PROFILES OF THE SPEAKERS

Session I: Opening session

**Mr. Raymond Van Ermen** is the executive director of European Partners for the Environment (EPE). He is a member of the international sustainable and responsible investment advisory committee of the Investment Bank FORTIS L Fund. His main fields of expertise include; resource efficiency as a new competitiveness driver; leverages- the investment and purchasing power; synergies to accelerate the transition towards a sustainable and resource efficient technology.

**Mr. Attila Varkonyi** is a non-executive Chairman of Hungary's Research, Technology and Innovation Council. The Council (1) supervises the National Research and Technology Agency, which manages an annual budget of about Euro 160 million in R & D and Innovation spending in many diverse fields, (2) advises on a further R & D & I spending of about the same size and (3) is an advisory body to the Minister of Economy. An economist by education, Attila spent 10 years with Europe's leading software company SAP primarily in Silicon Valley, was an IT entrepreneur in the US / UK, is currently a Budapest-based Venture Capital investor and has served on several Young Innovative Company Board of Directors.

**Mr. Ian Clark** is head of the unit “Research, Science & Innovation” in the Environment Directorate General of the European Commission. Among the unit’s key tasks are coordination of the implementation of the European Union’s Action Plan for Environmental Technology and the integration of EU Environment and Research policies. He has been working for the European Commission since 1984, originally for the Regional Policy Directorate General. In the Environment Directorate General he has also worked on the integration of environment policy into transport policy and the environmental aspects of the recent European Union enlargement. Ian Clark studied Geography and Regional Planning.

**Ms. Eszter Szabo** is GE's Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Leader for the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region covering 18 countries from Lithuania to Turkey. Her responsibilities include defining communications and public affairs strategy as well as driving GE's brand awareness initiatives in the region. Eszter draws on her wealth of governmental, business and corporate communications experience including posts as Head of the PR Department at the Ministry of Interior for Hungary and PR advisor for the Hungarian Prime Minister. Eszter joined GE in 1996 as Communications Manager for GE Lighting in Hungary and Eastern Europe and was promoted to an External Affairs Manager position responsible for EMEAI two years later. In 2000, she moved to corporate communications at GE Hungary Rt. In 2002 her responsibility was extended to the CEE region. She holds two BAs and an MA from the University of Economic Sciences in Budapest, and was also a Pew Economic Freedom fellow at Georgetown University in Washington D.C., where she also carried out a six month internship with a communications consultancy in 1995.

**Mr. Mikko Venermo** is a senior environmental advisor within the Environment and sustainability department at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). He has been with the EBRD for eight years. As a member of the Environment and Sustainability Department, he has a leading role in managing environmental issues, one of the core values of the EBRD, of a
wide range of projects. Approaching the environment concept from a business perspective, Mikko’s work is dominated by tying in the environmental considerations into the projects and the clients’ bottom line, profitability and competitiveness. He has a comprehensive knowledge of the environmental business activities through his involvement in a variety of policy and investment development work. Mikko joined the EBRD from an Investment Manager position at the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation. He started his ongoing career with Central and Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Union Countries at the Ministry of the Environment of Finland, managing support funds for environmental projects in Russia and the Baltic States and co-operating with European Commission Funds. His academic achievements include a Master's Degree in Environmental Technology and a first degree in Industrial Management. Mikko is 41 years of age and Finnish by nationality.

Ms. Marta Szigeti Bonifert is the executive director of the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe. She has spent 12 years working for the environment in various capacities at organisations such as the Environment Institute and the Environment and Water Ministry in Hungary. Before joining the REC, she spent 10 years in business working for multinational companies in various senior roles ranging from head of human resources to commercial director for the CEE region at companies such as UB/Gyori Keksz, Vivendi Telecom Hungary and the ING Group. She is a member of the Environmental Management and Law Association (EMLA) and was its first managing director. She is a founder and board member of the CEE Network for Gender Issues, vice-president of the Hungarian Foundation for Real Equal Opportunities and Hungarian civil focal point for the Gender Task Force of the Stability Pact. She is board member Europorosperitas 2010 Foundation; advisory board member of HEEEP; and advisory of Agroinnova/Torino University Scientific Committee.

Session II: Experiences of the countries

Mr. Gottfried Lamers is responsible for the Environmental funds in the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of Austria. This fund finances emission reduction in the air and waste sector and mainly CO2 reduction by funding energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Besides this fund he is also responsible for the Austrian Environmental Fund Abroad and the environmental subsidies of the EU. Additional he is dealing with the environmental aspects of the EU structural funds. He was involved in a twinning project with Hungary and several international consultancy projects about proper funds management.

