



SUBSTANDARD ENERGY-SAVING LIGHTS BLOCK PROGRESS TO SLOW CLIMATE CHANGE

*New initiative launched to improve quality,
boost consumer confidence*

MANILA, PHILIPPINES (28 JUNE 2007) – A coalition of government, industry, and non-profit organizations will launch a regional program in Asia to address new findings presented at the Asia Clean Energy Forum indicating that poorly manufactured energy-efficient lights could jeopardize efforts to mitigate climate change.

Upwards of 400 energy experts and policy makers meeting at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) heard on Thursday that energy-efficient compact florescent lights hold enormous potential to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the most common and harmful greenhouse gas. Replacing just one incandescent light bulb in your home with an energy efficient bulb could cut carbon dioxide emissions by 34 kg over its lifetime, according to internal research presented for the first time by Mahesh Iyer, Global CFL Product Manager for Philips.

At the same time, the Asia Clean Energy Forum participants were warned that poor quality lights could hamper efforts to cut emissions by undermining consumer confidence in Asia. As many as half of the energy-efficient lights on the market in many Asian countries are substandard products that do not last long and provide poor quality light, according to a discussion paper released by the USAID ECO-Asia and Clean Development and Climate Program. In contrast, European and North American markets have measures in place to ensure the quality of energy-efficient lights sold in their market.

In order to address this problem of product quality, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is joining forces with Philips Lighting and OSRAM to roll-out a regional initiative to certify that energy-efficient lights sold in the Asia region achieve minimum quality levels. The voluntary initiative will work with countries in the region to assist them in establishing region-wide quality standards, collecting data on product performance, and making the results publicly available. Countries of Southeast Asia will be an initial focus of the quality assurance program, through the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

“USAID is delighted to work together with the major lighting suppliers to develop a practical program to certify that the energy-saving lamps meet specified quality levels,” said Olivier Carduner, Director of USAID’s Regional Development Mission for Asia. “It is important for the credibility of clean energy efforts that standards be in place to ensure product performance and consumer satisfaction.”

USAID and the lighting suppliers have agreed to work with a regional non-profit organization, the Efficient Lighting Initiative (ELI), to certify the quality of energy-efficient

lights. Under this initiative, manufacturers would aim to meet the voluntary technical and performance specifications established by ELI, through its ELI Quality Certification Institute. The initiative is currently the only international certification scheme for energy-efficient lighting, and it relies on common, established international test procedures that are already in use by countries in the region. At the same time, USAID will work with governments in the region to encourage them to endorse certified products.

ADB hosted the three-day Asia Clean Energy Forum at its headquarters in Manila as part of its clean energy and environment program, which aims to increase spending in the field by up to \$1 billion a year.

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