



Media Release

10th March 2010

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland unveils ambitious 5 year strategic plan

~ The five-year lifetime of this strategy will see savings worth a total of €6 billion delivered, and support 5,000 -10,000 jobs each year ~

~ Authority will play a leading role in Ireland's sustainable energy drive ~

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) has today (Wednesday, 10 March, 2010) unveiled a five-year strategic plan with a mission of transforming Ireland into a society based on sustainable energy structures, technologies and practices, and a vision of making Ireland a recognised global leader in sustainable energy. Sustainable energy practices are already delivering significant savings to the Irish economy, with lowered business costs and household energy bills resulting from efficiency measures, and reduced fossil fuel imports from our increased use of renewable energy. Over the course of SEAI's five-year strategy, new savings worth €6 billion over its lifetime will be generated by sustainable energy actions, at the same time supporting 5,000 - 10,000 jobs every year.

The strategic plan builds on the strong foundations already established by the Authority over the past eight years, and sets out the opportunities and actions for Ireland to become a global leader in both the use of sustainable energy and in the clean technology space where Ireland already has a considerable competitive advantage. The goals and actions for SEAI are detailed under the key heading areas of: electricity supply, heat supply, energy in buildings, energy efficient products and behaviour, energy in transport, research and innovation, and policy development and analysis.

Commenting on the strategy, Energy Minister Eamon Ryan TD, said: *"Government has set a path for Ireland's new economy. It's green, innovative, knowledge-based and has the potential to set Ireland apart as a leading low carbon economy in the world. Above all it is sustainable. The new economy will bring savings - the EUR6 billion we can save over the lifetime of this strategy is the equivalent of our annual fossil fuel bill. It will bring investment and most importantly jobs for our people.*

SEAI's mission for the future is truly transformational. In the past 8 years, SEAI has grown as an organisation and shown it can deliver real change. Today's strategy combines vision with evidence-based policy and tested initiatives. I wish SEAI well in the fulfilment of this vision and its delivery on the ground."

SEAI Chief Executive, Professor Owen Lewis said: *"In the lifetime of this strategy, I envisage that Ireland will have made substantial further gains – in renewable electricity, in upgrading the efficiency of buildings, in improving energy efficiency in business. We also want to see the start of strong export-led growth in sustainable energy products and services. While the strategy is focused on the future, the delivery of it is very much based in action now. Sustainable energy actions over the course of the next five years will deliver total savings worth €6 bn over their lifetime and at the same time support five to ten thousand jobs every year."*

Continuing he said: *"And this is only the tip of the iceberg – ultimately we see that within the next 15 years, Ireland will develop a global reputation for research and development and clean technology services and products. Within 25 years, we envisage a national energy system totally rooted in local, green electricity, including a thriving marine renewable energy sector, and Ireland will actually be exporting electricity to Europe. These are the real opportunities for Ireland that will reduce our import dependence and our emissions, while at the same time creating jobs and enhancing competitiveness. What is required is a commitment from all levels of society to make this vision a reality for Ireland."*

Concluding Professor Lewis said: *"SEAI is already contributing real benefits to Ireland now with action centred on energy savings, emissions reductions, and importantly, jobs. We look forward to working with all parts of society to deliver on the goals and actions set out in this strategy."*

Today also sees a name change for the Authority. Formerly known as Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI), the Authority has reverted to its formal legal name, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), given to it in its establishing legislation in 2002.

Ends

About SEAI:

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