Mr. Jüri Truusa represents Ministry of Environment of Estonia (www.envir.ee) in high level working group of Environmental Technology Action Plan established by European Commission. He is councillor of Environmental Management and Technology Department of the Ministry, especially on the Best Available Techniques (www.envir.ee/ippe), and has long term national and international experience on environmental friendly technologies. Mr. J.Truusa was graduated as engineer-technologist on inorganic chemistry by Tallinn Technical University and as PhD by Moscow Institute of Technology.

Mr. Rune Opheim represents the Environmental Technology Project at the Norwegian Pollution Control Authority (SFT) - www.miljoteknologi.no, where he is responsible for China and the newer EU member states. The main aim of this project is to get experience, and give advice on how Norway (especially the environmental authorities) shall take part in this type of work in the future. Rune has long experience from both public and private sector, on local, national and international/EU level, including waste and water technology, transportation and spatial planning.
He is a chartered civil engineer from the University of Trondheim, and has also studied political science.

Ms. Riina Loukola is the Project Manager of the 3-year Environment Programme of Sitra, the Finnish Innovation Fund. Sitra’s Environment Programme aims at expediting the development, internationalisation and integration of the environmental sector, promoting investments in the field, creating business networks and promoting their internationalisation and devising a national action programme to support the growth of environmental technology exports. The National Action Plan was published in February 2007. Before recently joining the Sitra Environment Programme, she spent five years working with the international environmental issues in the Finnish Government, namely in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Ministry of the Environment. Her main fields of expertise are sustainable development and sustainable consumption and production issues.

Session III: Experiences of businesses

Mr. Ruslan Zhechkov is a Senior Project Manager at REC. Ruslan’s work has focused on issues concerning business and the environment including eco-efficient innovations. Ruslan has worked on a financing programme targeted at eco-innovations in SEE. He has conducted a study on environment and the economy commissioned within the Dutch Presidency of the EU. Zhechkov studies the economic implications of environmental measures in other EU Directives like IPPC, Waste, VOC Directives.

Mr. Andrzej Szoszkiewicz is a graduate of the Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznań, Poland. Currently he is an entrepreneur, joint owner and CEO of Smartlink Ltd, an information services company specialized in regional development and entrepreneurship. Smartlink runs www.funduszeonline.pl the biggest private website providing Polish businesses and administration with relevant information on government and EU funding schemes. Company’s growing business is printed publishing, e.g. magazines and books on EU funding and best practices. Smartlink is leader of the Winnova (Wielkopolska for Innovation) project, the biggest information project on innovation funded with structural funds in Poland. Prior to this he was an economic journalist for “Wprost” weekly, deputy editor-in-chief of "Businessman Magazine", leading Polish economic magazine. Author of two bestselling books on EU funding.

Mr. Attila Bodnar is an Architect who has practiced architecture in Hungary, Germany and the US. In 1987 he established his own architectural firm in the US and was responsible for complex industrial, residential and community projects. In 1992 he co-founded a company specializing in safety related technologies and oversaw the development of company until its sale to a Fortune 500 company in 1997. In 1998 Mr. Bodnar co-founded Organica Ecotechnologies in Hungary and as Vice President has been responsible for all aspects of company development. Under his leadership Organica became one of the leading environmental companies in Hungary, specializing in innovative wastewater technologies.

Session IV: Financing eco-innovation

Ms. Marion de Marcillac joined Eurosif in September 2006 as Head of Research. Marion has dual citizenship (French/Canadian) and in depth experience in the research and communication fields. Marion was project writer of the Eurosif “Venture Capital for Sustainability 2007” study.
Her previous positions have included liaising with the Corporate Partners of WWF France (more than 50 Multi Nationals represented), communications and event organisations in the Media field (Cannes Film Festival). Marion has Masters Degrees in Business (Ecole Superieure de Commerce de Paris - 1997) and Management of Corporate Social Responsibility (Université Paris XII - 2006). Her Master thesis was about the strategic relevance of partnerships between NGOs and businesses.

**Mr. Tamás Solymosi** Senior Manager CIB Bank Zrt. is responsible for energy and environmental project finance at CIB Bank, a member of the Intesa Sanpaolo group. The group of is one of the ten largest banking groups in Europe. Prior to joining the Bank, he worked in different consultancy and business development roles. He has significant experience in strategic and financial consulting, business development, venture capital and project finance. He has an MA in Economics and an MBA in business.

**Mr. Gábor Herczeg** (40) is the CEO of Corvinus Venture Capital Fund Managing Co. Achievements: have managed to successfully launch and operate the first Hungarian venture capital fund investing in innovative start-up and early phase SME-s in Hungary with HUF 5 billion (EUR 20 million). Previously worked as a business consultant to SME-s for several years, and preceding that spent almost ten years in the Hungarian futures industry from its very start. Graduated from the Gödöllő University of Agriculture, speaks English.

