

THE EU'S ENERGY POLICY IN THE CONTEXT OF ASIA-EUROPE COOPERATION: AN OVERVIEW

Background Paper for the Conference "Energy Security in Southeast Asia and Beyond – From Competition to Cooperation? Civil Society's Stake in Asia's and Europe's Energy Policy"

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Abstract

This paper will look at the different stages of energy cooperation within the European Union. It will then look at the various cooperation frameworks between Asia and Europe. The third part will provide an overview of Asian cooperation in the energy sector with a focus on ASEAN. The paper ends with an attempt to evaluate the progress and some suggestions about how civil society can be involved in the political process. It serves as a background paper to the FES conference "Energy Security in Southeast Asia and Beyond – From Competition to Cooperation? Civil Society's Stake in Asia's and Europe's Energy Policy", taking place from 20 to 22 October 2009 in Singapore.

From Competition to Cooperation?

Among the many global challenges, energy security has evolved as one of the key priorities for many countries. Driven by rising oil prices, resource scarcity and the imminent threat of climate change, countries in Asia and Europe have stepped up efforts to secure energy for their economies and peoples. While energy security has long been at the centre of national interest, recent years have arguably seen a shift in policies¹. More and substantive changes towards a regional approach (versus a national-level approach) will most likely be necessary to secure energy and economic growth in the future.

Traditionally, energy security has been dominated by **security of supply**, which is to be achieved through a **competitive market** in which consumers have access to **affordable** and **adequate** energy². While these factors can still be considered valid, there have been some additions in recent years³. New factors that are reflected in policies in Europe and Asia include **sustainability, environmental impact, socio-economic development** and **climate change**⁴.

Generally there seems to be consensus that transition needs to be achieved from competition to cooperation. The European internal integration process generally is regarded as a rather successful model for cooperation in the energy sector and has arguably had a spill-over effect to other regions, notably Asia. Internally, the key concepts of EU policies are **solidarity and liberalisation**. In its external policy, the EU is trying to speak with one voice, engage in **strategic partnerships** with key

¹ SPEECH/07/517 by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, 2007

² Presidency Conclusions, March 2007, III. 28. p.11

³ Daniel Yergin "Ensuring Energy Security" in Foreign Affairs Vol. 85, Iss. 2; pg. 69

⁴ For a more detailed overview of the discussion, see also the RSIS conference report from the Regional Workshop on Energy and Non-Traditional Security, available here: http://www.rsis.edu.sg/nts/resources/policy_briefs_and_reports/RSIS%20Conf%20Report%20Energy%20NTS.pdf

countries to ensure energy security and make the best use of its 'soft' power through a mix of **dialogue** and **economic/financial instruments**⁵.

EU Energy Policy – An overview

The early years of European integration

Cooperation in the energy sector has been at the very heart of European integration: The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was formed in the aftermath of WW II by forcing countries to cooperate in a crucial sector. It created, among other things, a high authority to ensure equal conditions for production and supply as well as working standards. This enabled the community to respond to fluctuations in prices, deal with production and distribution, as well as invest sufficient funds in the development of newer and cleaner technologies⁶.

Growing oil dependency

The EURATOM treaty⁷ of 1957 is often regarded a result of the initial success of the European community and a direct response to the decline of the coal industry in the founding European member states. At the same time, oil dependency in most European countries was growing considerably in the 1960s and 1970s due to economic growth. But cheap oil imports meant that energy security was not really an issue at that time. Thus the oil shock in the 1970s came as a surprise for many. Attempts to coordinate energy policy on the European level were weak, as energy policy was regarded as one of the core areas for a sovereign state⁸.

First steps towards a common energy policy

Only after the creation of a single European market in the mid-1980s, this provided new impetus for a common energy policy. The European Commission issued a document laying out some ideas for a more coherent energy policy in its *White Paper on Energy Policy*⁹ in 1988. The overall aim of the proposal was to create an equal playing field through harmonisation in the energy market, and eventually led to the so-called transit directives concerning the European gas and electricity market.

