

By Nkechi Isaac Leadership Newspaper, Pg 26 — Mar 17, 2015

In its bid to promote sustainable energy, the Federal Government says it is working towards improving electricity access to 75 percent by 2020 and 100 percent by 2030.

The Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Abdu Bulama made this known at the 4th national energy efficiency summit with the theme “Mainstreaming energy efficiency into public policy, regulations and procurement” organized by the Energy Commission of Nigeria (ECN) with support from the United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) in Abuja.

He said: “We are all aware of the present administrations endorsement of United Nation’s sustainable energy for all initiative by 2030. To this effect, government is working towards electricity access of 75 percent by 2020 and 100 percent by 2030; and with greater contribution from renewable energy of up to 20 percent by 2030, while automotive fuel mix shall include biofuels of up to 10 percent bio-ethanol and 20 percent bio-diesel.”

The minister who was represented by the Director, Chemical Technology and Energy Research Department in the ministry, Engr. Abbas Gummi, described energy as one of the essential catalysts for economic development and growth, saying its demand would continue to grow as long as we march towards achieving our national aspiration of being within the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020 and beyond.

According to him, “energy efficiency and conservation have a huge potential to contribute in achieving these goals as indicated in the draft revised National Energy Policy and Masterplan.”

Delivering a paper on energy efficiency as a driver for economic transformation and sustainable development, the Director-General of ECN, Prof Eli Bala, noted that both energy efficiency and conservation are very important in stabilizing and reducing carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere with resultant mitigation of adverse climate change.

He said the federal government’s policy on energy efficiency and conversation was first made in 2003 under the national energy policy, pointing out that the policy was reviewed by stakeholders to reflect changes that occurred over 10 years since it was approved in 2013. He explained that

the National Energy Masterplan was also reviewed in 2014 to indicate activities in the short, medium and long-term that would enable the strategies to be realized.

Saying Nigeria's economic transformation and development depends largely on adequate supply of sustainable energy in the economy, Bala emphasized that for the country to become one of the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020 as envisaged, adequate and sustainable energy supply was imperative, adding energy efficiency and conservation's best practices are essential in meeting this aspiration as well as mitigation of adverse climate change effects.

He, therefore, called on government to pass the National Energy Policy and Master Plan into law, saying it contained policy on energy efficiency and conservation.

In his remarks, the Country Director of GIZ in Nigeria, Dr Thomas Kirch, said activities in the Nigerian energy sector and particularly, energy efficiency required an efficient coordination and cooperation, describing energy as the backbone and key requirement for both social and economic development of any country and a major catalyst for industrial development.

He said the agency through the Nigerian Energy Support Programme (NESP) was committed to supporting the federal government to achieve the overall goal of ensuring a reliable and sustainable electricity supply.

"In this respect, energy efficiency has an important double function. On one hand, more efficient use of electricity reduces the power demand and therefore increases security of supply. On the other hand, by consuming less energy, companies save money and therefore become more competitive.

"Against this backdrop, we're supporting the Nigerian government to mainstream energy efficiency into policies, standards and regulations, and assisting the private sector to embrace the principles of a sound energy management from key aspects of the NESP," he added.

He called on stakeholders in the energy efficiency sector to give clean energy technologies a prominent place and include them in relevant policies, standards, regulations and procurement

processes.

Earlier in her remarks, the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Mrs Akon Eyakenyi, represented by the Director of Electrical Engineering Services of the Ministry, Engr. Julius Olurinola, lauded ECN for organizing the programme, describing energy efficiency as the cheapest way of reducing carbon and cutting bill for consumers.

“We are enthusiastic about energy efficiency in buildings as a key tool in addressing climate change, controlling rising energy costs, reducing environmental footprints, and increasing the value and competitiveness of buildings.

“As you are aware, energy efficiency is the cheapest way of reducing carbon and cutting bills for consumers. It is also the cheapest way of sourcing for scarce energy. It has to be at the heart of what we do as we provide policies and enabling environment for construction of houses and public buildings in Nigeria,” the minister stated.

She said the ministry was collaborating with the UN-HABITAT and GIZ to come up with building energy efficiency design guidelines which would eventually lead to a national building energy efficiency code, even as she reiterated the ministry’s readiness to work with the commission in realizing improved energy efficiency for the nation.