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NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES IN SWEDEN

SUMMARY

The long-term objective of Swedish energy policy is to reach a situation where Sweden's energy requirements are met by lasting, preferably renewable and indigenous, sources of energy with a minimum of environmental impact. The present high dependence on imported oil is regarded as unacceptable for a number of reasons, inter alia, considering the future energy needs of the developing countries.

Significant measures have been taken in recent years with this objective in mind and with a view to eliminating the constraints that hamper a restructuring of the energy system.

Hydro-electric power is Sweden's most important indigenous source of energy. Hydro-power presently accounts for two thirds of total electricity production (61 TWh in a year with average precipitation). Production in 1990 is expected to be 65 TWh. The forests are Sweden's most important natural resource and they also play an important role as a source of energy, particularly in the pulp and paper industry. It is expected that utilization of indigenous solid fuels (forest residues and peat) will increase considerably during the 1980s. Solar energy for heating purposes and wind power are expected to make small contributions by 1990.

The rate of introduction of new and renewable energy sources depends to a large extent on the competitiveness of such energy sources in relation to conventional energy, and on how this relationship is perceived in the long term. It also depends on the priority accorded to new and renewable energy within national energy policies.

Measures taken by the Swedish Government to overcome constraints that limit the introduction of new and renewable sources of energy include economic incentives as well as considerable research and development efforts aimed primarily at technical development and environmental issues. The main emphasis of the Swedish energy research programme is placed on renewable energy.

The Swedish Government attaches great importance to a further development of international co-operation in the field of new and renewable sources of energy. It is fully recognized that strong measures are needed by developed countries and by the international community with a view to promoting the development of both conventional and non-conventional energy sources in developing countries. The Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) has adopted specific guidelines for energy assistance. The Swedish Agency for Research Co-operation with Developing Countries (SAREC) provides assistance for strengthening indigenous research capacity in developing countries, for example, in the field of energy. The Swedish Commission for Technical Co-operation has supported several projects in the field of renewable energy.