Progress and liberalisation

Liberalisation progressed during the 1990s, albeit limited. In line with the completion of the internal market, proposals for liberalisation of the energy markets were put on the table. Internal factors encouraging this development can be derived from the overall revitalisation of the EU integration process in the late 1980s (Single European Act, SEA) and early 1990s (Maastricht Treaty), providing the European Commission with more competencies.

In 1995 the European Commission issued a Green Paper '*For a European Union Energy Policy*'¹⁰, followed by a '*White Paper on Energy Policy for the EU*'¹¹. In the

⁵ SPEECH/07/517 by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, 2007

⁶ Summary of the ECSC Treaty, available here:

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/treaties_ecsc_en.htm

⁷ Summary of the Euratom Treaty, available here:

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/treaties_euratom_en.htm

⁸ See Jane Haaland Matlary in: "The European Union and the Nordic Countries" p. 240

⁹ (COM (1988) 174)

¹⁰ (COM (1994) 659)

White Paper the Commission proposed a 5-year programme in which energy and environmental policies would be combined.

Thus, the focus was slowly shifting from a purely security of supply-approach to a more integrated approach, taking into account environmental concerns, security of supply as well as competitiveness.

New millennium - new impetus

Driven by a peak in oil prices, the Commission issued a Green paper entitled “Towards a European strategy for the security of energy supply”¹². In this, a long-term strategy was outlined, emphasising actions related to a demand-management approach to energy supply, an evaluation of the value of nuclear energy and expansion of the EU's energy infrastructure.

The need for a common European energy policy was also reinforced by the fact that climate change was commonly acknowledged as a major challenge, combined with more and more warnings that fossil fuels will not last for ever. Further, the problems created by nuclear energy, especially issues of storage of nuclear waste, long-term security and high prices for maintenance, etc. led to a more ambitious energy policy, driven by the European Commission's proposals and global developments¹³.

Formalisation and moving forward

In 2005, energy policy was formally put under the European Commission's competencies by the informal European Council meeting in Hampton Court.

Following this, the EC reaffirmed its role of ‘initiator’ of community policies and issued a Green Paper¹⁴ in March 2006, sketching out a comprehensive energy package with three priority objectives: sustainable development, competitiveness and security of supply. The paper also suggested a regular Strategic Energy Review.

Energy and Climate Packages and beyond

In 2007 the European Commission presented its first “Energy and Climate Package” comprising the first Strategic Energy Review¹⁵ and the Communication *Limiting Climate Change to 2 degrees – Policy Options for the EU and the world for 2020 and beyond*¹⁶. The EU's 20-20-20 goal was initially suggested in this communication. Further, it identified five objectives for a future European energy policy:

1. improving **energy efficiency**
2. increasing the role of **renewable energy** sources
3. increasing the amount of energy taken from clean hydrocarbons
4. strengthening the EU's carbon market
5. ensuring an open and competitive internal energy market

¹¹ (COM (1995) 682)

¹² (COM (2000) 769 final)

¹³ On the international level growing economic interdependency, the rise of Asian (and other) emerging economies and their hunger for energy, as well as rising oil prices, are among the external factors.

¹⁴ COM (2006) 105 final

¹⁵ COM (2007) 1

¹⁶ COM (2007) 2

The 20-20-20 goal states that by 2020, the EU aims to achieve at least a 20% reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases and intends to increase the share of renewable energy in the total energy consumption to 20%.

This communication was adopted by the Spring European Council in March 2007. A Council Action Plan emphasises the need for greater diversification in the energy mix and routes, and states that “(t) he development of a common approach to external energy policy has to be speeded up”¹⁷.

A key role for technology: The SET-Plan

A number of legislative proposals were tabled in the following months, including the third liberalisation package for the gas and electricity market¹⁸ and a proposal for a Strategic Energy Technology-Plan (SET)¹⁹ in November 2007. One of the elements of the SET-Plan was to enforce international cooperation in the area of energy technology with a focus on “helping those countries develop and grow in a more sustainable manner, while building new market opportunities for EU industry and ensuring effective collaboration in accessing and developing resources”²⁰.

The details of the SET-Plan were recently announced²¹ and are expected to be adopted by the next European Council on 21/22 October 2009.

