

Brussels, 12 March 2010

Ten companies line up for the European Business Awards for the Environment 2010

Ten European companies were shortlisted today for the European Business Awards for the Environment. The finalists represent companies from Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, Turkey and the UK. The prizes, awarded by the European Commission every two years, single out European companies that have made an outstanding contributions to sustainable development in four categories - management, products, processes, and international cooperation. The four winners will be announced at a ceremony on 2 June 2010 during Green Week, the Commission's major annual environmental conference and exhibition event in Brussels. The awards go to companies that spur economic growth by contributing to innovation and competitiveness while also protecting the environment.

"Preserving the environment makes enormous economic, social and business sense," said Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment. "These Awards recognise the most far-sighted, responsible and eco-innovative companies in Europe and play a major role in identifying and promoting best practices. EBAE winners are the best of the best."

The 10 finalists were chosen from 141 entries from 24 EU and candidate countries. This is the highest number of entries recorded since the European Awards for the Environment were launched in 1987. This record reflects growing interest of businesses in sustainability and their understanding for today's environmental challenges.

The Jury, chaired by Cristina García-Orcóyen Tormo, Chief Executive of the Fundación Entorno-BCSD España, is made up of 14 environmental experts representing industry, NGOs, academia and public authorities. The jury short-listed three candidates in the Management, Product and Process categories and one company in the International Cooperation category. The winners in each category will be announced and receive their awards at a ceremony in the Bibliothèque Solvay, Brussels, on 2 June 2010, during Green Week, the Commission's annual environment conference. The theme of this year's conference is "Biodiversity – our lifeline."

The 2010 Business Awards were open to companies from all EU Member States and candidate countries. Companies had to succeed in national award schemes before being nominated by national award bodies for the European Business Awards. A participating country can send a maximum of 12 candidates for the European Awards, three for each category.

The finalists for the European Business Awards chosen today are:

The Management Award (for strategic vision and management systems which enable companies continuously to improve their contribution to sustainable development)

AEVG Abfall-Entsorgungs-und Verwertungs GmbH, Austria

The Jury was particularly impressed by the extent to which renewable energy was integrated into municipal waste management systems run by this company.

ARÇELİK A.Ş, Turkey

This manufacturing company was commended for its holistic approach to all sectors, and for the way environmental and social issues are fully integrated into business management.

The Findus Group, UK

Findus was nominated for implementing a management system to ensure that profits do not come at the expense of depleted resources in the highly sensitive fisheries sector.

- The Product Award for Sustainable Development** (for the development of a new product or service that makes an outstanding contribution to sustainable development)

Energy ICT, Belgium

An energy monitoring and control system used by a major retailer to achieve substantial reduction in energy use.

Frigoglass Saic, Greece

For a new energy efficient medium refrigeration system for commercial ice-cold merchandisers

Siemens AG, Germany

Siemens is being commended for major improvements to the energy efficiency of large gas turbines.

Special commendation: EDF Group, Slovakia

An attractive and easy-to-adopt solution to prevent birds being killed by electricity transmission lines.

- The Process Award for Sustainable Development** (for the development and application of a new production technology that makes an outstanding contribution to sustainable development)

Ecover – Ecosurfactants, Belgium

Production of 'ecosurfactants' – the active components of cleaning agents – using a natural fermentation process with fully renewable raw materials instead of fossil resources.

Zenergy Power GmbH., Germany

First use of superconductor technology in an industrial production process, cutting the energy needed to heat copper and aluminium billets by 50%.

Dr.-Ing. Werner Neu Verfahrenstechnik GmbH, Germany

A new method to produce thermoplastic sheets that brings considerable energy savings and higher productivity.

- The International Co-operation Award for Sustainable Development** (for the sharing of knowledge and technology in international cross-sector partnerships which contribute to sustainable growth in developing countries)

Grupo Ferrovial, Spain

Providing safe drinking water to the people of the Serengeti, Tanzania, significantly improves the standard of living particularly for women and children. This ongoing project has a high replication potential with clear indications of how to solve an endemic problem in other developing countries.

Background:

The European Commission launched the European Business Awards for the Environment (EBAE) in 1987 in order to recognize, reward and promote the achievements of companies who pioneer environmentally friendly policies and products.

EBAE cover four different categories: management practices, products, processes and international co-operation activities that contribute to economic and social development without harming the environment. Despite the current economic climate, an exceptionally high number of entries were submitted for the 2010 awards, with 141 entries from outstanding companies across Europe – up from 125 in 2008.

The competition is open to any company irrespective of size, from EU Member States and candidate countries. All entries are finalists of their national competitions – an essential prerequisite for participation at EU level as only the best companies from the EU and candidate countries can apply. This means that companies awarded the European prize are 'the best of the best': the most far-sighted, responsible and innovative across Europe.

Further information about the European Business Awards for the Environment is available at:

www.ebae.eu

Information about Green Week is available at:

<http://www.greenweek2010.eu>

Contacts:

Joe Hennon +32 2 29 53593

Katarzyna Wolos + 32 2 29 97981