



## World Consumer Rights Day 2006

### Take action on energy – sustainable access for all

**Together we can influence government decision-making and consumer behaviour on *energy*. On 15 March 2006 our goals are to push governments for action on:**

- coverage and continuity of service
- affordability
- sustainability

### Sign-on letter to the G8

The G8 energy ministers will be meeting in Moscow on 15 March. In the words of the Russian President Vladimir Putin:

*'This year, we plan to urge our partners to redouble efforts to ensure **global energy security**. We believe that today, it is crucial to find a solution to a problem which directly influences the social and economic development of all countries, without exception. I am convinced that our efforts towards attaining this goal should be comprehensive and must stimulate stabilization of the global energy markets, development of innovation technologies, use of renewable energy sources and protection of the environment. We believe that today, we must think very seriously about ways to bridge the gap between energy-sufficient and energy-lacking countries.'*

But the G8 leaders already agreed on a 'plan of action' last summer in Gleneagles, Scotland ('*Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development*'). That document recognises the various energy problems facing the world, and the 'importance of raising consumer awareness of the environmental impact of their behaviour' through 'clear and consistent labelling'. But it sets no specific targets for action on sustainable access to energy and most G8 members have since failed to turn their words into concrete steps.

We want the G8 to do much better this year. **We encourage all CI members to send the attached sign-on letter to G8 ministers before 15 March.** With members in 113 countries the consumer movement should make its voice heard!

We have included the relevant e-mail addresses. Also, feel free to circulate these letters on your networks, to friends and family and to anyone interested in sending a message to the G8 on sustainable access to energy.

Please send the attached sign-on letters by fax, e-mail or post before World Consumer Rights Day and send a copy to: [dcuming@consint.org](mailto:dcuming@consint.org) (or fax: +44 20 7354 0607) so that we can keep track of how many letters have been sent.

Thank you in advance.

### On 15 March encourage consumers in your country to save energy and cut their fuel bills

- CI members often already provide lots of information to consumers about the environmental impact of energy consumption. As well as helping consumers to choose a new supplier (in countries where there is a choice), CI members can also show there are many ways for consumers to save energy at home and cut down their fuel bills.

- Please promote these activities on or around 15 March as a contribution to World Consumer Rights Day.

## Letters to national energy authorities

- Please send a letter to the relevant energy authority in your country based on the advocacy questions provided in the attached energy backgrounder, or use the model letters provided. Feel free to modify the letters to suit the particular energy context of your country/region.

## Meet the minister

- Arrange a meeting with your energy minister, or other officials from your energy authority. Use the advocacy questions provided in the energy backgrounder to gather information on government energy policy and plans. Is your government planning for the future and taking into account the access needs of consumers? Demand that your government puts in place a comprehensive sustainable energy plan that has as its objective *sustainable access for all*.

## Publish your demands

- Write a letter to your national newspaper using the energy backgrounder or model letters as a guide. Emphasise the need for leadership from national governments, in partnership with industry and consumers, in the development of a comprehensive sustainable energy plan which is financially and environmentally sustainable and which remains within the limits of consumer affordability – **sustainable access**.

Please send a copy of any letters published to [dcuming@consint.org](mailto:dcuming@consint.org)

## Energising your streets

- Organise a peaceful demonstration or a street theatre performance on one of the following themes:
  - Get connected: connecting non-connected poor consumers. Use blindfolds or other props to make your point.
  - Sustainable energy: a bright future for our children
  - Responsible energy use – don't let the lights go out!

Or draw attention to the numbers of people reliant on burning dung for energy (use your imagination and you will be sure to attract attention to the plight of unconnected consumers).

## Press conference

- Hold a press conference under the heading of 'Energy: sustainable access for all consumers', and draw attention to the energy concerns of consumers in your country/region. Be sure to call upon your government to develop a comprehensive energy plan which is financially and environmentally sustainable and which remains within the limits of consumer affordability – **sustainable access**. Invite local media and community organisations.

## Energising your community – and your government

- With like-minded organisations, stage a community debate on the theme of 'Energy: sustainable access for all'. Focus on the key energy challenges in your area and develop a community based consumer action plan for sensitising government authorities to consumer energy concerns. Produce a statement from participants demanding a comprehensive national energy plan which is financially and environmentally sustainable and which remains within the limits of consumer affordability – **sustainable access**.

## Surveying the energy crisis

- Gather case study material from consumers regarding the problems they face with respect to access to energy: prohibitive connection charges, service interruptions, affordability issues, use of biomass and the related health problems, etc.

Compile these case studies and present them to your local energy authority. Be sure to involve the media and include interviews with consumers, a press conference or whatever you think would work best to attract attention to the issue in your country/region.

## Use your imagination!

If you don't know already, find out what the main energy issues are facing consumers in your region/country and develop a campaign activity that captures the attention of public officials whilst engaging the public. Don't forget to let us know what you did so that we can publicise it.

### Please remember:

- Be sure to send the sign-on letters to the G8 and a copy to [dcuming@consint.org](mailto:dcuming@consint.org). This will only take a couple of minutes of your time and the more CI members that send it, the greater impact it will have.
- Let us know what you organised for WCRD 2006. Send photos, examples of media coverage, or simply a written description of your activities.
- If you get a response from your government or gather information from consumers in your country, please let us know about it.
- Please send in your feedback form to help us plan more effectively for World Consumer Rights Day 2007.

Consumers International  
February 2006

## G8 Energy Ministers contact information

Please send the G8 Sign-on letter to the following e-mail addresses and/or fax numbers:

### United States of America

**Mr. Samuel W. Bodman**

Energy Secretary

Fax: +1 202-586-4403

E-mail: [The.Secretary@hq.doe.gov](mailto:The.Secretary@hq.doe.gov)

### Russian Federation

**Mr. Khristenko Viktor Borisovitch**

Energy Minister

E-mail: [pr@mte.gov.ru](mailto:pr@mte.gov.ru)

### France

**M. François Loos**

Ministre délégué à l'industrie

Ministère de l'économie, des finances et de l'industrie

Fax: +33 1 53 18 96 48

E-mail: [sec-presse-industrie@cabinets.finances.gouv.fr](mailto:sec-presse-industrie@cabinets.finances.gouv.fr)

### Canada

**The Hon. Rona Ambrose**

Minister of the Environment

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E-mail: [Ambrose.R@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Ambrose.R@parl.gc.ca)

### Germany

**Minister Michael Glos**

Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Technologie

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For e-mail go to: [http://www.bundestag.de/mdb/bio/G/glos\\_mi0.html](http://www.bundestag.de/mdb/bio/G/glos_mi0.html)

### Japan

**Mr. Toshihiro Nikai**

Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry

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E-mail: [webmail@meti.go.jp](mailto:webmail@meti.go.jp)

### United Kingdom

**The Hon. Malcolm Wicks**

Minister of State for Energy

Department of Trade and Industry

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### Italy

**On. Altero Matteoli**

Ministro dell'Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio

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