It recognises the fact that the transition towards a low-carbon industry must be a global effort, not just a European one²². Sufficient investment in new technologies is regarded as key to ensuring energy security in the medium-to-long-term.

In 2008, the Commission presented further legislative proposals to implement the energy and climate change package, including an assessment of national strategies about energy efficiency measures²³ and a directive on the promotion of renewable energy resources²⁴.

Second Strategic Energy Review

In November 2008, the Commission presented its second strategic energy review in November, focusing on security of supply and fossil fuels²⁵. In the second review, the Commission states that despite efforts to cut down emissions and increase the share of renewable energy, up until 2020 the share of fossil fuels in the total consumption will remain the same. Thus the focus of the review is on mid-term solutions to ensure supply and good relations with key supply countries, especially in the Eastern neighbourhood. It also stresses the multi-actor approach that will be necessary to achieve lasting and substantive change – including active citizen participation²⁶.

¹⁷ Annex I, III.4., p. 19, Presidency Conclusions European Council Brussels May 2007

¹⁸ For an overview see: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/energy-climate-change-integrated-eu-policy/article-160957#>

¹⁹ COM (2007) 723 final

²⁰ COM (2007) 723 final, p. 13

²¹ COM (2009) 519 final

²² COM (2009) 519 final, p.3

²³ COM (2008) 11 final

²⁴ COM (2008) 19 final

²⁵ COM (2008) 781

²⁶ Website of the European Commission: Second Strategic Energy Review - Securing our Energy Future

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The main risk factors identified for the EU's energy security supply are traditional energy supply systems preventing investments in new technologies, rising prices for oil and gas, inefficient use of energy, insufficient resources reserves, pollution through energy use and lack of coordination²⁷.

The review spells out priorities for the future, with external relations and energy security on top of the list. The plan is to place energy in the focus of the EU's external relations, not only with key supplier countries like Russia but also in relations with other countries. Instruments to achieve this goal will be the EU's trade policy and external assistance programmes along with bilateral partnership and political dialogues on various levels²⁸

Among the recommendations is to make the best use of indigenous energy resources and invest even more in renewable energies. According to the Commission, coal as well as nuclear energy will remain important sources of energy for the years to come so that improved energy efficiency will also be vital on the road to more energy security²⁹.

Consultation process

One of the tools used by the European Commission in its energy policy is the regular '**Strategic EU Energy Review**', which was carried out for the second time in 2008³⁰, and is taking into account national as well as external energy policies and analysing their impacts. In the process of preparing it strategic energy review, the European Commission also launches a public consultation, which provides room for involvement of civil society in the review process. Basically, all interested parties are invited to answer a questionnaire or to submit comments to the European Commission. For the last consultation, a total of 280 submissions (159 from individuals and 121 from organisations) were received³¹. These documents will be taken into account when the Strategic Energy Review is drafted, even though there is no formal requirement to hear civil society groups in this process. It is part of the EU's efforts to actively engage citizens in European policies and does provide a mechanism to involve interested parties in the political process.

Current EU energy security measures

At the moment, the EU is focusing on the following actions to ensure energy security through its internal policies:

- stepping up efforts to achieve better coordination among the member states
- complete internal market for gas and electricity
- diversification of energy sources and suppliers
- improve energy efficiency of industry and products through investment in and use of new technologies
- strengthen research in new energy technologies, particularly renewable energy solutions

²⁷ For a comprehensive overview, see the citizen summary: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/strategies/2008/doc/2008_11_ser2/strategic_energy_review_citizens_summary_en.pdf

²⁸ COM (2008) 781 final, p. 7

²⁹ Website of the European Commission: Second Strategic Energy Review - Securing our Energy Future

³⁰ The first EU Strategic Energy Review was issued in January 2007.

³¹ Report on public consultation prior to the 2nd Strategic Energy Review

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- ensure interoperability of energy infrastructure networks³²

Externally, the EU is taking the subsequent steps:

- engage in dialogue and strategic cooperation with key supply countries notably in the proximity of its borders
- make use of international negotiations like the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to push for ambitious and far-reaching global agreements
- make available financial resources to fund projects and activities related to improving energy efficiency and increasing the share of renewable energies³³

While Russia and the immediate neighbours of the EU receive most attention when it comes to strategic dialogue and cooperation measures³⁴, energy security is regarded as a global concern by the EU and it is believed that a solution can only be achieved on an international level. Thus the EU is naturally also looking towards Asia when it comes to dialogue and cooperation, especially in multilateral frameworks like UNFCCC and others.

