

Energy Efficiency, a Driver for Innovation?

Paris – September 24, 2009

Executive Summary

‘Energy Efficiency, a Driver for Innovation?’ was the theme of the Dialogue Workshop organised by Hitachi, Ltd. at the *Maison de la Culture du Japon à Paris* on September 24, 2009 in preparation for the 12th EU Hitachi Science & Technology Forum. Scene-setting presentations were given by high-ranking European and Japanese officials that outlined the key issues and challenges related to energy efficiency policy and development in European and Japan. Following these presentations, a panel of French experts, chaired by Michel Petit, debated the key question of the Workshop and considered in particular the role of energy efficiency in the buildings and transport sectors.

During the course of the Workshop many points were raised and discussed such as:

- the role of green IT in aiding energy efficiency in various sectors;
- the tools available to legislators to harness innovation;
- funding and financing issues;
- energy efficiency in the product design process;
- the issue of certification and harmonisation of standards and;
- the need for personal carbon accounting and social innovation.

The Workshop provided ample evidence of energy efficiency’s role in driving innovation and provided food for thought on what needs to be done to optimise the potential benefits of energy efficiency overall and in key sectors. It was stressed that both the private sector and policymakers have key roles to play in this development and will need to work together.

The public sector will be required to promote energy efficiency through policy instruments such as legislation, economic incentives for R&D as well as technology deployment, and public awareness campaigns. In the private sector, production processes must continue to become more energy efficient and energy efficiency needs to be a primary feature of product design. **However, this Dialogue Workshop demonstrated that this may not be enough to maximise the potential of energy efficiency.**

Public and Private sectors will therefore need to work with NGOs and the general public to ensure that energy efficient products are also subject to efficient use. Social innovations such as personal carbon accounting, as the recently introduced French Carbon Tax is seeking to bring about, will be necessary to fully optimise the potential of the innovations being brought about by energy efficiency.