



**For immediate release**

## **Retrofitting existing buildings is critical to achieving Europe's energy and climate change objectives**

**Brussels, 26 March 2010** - Eurofuel, the European Heating Oil Association, and the European Partners for the Environment (EPE) urge policymakers to speed up action to improve energy efficiency of buildings and heating systems to ensure a smart and eco-efficient growth for Europe.

The important interplay between building renovations, energy-efficient and innovative heating solutions were addressed at yesterday's high level conference organised by Eurofuel and EPE as part of the EU Sustainable Energy Week. At the same time, EPE launched the European Re-Building Forum with the objective to accelerate the implementation of the estimated 35%-40% cost effective savings potential in existing buildings by 2020.

Gathering key experts from across sectors, such as Pirjo-Liisa Koskimäki from the European Commission, MEP Silvia-Adriana Ticau, representatives from the German Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, the European Solar Thermal Industry Federation (ESTIF), WWF Europe and the Dutch Built Environment Platform (PeGO), participants engaged in a constructive debate on the future path towards reducing emissions and improve savings in the European heating and buildings sector.

The recent announcement by the Commission that national energy efficiency measures will only achieve half of the EU 20% savings objective shows the need for urgent solutions. Panelists discussed funding options, the implementation of the Buildings Directive, training and experts and future heating solutions. Experts concluded that more ambitious actions are needed to improve the energy efficiency of buildings, access to incentives should be facilitated and that a mix of measures is required. It is about "and/and" rather than "either/or". Koskimäki stressed that "when renovating, better to do it well."

Arianna Vitali Roscini, WWF, stated that "the biggest energy saving potential in existing buildings has not been fully grasped". Renovation and insulation measures greatly improve efficiency. The average age of boilers (gas or oil) in many Member States is over 15 years old. Eurofuel believes that penetration of modern oil condensing boilers could deliver energy efficiency gains of 15%-20%. Innovative technologies and solutions such as Multi Hybrid Heating Systems is the way forward. Integrating renewable energies such as solar, wood and sustainable bioliquids with oil heating systems achieves even greater primary energy savings and significant emission reductions. Dr Moritz Bellinggen, President of the Technical Commission Eurofuel said: "In Germany, nearly 60% of oil condensing heating systems installed in 2008 were oil and solar thermal hybrid solutions. The next leap is integrating Micro-CHP and oil-driven heat pumps".

Xavier Noyon, ESTIF, said: "I warmly welcome the hybrid systems initiative of Eurofuel, as part of the heat demand is provided by solar thermal energy, and the efficiency of the fossil fuel is improved".

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**Editor's notes:**

1. **Eurofuel** is the umbrella organisation representing 10 national associations which promote the use of heating oil for domestic heating, including over 10,000 companies. Eurofuel's members cover the complete home heating supply chain, from oil companies, through to independent fuel traders and distributors, heating equipment manufactures and finally heating installers. Eurofuel is engaged in the development of innovative techniques for heating oil and equipment, and our members are committed to ensuring the competitiveness and efficiency of heating oil, while reducing its environmental footprint. [www.eurofuel.eu](http://www.eurofuel.eu).

2. **European Partners for the Environment** is a multi-stakeholder forum bringing together Public Authorities, Companies large and small, Trade Unions, Research Institutes, Environmental Organisations, Consumer and Ethical NGOs and Civil Society Groups. Its mission is to improve cross-sectoral collaboration and joint initiatives to align business, capital markets and society more closely with the sustainability agenda. EPE builds the ground for consensus on sustainability and serves as a catalyst, in Europe and around the world, to achieve into the future a better balance between the environment, social and economic element of life. [www.epe.be](http://www.epe.be)