EU-Asia energy cooperation

The focus of EU-Asia energy cooperation has largely been on demand-side management, technology transfer as well as educating consumer behaviour in order to limit energy consumption.

This translates into actions within the following different frameworks:

- bilateral dialogue under the EU-ASEAN partnership
- bilateral dialogue forums with key countries (China, India, Japan)
- bi-regional dialogue under the ASEM framework
- support for regional integration measures in the area of energy policy and coordination

Cooperation with ASEAN

As early as 1988, a joint ASEAN - EC Energy Management Training and Research Centre was established in Jakarta. Its purpose was – among other things – to “strengthen cooperation among the ASEAN countries and between ASEAN and the European Community (EC) in the field of energy through proper energy management to secure energy supply for economic and social development”³⁵. The focus of the activities was largely on capacity-building measure and transfer of knowledge and technologies.

Growing globalisation of markets, the fast growth of Asian emerging economies, coupled with increasing environmental concerns in the 1990s provided the framework

³² EUROPEAN COUNCIL ACTION PLAN (2007 – 2009) ENERGY POLICY FOR EUROPE (EPE)

³³ A list of guiding principles is spelled out in the Paper from the European Commission for the European Council : AN EXTERNAL POLICY TO SERVE EUROPE'S ENERGY INTERESTS

³⁴ The main part of the EU's external energy policies is directed towards Russia and countries in the immediate neighborhood of the EU.

³⁵ Agreement on the Establishment of the ASEAN - EC Energy Management Training and Research Centre (1988), Art. 2

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for the European Commission's White Paper on Energy³⁶ and subsequently the Europe-Asia Strategy for Energy Cooperation³⁷.

In its 1995 White Paper³⁸ the EC mentions the rise in energy consumption in non-OECD countries³⁹ and outlines ideas for engaging in cooperation with Asia in the area of energy⁴⁰. Further, it was suggested that an "energy dimension will be inserted into the financial instruments to adjust the modalities of intervention to the energy needs"⁴¹ and to "define an energy strategy for cooperation with Asia"⁴². This Europe-Asia Strategy for Energy Cooperation⁴³ was adopted by the European Council in 1997.

In the document, three priority areas for cooperation on energy with Asia were identified: strengthening the security of supply in Asia and Europe, participating in Asia's energy markets and protecting the global environment. Further, it was planned to set up a dialogue on energy policy aimed at managing supply and demand. The mobilisation of the private sector was another priority identified in the strategy paper.

In more practical terms, this led to the EC-ASEAN Energy Facility Programme (EAEF), an 18 million EUR programme that ran from 2002 to 2007 and supported a total of 77 projects aimed "to facilitate partnerships between ASEAN and European organisations in developing specific joint regional projects in the energy sector"⁴⁴. It covered five sub-sectors (electricity, natural gas, renewable energy, energy efficiency and clean coal) as well as institutional development. All of these priorities had initially been identified in the Strategy paper⁴⁵. The programme was concluded in 2007⁴⁶.

With the review of the EU's external financial instruments in 2006, cooperation with ASEAN now falls to a large extent under the DCI (Development Cooperation Instrument). Energy is part of the thematic programme Environment and Energy and mainstreamed into most of the priority areas of the EC's work abroad and in Asia.⁴⁷

On a political level, a number of initiatives have been established in recent years. Since August 2007, the EU-ASEAN Senior Officials Energy Dialogue exists. This programme was a direct follow-up from the activities under the EC-ASEAN Energy Facility (EAEF)⁴⁸.

