.

<http://www.ymparistoyritykset.fi/>



Winners of the Finnish national competition. From left to right: Eeva Hellström, Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra; Anssi Jalava, Biolan Oy; Esa Mäki, Biolan Oy; Mika Aho, ST1 Biofuels Oy; Mikko Kantero, Preseco Oy; Juha Estakari, Bio-Teho Oy; and Kirsi Sormunen, Nokia Oyj

## Three winners for 2010 EU Ecolabel Communication Awards



The European Commission announced the winners of the 2010 EU Ecolabel Communication Awards, selected by a jury of environmental and communication experts, in Brussels on 19 October 2010. The award recognises exceptional promotional activities to increase public awareness of the EU Ecolabel for environmentally-friendly goods and services. The Jardim Atlântico hotel in Madeira won the service-provider category for its campaign to raise aware-

ness of the EU Ecolabel using different types of media and activities involving the local community. The two joint winners in the producer/retailer category were: Paris-based Arjowiggins Graphic, a leading manufacturer of recycled paper, for its worldwide campaign promoting the EU Ecolabel; and the Sara Lee Corporation, with its international headquarters in the Netherlands, for the promotion of its eco-labelled shower gel product line. The EU Ecolabel aims to encourage the production and consumption of green products and services across the EU and beyond.

<http://www.ecolabel.eu>

## EBAE Steering Committee meets in Budapest

The EBAE Steering Committee met in Budapest, Hungary on 21 and 22 October 2010 to discuss promotional activities following the 2010 edition of the Awards and review the rules for the 2012 edition.

The meeting was hosted by the KSZGY SZ (Association of Environmental Enterprises) and its International Relations Manager Mrs Ágnes Czibók, EBAE National Coordinator in Hungary.



From left to right are: Peter Novak (Slovenia), Goran Uebel (Sweden), Andej Soltes (Slovakia), Kerem Okumus (Turkey), Charlotte Faber (Denmark), Dirk Schaap (The Netherlands), Graham Sprigg (UK), Isabel Lico (Portugal), Eleni Polychronopoulou (Greece), Soledad Zuleta (Spain), Pia Vilenius (Finland), Sam Mulligan (Secretariat), Kadri Tomingas (Estonia), Anton Pizzuto (Malta), Armin Pecher (Austria), Katarzyna Wolos (EC), Caroline Godts (Belgium), Ágnes Czibók and Cédric Hananel (Secretariat).

■ **POLEKO 2010** International trade fair of environmental protection, Poznan (PL), 23 to 26 November 2010

The largest show of environmental protection and municipal services in the New Member States. It offers a unique platform for meetings of contractors from Eastern and Western Europe.

More information:  
<http://poleko.mtp.pl/en/>

■ **9th ETAP Forum on Eco-innovation:** Financing the eco-innovators, Brussels (BE), 29 and 30 November 2010

The event will examine current trends, identify and discuss the challenges in this domain, share good practices and provide recommendations on the design of financial support programmes.

More information:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecoinnovation2010/2nd\\_forum/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecoinnovation2010/2nd_forum/index_en.htm)

■ **Pollutec 2010**, Lyon, France, 30 November to 3 December 2010 International exhibition of environment equipment, technologies and service for prevention and treatment of pollution, preservation of the environment and implementation of sustainable development.

More information:  
<http://www.pollutec.com/>



## European Business Awards for the Environment

### HOW TO CONTACT US

EBAE website: <http://www.ebae.eu>

Alternatively you may contact your national organiser directly:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/awards/procedure\\_coordinators\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/awards/procedure_coordinators_en.htm)

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