

Green

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Missed Opportunity

Green Growth Strategies Prompt Calls for Better Emissions Measurements

GENEVA — Environmental concerns, government programs and possible international quotas on carbon dioxide emissions are raising calls for better ways to measure the effects of electronics, speakers said last week during a conference at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Having a green growth strategy is easier to say than do in tough economic times, said Graham Vickery, head of the OECD Information Economy Group.

New technologies and gadgets compete for resources that could be used for reducing generally low-cost energy use, said Bo Larsen, president of telecom at Union Network International, a labor union of 4 million telecom and IT workers. Telecommuting so far "hasn't led to any evolution of the labor market," except for some high-skilled workers and specialists, Larsen said at the conference in Helsingor, Denmark. Many positive steps have been taken "but we're still missing a breakthrough," Larsen said.

Flagship programs need to promote green IT solutions, said Lorenz Hilty, head of the Technology and Society Lab at the Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Testing and Research. Governments should lead by example by using green information and communications technology solutions, Hilty said.

Greening transport systems, lifestyles, city planning and legislation with IT can take generations, said Suk-Ho Bang, president of Korea's Information Society Development Institute, a government think tank. A recent Korean presidential declaration made green growth a national agenda for the next 60 years, Bang said. Korea is focusing government R&D on data servers, LED TV and next-generation displays and PCs, Bang said.

"Smarter does not by itself mean greener," said Deborah Estrin, director of the University of California at Los Angeles Center for Embedded Networked Sensing. Technology innovations and investment must be coupled

with the right policies and incentives for smarter to result in greener, Estrin said. ICTs can change behaviors by providing information on their energy consumption, Estrin said. Sensors, software and networks can spur reliable measurement and modeling of natural resource ecosystems, she said.

ICTs' crucial role in economic recovery is the key to unlocking the opportunity of green growth, said Richard Simpson, director general of Electronic Commerce in Industry Canada. ICT strategy needs to be presented as economic policy, not technology policy, Simpson said.

Many conference speakers said ICTs aren't well represented in environmental, climate change and UN Climate Change Conference communities, Estrin said. The resulting under-investment and -use is "a very significant missed opportunity," she said. The Danish government will press for a binding agreement to reduce CO2 emissions at the UN Climate Change Conference, said Jorgen Andersen, director general of the Danish National IT and Telecom Agency. "We have to look beyond" the UN Climate Change Conference, said Andrew Wyckoff, acting director of OECD Science Technology and Industry Directorate. Tools and solutions will be needed after the conference reaches "what hopefully [will] be quotas," Wyckoff said.

Standardized metrics are needed for net CO2 reductions, Hilty said. "Reducing ICTs' carbon footprint doesn't make sense without a transparent and common method for measuring the carbon footprint," Anderson said in a wrap-up session. Getting trusted, rigorous data for indicators and metrics that will "survive attacks from vested interests who don't like what they're seeing takes a long time," Wyckoff said.

Inconsistency in metrics, tools and targets can create confusion and impede progress, Estrin said. An acknowledged method for measuring the carbon footprint for ICT is needed for setting targets and evaluating results, Anderson said. "There is a need for developing common standards," to monitor, measure and verify "carbon emission on the basis of a baseline defined in advance," Anderson said.

A common methodology for figuring ICTs' impact on climate change is under development in ITU-T, said Malcolm Johnson, director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau. A study group meeting last week worked on converting the methodology into a global standard, he said. "Anyone that can contribute to the work should be able to participate in that group," Johnson said. — *Scott Billquist*

DTV Transition

TV E-Waste Bill Passes Texas Legislature, Heads to Governor's Desk

A bill mandating TVs be added to the current Texas e-waste law passed both chambers this week and is on its way to Governor Rick Perry's (R) desk. The bill, authored by Rep. David Leibowitz, D-San Antonio, and sponsored by Sen. Kirk Watson, D-Austin, requires TV manufacturers to implement statewide recycling plans for used TVs in order to sell their products in Texas. Four bills were introduced this session that added TVs to the list of electronics that need to be recycled and the one that passed came about when several legislators combined what they wanted to see into one bill.