³⁶ COM (1995) 682

³⁷ COM (1996) 208

³⁸ COM (1995) 682

³⁹ South-East-Asia is mentioned specifically as one of the major growth regions, see COM (1995) 682, 3.2. 38, p.12

⁴⁰ Measures include: strengthening of energy transport networks, of energy efficiency, of renewable energies and the transfer of clean and efficient technologies, p. 29

⁴¹ COM (1995) 682, Art. 98, p. 29

⁴² COM (1995) 682, p.29

⁴³ COM (1996) 208 final

⁴⁴ Website of the ASEAN Energy Centre: <http://www.aseanenergy.org/eaef/>

⁴⁵ COM (1996) 308 final

⁴⁶ For more information on the EAEF, see the legacy brochure available here: <http://www.aseanenergy.org/eaef/>

⁴⁷ For an overview, see the EC's Strategy Paper for Asia, 2007-2013

⁴⁸ JOINT MINISTERIAL STATEMENT - 25TH ASEAN MINISTERS ON ENERGY MEETING (AMEM) SINGAPORE, 23 AUGUST 2007

Focus under the EAEF has been on the participation of the private sector and the establishment of public-private partnerships⁴⁹ rather than on participation of civil society in the process.

Strategic partners: India and China

Recognising the global importance of the rapidly growing economies of China and India, the EU has engaged in a strategic partnership with both countries with energy being a part of the cooperation.

With China, the EU has organised a joint Energy Conference since 1996. There is also an EU-China high-level working group on energy as well as an EU-China high-level dialogue on energy and transport strategies⁵⁰. The Environment and Energy Programme (EEP) with China runs since 2002 and aims to increase energy security on both sides through sustainable use and enhanced cooperation⁵¹

Since 2004, the EU has engaged in a strategic partnership with India, with energy cooperation being a key element⁵². Focus of the cooperation has been on clean energy technologies as well as rural electrification.⁵³ A noteworthy initiative is the EU-India Civil Society Roundtable that was set-up by the EU-India Ministerial meeting in 1999 and is organised jointly since 2001. It has resulted in a number of recommendations on energy and sustainability that are submitted to the EU-India summit.⁵⁴ In their last statement, participants “reaffirm that the challenges of climate change and energy can only be met with the support of civil society” and call for a “civil society dimension” in a partnership on climate change and energy⁵⁵ Another related initiative is the EU-India high-level dialogue on energy and climate change that was launched in 2007. It is organised by Action for a Global Climate Community (AGCC) and supported by the European Commission, the European Environment Agency (EEA), the German Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and other key civil society organisations⁵⁶. The outcomes of the last meeting include a number of recommendations to the next EU-India summit and it is foreseen to deliver them to the leaders in person in November 2009. The EU-India high-level dialogue on energy and climate change represents a good example of how civil society organisation can act as drivers for the intergovernmental process if there is sufficient backing by key players in the intergovernmental arena.

Cooperation under the ASEM framework

The Asia-Europe Meeting was initiated in 1997 and since then the heads of state and government of today 45 countries have met on a bi-annual basis to discuss areas of further cooperation. Energy has been part of the agenda and the importance of energy security had been identified by the 7th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in

⁴⁹ For more information on the EAEF see the EAEF legacy brochure, available here: <http://www.aseanenergy.org/eaef/>

⁵⁰ For an overview of EU-China cooperation see website:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/bilateral_cooperation/china/china_en.htm

⁵¹ Website of the Environment and Energy Programme: <http://www.eep.org.cn/about.aspx>

⁵² See JOINT WORK PROGRAMME, EU-INDIA CO-OPERATION ON ENERGY, CLEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

⁵³ For an overview of EU-India cooperation in the energy field, please see:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/bilateral_cooperation/india_en.htm

⁵⁴ http://www.climatecommunity.org/EUIndiaMechanisms_overview.html

⁵⁵ 12th Meeting of the EU-India Roundtable, Paris, France, 15-16 July 2008: Statement

⁵⁶ See website of AGCC:

http://www.actionforaglobalclimatecommunity.org/IndiaEU_Dialogue.html

2005. This was subsequently reflected in the ASEM 6 declaration on climate change: "We recognise the climate change and security of energy supply are inter-related"⁵⁷. The ASEM 6 summit also identified sustainable development and energy as one of the priority areas for ASEM for the next decade⁵⁸.

Energy cooperation was also discussed at the 3rd ASEM Environment Minister's Meeting in 2007 in Italy. The declaration states that "measures to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency can boost economic performance and ensure energy security"⁵⁹.

