



Delta-Eko

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Turkey, France sign MoU agreement to support green projects

The Industrial Development Bank of Turkey (TSKB) and the French Development Agency (AFD) signed Thursday a memorandum of understanding, or MoU to support "green" projects aiming at greenhouse gas emission reduction in Turkey.

TSKB did not give any information about the budget allocated to fund green projects under the MoU, but said talks were under way to make certain the amount of the budget.

However, AFD's CEO Jean Michel Severino said that the French agency would grant 5 billion Euros of loans for projects across the world and that it has decided to allocate 200 million Euros for Turkish banking industry this year.

TSKB Director-General Halil Eroglu said his bank has funded 71 renewable energy projects in Turkey that amounts to 2,255 megawatts, or 15 percent of Turkey's overall renewable energy capacity.

"Once these projects are launched, Turkey's greenhouse gas emission will be reduced more than 4 million tons which equals to over 1 percent of whole greenhouse gas emission in the country," Eroglu said.

AFD has provided 800 million Euros of financing for projects in Turkey, including a natural gas power plant in northern Turkey, a wind farm in western Turkey and a hydroelectric power plant in eastern Turkey.

World Water Forum a success in Istanbul

Two weeks after the 5th World Water Forum, officials and organizers held a press conference at the Sütluce conference center in Istanbul on Friday to announce the event's successful outcome.

Professor Veysel Eroğlu, head of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, highlighted aspects of the forum that would benefit both the worldwide water situation and Istanbul as a host city. He said the record number of academics, scientists and water experts who attended the event and shared their knowledge enabled the ministers to work efficiently while drawing up solutions and plans to combat water problems. "Hundreds of people from across the world worked together intensively to draw up realistic strategies that could be implemented upon returning to their own countries," Eroglu said, adding that each country has a responsibility to carry out the actions that were discussed. According to Eroglü, the forum also brought political gain by drawing politicians from 155 countries together to make crucial decisions.

Istanbul Province Governor Muammer Güler also spoke at the press conference, where he discussed Istanbul's success in hosting the event, which required 145 transfer buses, 18 boats, 128 minibuses and 140 security cars. He said access to the conference center ran smoothly throughout the week and that the programs, events, translations and information facilities were generally organized successfully.



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Siemens' crisis response: A new 'green' factory

Siemens Chief Executive Officer Peter Löscher opened the company's new factory in Gebze, southeast of Istanbul, on Thursday with the words, "This is our answer to the crisis."

"We have done it in Turkey because you have earned it," Löscher said, underscoring the country's importance as a regional hub for Siemens, a global electronics and electrical engineering company.

With one-fourth of the Turkish population in school and 4 percent of the country's gross domestic product spent on education, Turkey shows great promise for a successful future, Löscher said. "Turkish young people are hungry and ready for challenges."

The factory opening took place just 13 months after construction began in March 2008. The new facility stretches across an area of 150,000 square meters and cost 100 million euros to build. Energy Minister Hilmi Güler, German Ambassador to Ankara Eckart Cuntz and Siemens' CEO of Energy Wolfgang Dehen and Turkey CEO Hüseyin Geliş joined Löscher in inaugurating the factory by pressing a symbolic button.

A model 'green' factory

Löscher said the new site is a model "green" factory due to its energy efficiency and environmentally friendly systems and design. He said it fulfills the criteria for the United States' benchmark Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, certificate, achieving 25 percent energy savings through the use of highly efficient, technological and innovative systems for lighting, heating, cooling and ventilation. Highly efficient toilets, waterless urinals and the collection and use of rainwater will reduce water consumption 50 percent.

The factory will employ about 2,000 workers and focus its production on new energy technologies. Together with the company's other factory in Istanbul's Kartal region and its regional offices, it will bring Siemens' Turkish workforce to 6,000 people. Turkey CEO Geliş said the building of a new factory in a time of economic crisis shows how important Turkey is to the German company. "Twelve percent of Turkey's energy demand is met by Siemens technology," he said, adding that the company will continue its growth in the region.

According to Dehen, three factors drove the company to increase its investments in the energy sector and open the new factory: demographic changes that will increase demand for energy, particularly in Asia; the finite nature of fossil-fuel resources, which require greater energy efficiency and optimization of the energy mix; and the need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions because of climate change. "Energy has to be clean, sustainable and affordable," Dehen said.

