



SEAI energy roadmaps point the way to a sustainable energy future for Ireland

Future energy system could generate fuel import savings of up to €7.5 billion by 2050

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) today (Thursday 15 December, 2011), unveiled three energy roadmaps to 2050 focusing on the potential benefits of Ireland moving to a future energy system where electricity, managed via a smart-grid, and increasingly generated by wind, meets more of the country's energy needs, in particular for heat and transport. The roadmaps, which are developed to inform energy policy in Ireland, demonstrate the potential to: positively exploit our abundant, indigenous energy resources; create employment and reduce our CO₂ emissions; and over dependence on costly imported fossil fuels.

The series of energy roadmaps relate to Smart-grid, Wind Energy and Electric Vehicles – from 2011 to 2050. Potential benefits by 2050 include fuel import savings of between €3.8 billion and €7.5 billion, 1.8 million electric vehicles on Irish roads reducing transport fossil fuel imports by 50%, and Irish wind energy contributing 2.5% to EU electricity demand and offsetting up to €10 billion of fossil fuel requirement.

Launching the Roadmaps, Professor J. Owen Lewis, Chief Executive of SEAI said: *"The Roadmaps unveiled today are a further important mapping of the long term opportunities in energy and the road to a decarbonised energy system for Ireland. They show a great many benefits, including reduced energy imports leading to increased security of supply, increased use of renewables leading to lower CO₂ emissions and significant employment and economic opportunities. Importantly, the Roadmaps assist in informing the necessary decisions and actions about our long term ambition for sustainable energy in Ireland."*

The roadmaps launched today follow on from the first series of roadmaps unveiled in November 2010, which considered the country's ambitions in the areas of ocean energy, bio-energy and energy efficiency by 2050.

Copies of SEAI's Energy Roadmaps to 2050 can be downloaded from SEAI's website:

www.seai.ie.

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Notes to Editor:

Highlights of the three Energy Roadmaps include:

1. Smart-Grid Roadmap to 2050:

Explores how a smart grid can be operational in Ireland by 2050 and examines the contribution this will make to the decarbonisation of the electricity supply.

- By 2050, smart grids will see an accumulated reduction in energy related CO₂ emissions of 250 million tonnes
- Greater integration of indigenous renewable energy sources will see a net reduction in energy imports of 4.3Mtoe, equating to savings of €3.8 - €7.5 billion in direct fuel offset by 2050
- More than 10,000 Irish jobs will be created by the implementation of smart grid infrastructure and associated technologies

2. Wind Energy Roadmap to 2050:

The development of renewable energy, including both offshore and onshore wind, is central to Ireland's energy policy.

- Onshore and offshore wind could create 20,000 jobs by 2040
- The potential economic value of electricity generated by wind could reach almost €15 billion by 2050
- By 2050, Irish wind could contribute 2.5% to EU electricity demand and just over 5% of EU wind energy generation could come from Ireland

3. Electric Vehicles Roadmap to 2050:

Transport currently accounts for one third of Ireland's energy requirement and energy related CO₂ emissions and is almost entirely dependent on oil. With an abundance of accessible wind and ocean energy and short distances from the capital city to key neighbouring centres, Ireland is well suited to become an early adopter of electric vehicle technology.

- Transport fossil fuel imports could reduce by up to 50% compared with 2011 – equating to a reduction of 800,000 tonnes of oil per annum
- CO₂ reduction of 4 million tonnes per annum for the passenger car fleet by 2050
- Cumulative savings to Irish society of €2.3 billion to €12.4 billion by 2050

About SEAI:

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) has a mission to play a leading role in the transformation of Ireland to a society based on sustainable energy structures, technologies and practices. The Authority is partly financed by Ireland's EU Structural Funds Programme co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union.