At the last ASEM Summit in Beijing in 2008, the Beijing Declaration on Sustainable Development was agreed. It includes a section on climate change and energy security, in which leaders confirmed the multilateral approach to solving these issues and encourage countries to "make contribution to safeguarding global energy security"⁶⁰.

In 2009, the 1st ASEM Ministerial on Energy Security took place under the EC's ASEM dialogue facility in Brussels in June. The significance of the topic was also underlined by the fact, that two Commissioners attended the meeting and gave keynote speeches, as well as representatives of all ASEM members. In the final statement, leaders once again confirmed their commitment to a low-carbon economy and called for greater diversification as well as integration and transparency. The first follow-up action included the EC-ASEAN meeting on the work plan for energy⁶¹.

With ASEM being an informal political process, any initiatives will remain largely unbinding for states. Nevertheless, this framework provides the opportunity to raise questions and discuss issues without the stakes being too high. Further, spill-over effects like the follow-up action mentioned above, can lead to concrete actions in other political frameworks on bi-lateral or bi-regional levels. In terms of civil society participation to the ASEM process, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) has initiated a multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue and debate with its Asia-Europe Environment Forum⁶². This programme brings together representatives of civil society organisations in Asia and Europe and provides inputs and recommendations to the official ASEM meetings. In 2008, the ASEM Summit in Beijing acknowledged the contribution of ASEF's environment programme in the chairman's statement⁶³. Thus there is room for involvement of civil society representatives in the ASEM process.

Asian energy cooperation

The first ASEAN energy cooperation agreement was concluded as early as 1987 in Manila, as a response to high oil prices and war/instability in the Middle East. However, implementation was almost non-existent until much later. Even before, the ASEAN Economic Ministers had met a couple of times to discuss energy cooperation,

⁵⁷ ASEM6 Declaration on Climate Change Helsinki, p.2

⁵⁸ Chairman's Statement of the Sixth Asia-Europe Meeting

⁵⁹ Declaration of the 3rd ASEM Environment Ministers' Meeting, p. 1

⁶⁰ Beijing Declaration on Sustainable Development, Art. 23

⁶¹ Joint Statement ASEM Ministerial Conference on Energy Security

⁶² For more information, see www.asef.org and www.env.asef.org

⁶³ Chair's Statement of the Seventh Asia-Europe Meeting, Art. 30

with the first meeting taking place in September 1980 in Bali⁶⁴. The AMEM (ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting) has since then taken place on a regular basis and evolved into a permanent forum for discussion among the ASEAN Ministers. In the 1990s, the AMEM agreed on the first ASEAN Medium-Term Programme of Action on Energy Cooperation, which ran from 1995 to 1999. In it the following areas are identified for closer cooperation: electricity, oil and gas, coal, New and Renewable Sources of Energy (NRSE), energy conservation, energy and environment, energy policy and planning. Implementation was under the responsibility of the ASEAN secretariat⁶⁵.

The implementation and coordination of the activities of this plan of action were given to the ASEAN Centre for Energy, which was the successor of the ASEAN-EC Training Centre⁶⁶ and established in 1998. It is based in Jakarta and funded by contributions of ASEAN member states.

The following AMEM meetings led to the *ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation 1999-2004 (APAEC)* that was adopted by the 17th AMEM in 1999. It was part of the first implementation stage of the ASEAN Vision 2020⁶⁷ and identified six priority areas, with the development of an ASEAN power grid on top of the list. Thus efforts were concentrated on integrating existing technologies with the ultimate aim of creating a common standard to ensure interoperability and thus security of supply within ASEAN member states. The EU was mentioned as the most important dialogue partner in the energy field⁶⁸.

In 2002, the ASEAN Ministers signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Bali on the Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline Project, one of the key projects of the first APAEC. The MoU created the institutional framework for the implementation and distributed responsibilities to various authorities. During the 20th AMEM in 2002 a roadmap for the implementation of the ASEAN power grid and the ASEAN gas pipeline were adopted. In the second APAEC, the importance of energy cooperation is reiterated and a number of areas for further cooperation are identified. In the section on international cooperation in the energy section, the EU is mentioned as a key partner.