Energy Minister Güler said investments in the energy sector have to continue despite the crisis. "We will invest \$120 million in this sector through 2010," he said, adding that the coming years will be the age of hydrogen energy and that Turkey will expand its focus on wind energy. "We already use Siemens turbines, but I also propose that Siemens should start to produce turbines here in Gebze," he said.



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Greenpeace activists protest Obama on Bosphorus Bridge in Turkey

Greenpeace activists protested the visit of U.S. President Barack Obama unfurling a banner from Istanbul's main Bosphorus Bridge on Monday. (UPDATED)

Greenpeace activists unfurled a banner bearing an image of Obama and a slogan, in three languages, Arabic, English and Turkish, which read "Save the Climate for Peace" from the Bosphorus Bridge.

The one hour protest, which disrupted traffic on the main bridge between Istanbul's European and Asian sides, ended peacefully and police detained 18 activists who took part.

"We are calling on the U.S. president to deliver on his election campaign promises" to make the battle against global warming one of his top priorities, a leader of the group, Korol Diker, told AFP.

Turkish police also broke up a small protest outside the Parliament building in the capital Ankara where Obama addressed lawmakers.

Police using truncheons charged at about 20 leftists demonstrators. The group shouted "Yankee go home!" and "murderer U.S.A." Police detained the protesters as well as dozens of other leftists and activists in small anti-Obama protests in several other cities.

Obama, on a two-day visit Turkey, began talks with Turkish leaders in Ankara Monday before traveling on to Istanbul later in the day.

Obama gets a Bosphorus climate note

Greenpeace activists unfurled a banner from the Bosphorus Bridge bearing an image of U.S. President Barack Obama and reading, in three languages, Arabic, English and Turkish, "Save the Climate for Peace."

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Court to decide on manganese mines

A Muğla administrative court will make a verdict over the lawsuit filed to cancel the Neslişah company's license to operate a manganese mine in the Osmaniye village of Muğla's Marmaris district.

Marmaris, one of the most beautiful holiday spots in Turkey, is facing the danger of becoming a mining center. There are around 50 licenses authorized by the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources at 42 different locations in the town. Recently a group of 11 associations came together to protest licenses that allow mining activities in the town.



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The Neslişah mining company received a mining search license from the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources in 2007 to seek a mine on a forest area of 600 hectares. When they had to cut down 900 trees to build a road to the mine, environmentalists raised their voices against what they called a "nature massacre."

Environmentalists claimed that with the company's mine, the pine honey production in this area would be damaged and the village would be badly affected, and applied to the court to stop the operation.

Nurcan Dağ, who deals with the town's tourism, said that if they started to discover mines in Marmaris, the tourist spot would turn to a mining center. "This would kill tourism here. This damages the economy. If this company gets the license, it will be a precedent for others to mine in Marmaris," said Dağ.

Rains fill up Beydağ Dam

The amount of rainfall during the autumn and winter seasons has helped İzmir fight drought.

The water behind Beydağ Dam, on which construction was started on in 1994 to provide water for the Küçük Menderes River, increased to 60 million cubic meters. Despite being far behind its full potential of 250 million cubic meters, as it is still under construction, the current amount is the biggest that the dam has ever seen.

The head of the İzmir branch of the State Waterworks Authority, or DSİ, Ayhan Sarı Yıldız said that the dam will pour five cubic meters per second onto the fields in case of drought during the summer.

The Beydağ Dam is 90 meters high, will be completed in 2011 and will provide water for six towns.

Summit attracting interest from 31 nations

The Marmara Group Foundation for Social and Economic Research has announced that the 12th Avrasya Economic Summit will meet in Istanbul on May 6, 7 and 8 with participants from at least 31 countries expected.

The presidents of Croatia and Kosovo are expected to attend as well as 19 ministers, two of which are deputy prime ministers.

"As of today we are expecting participants from 31 countries. I believe that the closer we come to the date of the conference, participation will increase," said Marmara Group Chairman Dr. Akkan Suver.

Topics that will be discussed include the Nabucco pipeline project, integrated approaches, alternative energy lines, the global economic crisis, regional cooperation, global warming and Asia's rising power, China. The conference will include a new event on the first evening: the first Avrasya Economic Summit Cup race in cooperation with the Turkish Jockey Club.

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