Environmentalists believe this producer take-back approach to recycling, in which the makers of the product are responsible for its end-of-life care, will result in more sustainable products and more accessible recycling programs, said Robin Schneider of Texas Campaign for the Environment. Typically, TVs contain four to eight pounds of lead, as well as other potentially hazardous heavy metals and chemicals, she said. "With the digital transition looming, we believe this legislation will help prevent the millions of TVs made obsolete by the switch from being trashed in Texas landfills and waterways," Schneider said. To cele-

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brate the passage of the bill, environmental advocates, dressed up as zombie televisions and paraded up from Congress Ave. to the State Capitol south steps.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality officials aren't worried about an influx of TVs as the DTV transition approaches and aren't increasing recycling efforts, said Mike Lindner, a member of the commission. Residents who have analog sets are a minority, Linder said. And if residents do throw out their analog sets, Linder said, it won't have a significant environmental impact, because landfills have thick liners and are meant to be able to handle pumping out toxins. — *Ryan McDermott*

Energy Efficiency

Lighting manufacturer Osram will focus its research on LEDs as the most energy-efficient and cost-saving source of illumination for the future, the German company said on Thursday. It called light-emitting diodes "the light of the future" despite recent inroads by compact fluorescent lamps, halogen energy-saving lamps and other new types as replacements for conventional incandescent lights. Osram claims to be one of the two top lighting manufacturers in the world. Philips, General Electric and Toshiba also are leaders in the field. Compared with CFL and HES technology, LEDs "have considerable potential for increases in brightness and efficiency, and can deliver even more potential energy savings than traditional light sources," Osram said: "LEDs can be five times more efficient than incandescent lamps, and are expected to be ten times more efficient in the future. LEDs are point-light sources, and their directional light helps reduce light pollution, eliminating scattered, wasted light and delivering light precisely where it's needed." Artificial lighting accounts for 19 percent of global electricity consumption, Osram said. "Replacing conventional light sources with efficient light sources such as LEDs could cut global electricity consumption for lighting in half." LEDs already are used in a wide range of applications," Osram said. "They are more than just 'nice to have' and there is ample evidence that cost efficiency and environmental protection are not mutually exclusive. LEDs combine sustainability with cost efficiency." It forecast double-figure growth for the LEDs in the "mid-term," without citing a specific period of time. "As the technical performance of LEDs increases and their manufacturing costs decrease, LEDs will come to

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dominate more and more applications for which they offer significant energy savings and reduced overall costs,” Osram said. Those applications include CE products, automobiles, and public-sector uses like street lighting.

Industry Notes

Efforts to create a standard for wireless recharging of consumer devices will get help from four more companies. Duracell, Hosiden, Leggett & Platt and Samsung will join the Wireless Power Consortium, bringing its membership to 13 companies, the consortium said on Thursday. It was formed in December 2008 and seeks to eliminate the inconvenience and waste associated with the existence of multiple chargers for different devices, brands, and even models with the same brand. The elimination of redundant chargers, and the development of a standard for wireless recharging, ranked within the top 20 percent of consumer lifestyle demands, the consortium said, citing 3 independent polls. Japan’s Hosiden makes electrical components. U.S.-based Leggett & Platt provides equipment for electricity infrastructures. They, Duracell and Samsung join consortium founders that include Logitech, National Semiconductor, Olympus, Philips, Sanyo and Texas Instruments.

International

Lexmark in Europe is offering an “eco-simulator” PC program to help consumers and home-office workers reduce their carbon footprint by printing more responsibly. The tool was originally created for businesses, but has been adapted for lower-volume users, Lexmark U.K. said on Thursday. The program, available for downloading, calculates the environmental impact of an individual’s printing. It translates usage into global warming and ozone pollution potential, as well as showing users the amount of non-renewable resources that are involved in the printing process. Previously-published Lexmark studies found that most of a printer’s carbon footprint comes from paper use, compared with only about 10 percent in terms of energy. Consequently, the “eco-calculator” tracks users’ paper consumption, and makes suggestions on how to economize on paper and consumables like ink. The application isn’t available to U.S. customers. “This is a European tool based on European standards and protocols,” a Lexmark U.S. spokesman told us on Thursday. He declined to say if or when a similar program will be offered in the U.S. — **SAB**



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