The Bali AMEM also introduced the ASEAN+3 (Japan, Korea, China) Cooperation in the field of energy. This led to the five-point initiative agreed on by the ASEAN+3 Energy Ministers' meeting in September 2002 in Japan. Thus in the recent years, energy cooperation within ASEAN has been extended to other major players in the Asian region, while more efforts have been made to achieve the ambitious integration targets within the ASEAN framework.

So far, there is no mechanism for participation of civil society in the energy dialogue on ASEAN level, which remains largely an inter-governmental process with responsibilities divided between national authorities and coordination through the ASEAN secretariat, the SOME (Senior Officials Meeting on Energy) and the ASEAN Energy Centre (ACE). Within this framework, energy security can be a major driver of energy cooperation among ASEAN countries. The focus of activities has been on

⁶⁴ Joint Press Release for the First Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Ministers on Energy Cooperation

⁶⁵ ASEAN Medium-Term Programme of Action on Energy Cooperation (1995 - 1999)

⁶⁶ Agreement on the Establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Energy

⁶⁷ ASEAN PLAN OF ACTION FOR ENERGY COOPERATION 1999-2004 Executive Summary

⁶⁸ ASEAN PLAN OF ACTION FOR ENERGY COOPERATION 1999-2004 COOPERATION WITH DIALOGUE PARTNERS

interoperability as well as information sharing within the ASEAN member states and is likely to pick up pace in the years to come. In order to ensure sustainability, transparency and awareness among the public, active participation of citizens in the discussion on energy security should be encouraged.

Step by Step: Civil Society's Role in the Energy Security Debate

As has become obvious from this overview, energy cooperation has long been on the agenda both in Europe and Asia as well as on a bi-regional level. Recent years have, however, seen an intensification of energy cooperation triggered by the formalisation of EU energy policy and the active role of the European Commission on one hand, as well as climate change on the other hand.

Securing supply for an ever-growing economy and further globalisation will require substantial efforts to increase energy efficiency across the globe and considerable investment into the exploration of alternative energy resources. While Europe is trying to take the lead in a sustainable energy policy, Asia is also taking actions – arguably fostered recently by the global financial downturn. The most prominent examples are the 'green stimulus package' in China and other major Asian economies. This is also related to the fact that energy will remain a major factor for sustainable economic growth.

In terms of energy security, a shift can be observed from the traditional, supply-focused towards a more integrated, multi-faceted approach on the political level. While security of supply is still a key element of energy security for Asia and the EU, in the bi-regional fora dialogue has opened to a wider field, including energy efficiency measures, renewable energy sources as well as diversification.

In the EU, recent developments driven by the European Commission have led to a greater liberalisation and more transparency on the internal energy market, while externally the EU is trying to take the lead through publicly announced targets and is trying to strengthen coordination and communication. Asia-Europe cooperation in the area of energy has been part of various frameworks for quite some time, although energy security has only fairly recently been taken up as a focus in the international arena.

For Asia, the involvement of the private sector in energy cooperation has been a priority along with efforts to achieve greater inter-operability. Within ASEAN, progress is ongoing and some more ambitious projects are in the pipeline. Since a couple of years, ASEAN is also engaging in a strategic dialogue with Japan, Korea and China in the area of energy cooperation.

Overall, there exist a number of political processes and frameworks for dialogue between Asia and Europe on energy cooperation and energy security more specifically. What is currently missing is a formally established channel for civil society to participate actively in the energy security discussion between Asia and Europe as well as within the Asian region. As has been demonstrated by the example of the EU-India Civil Society Roundtable and the EU-India High Level Dialogue on Energy and Climate Change, civil society representatives do have a vital interest in participating and can provide valuable inputs to the intergovernmental process. The Asia-Europe Environment Forum is another example of a mechanism that manages to convey key messages from a civil society to governments within the ASEM process. Another way of including civil society opinions in policy making is the consultation process utilised by the European Commission in various policy areas,

including energy policy. As mentioned before, participation from civil society could help to achieve sustainability through innovative solutions, greater transparency, and competitiveness across the industry, and will ultimately result in better awareness of the global challenges.

About the Author

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