**Ms. Stefania Romano** is an experienced manager of international projects concerning environment, sustainable development and transnational cooperation. After working in the Italian Ministry of Environment, land and sea in Rome, she was appointed to participate in the development of the bilateral cooperation between Serbia and Italy in the Task Force for environment of the Ministry. Subsequently she was assigned to represent the Italian Trust Fund in Budapest at the Regional Environmental Center where Ms. Romano presently serves in a double function as an Advisor to the Executive Director and also as a local coordinator for projects financed by the Italian Trust Fund. In the latter function Ms. Romano evaluates and approves budgets for multi-country projects, monitors implementation and disbursement of funds and assesses outcomes and expenditure reports. These projects vary from capacity building on sustainable development to climate change and energy efficiency and geographically expand on a global scale.

**Mr. Osamu Mizuno** is the Director of Japanese Special Fund at REC. Osamu has just joined to the REC from the end of last month. He is expected to work not only for the management of JSF but also in several areas in the REC. He comes from the Ministry of the Environment, Japan. He is the former Director of Office of International Strategy on Climate Change in MOEJ and was fully involved in the international negotiation process under UNFCCC. He also has work experiences in variety of areas such as sea environment protection, environmental research management, chemical risk management and Ozone Layer protection.

**WHO ORGANISED THE CONFERENCE?**

The conference is organised by the **Environmental Financing Team** of the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe. **Environmental Financing Team** provides assistance on strategic environmental investment planning, investment projects preparation, assistance in design and improvement of financing
mechanisms and promoting environmental integration in the EU funds on the level of programming, planning and use of the funds.

The work of the team focuses on:

- **Assistance in strategic environmental investment planning.** It covers environmental investment planning, identification and prioritisation of environmental infrastructure investment projects, investment projects formulation. It also covers work on the national level on financial implications of the EU directives and other regulations.

- **Assistance in environmental investment project preparation.** Building capacities to develop and implement environmental infrastructure projects at the local and regional level (including development of pre- and feasibility studies). It covers assistance in absorbing investment funds in a sustainable manner and to maximise the use of available funds for sustainable, high quality environmental investments.

- **Assistance in design and improvement of environmental financing mechanisms** like environmental funds and economic instruments. Supporting and designing innovative environmental financing mechanisms.

- **Promoting environmental integration in the EU Funds** on the level of programming, planning and use of the funds. Assisting countries and regional authorities in increasing absorption capacity of the EU funds and bringing better understanding of changes in the EU Cohesion policy.

The Environmental financing team is located in the REC Head Office in Szentendre, Hungary. Its members are:

**Ms. Joanna Fiedler** is a senior project manager and environmental financing topic area leader at REC. She has degrees (BSc and MSc) in environmental protection from the University of Poznan in her native Poland. She has been a full-time member of the REC’s staff for four and a half years. She is responsible for a number of international projects funded by the EU and other donors. These have related particularly to environmental financing and economic instruments, including all aspects of the implementation of EU investment-heavy directives. She is working on several projects related to assessment and evaluation of environmental situation in CEE and SEE with special focus on environmental policies, investment implications and design of financial mechanisms. Since 2002 she is managing the Priority Environmental Investment Programme for South Eastern Europe which provides a strategic advice to the ministries of environment in the SEE on identification, prioritisation and preparation of environmental investment infrastructure projects. Prior to joining the REC in 2002, Joanna was a researcher at ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited (UK). She played a major role in the EU’s PEPA (Priority Environmental Projects for Accession) Programme. She also made a major contribution to a key study for DG ENV on the benefits of compliance with the environmental acquis for the Candidate Countries, in which she was responsible for preparing reviews on waste management for all the countries.

**Ms. Eniko Artim** is a project manager at REC. She is an ecologist and environmental manager who has graduated in Hungary and the Netherlands. At REC she is a project manager and an environmental expert in the environmental financing team. She works on the implementation of projects related to environmental financing and economic instruments in EU member states and South Eastern Europe. She is responsible for managing international projects related to the use of
Ms. Venelina Varbova is a project manager at REC and an environmental expert in the environmental financing team. She works on the implementation of projects related to environmental investment formulation, preparation and financing in South Eastern Europe. Since 2005 she has been managing the project “Cross-border cooperation through environmental planning and investment” which is implemented in three selected cross-border sites in the SEE. The main focus of her work under this project is assistance to cross-border municipalities and local decision-makers in SEE in identifying, preparing and promoting infrastructure projects, strategic advice, financial and socio-economic analysis. Venelina Varbova is an economist who has graduated in Bulgaria.

Mr. Dusan Sevic is a project officer in the REC environmental financing team. He works on the preparation and implementation of projects related to environmental financing and economic instruments in EU member states and in South Eastern Europe. His previous professional experience includes environmental impact assessment, strategic environmental impact assessment as well as environmental legislation and policy analysis in the CEE and SEE region. He is member of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA).

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