



CONNECTING COMMUNITY AND SUSTAINABILITY
RENEWABLE ENERGY-EFFICIENCY-REDUCE-REUSE-RECYCLE-COMPOSTING

ECO RENDEZVOUS



Solar Energy III

The third edition of renewable energy series on Solar Energy organized by EnvironFocus Incorporated was held on January 12, 2013 at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites Toronto - Mississauga at 10am. The objective was to increase awareness of solar energy as a renewable energy option in a way that is understood by the public and to link existing businesses to an interested audience (Residents and businesses) in an informal environment. The main points discussed were: solar as a renewable energy source and business and investment opportunities associated with community solar energy development. There were opportunities to see and buy eco-friendly products and to book organic farm produce marketed by EnvironBuzzers.

Participating speakers and organizations that made the event a success include:

- Lia Van Baalen, Marketing Assistant, Fronius Canada Ltd
- Jim Jaeger, Partner, Dynamic Solar Tech Inc
- David Biderman, Partner, Dynamic Solar Tech Inc
- Julie Leach, TREC, Renewable Energy Co-Operatives : Solar Share
- Buchi Onakufe, Akachi Farms
- Sue Gitti , Jewels of Chakara

The event was well attended. During the event attendees were divided into 3 small groups to discuss a statement from an Ontario PC caucus white paper – “The serious issues of oversupply and price have been obscured by a debate about whether wind and solar technologies are good or bad. They are neither”.

The outcomes of the discussions from the groups were very similar. It was agreed that solar and wind and all other up and coming renewable energy options should be provided with the same opportunities for sustainable development as main stream energy sources are given as they play a part toward meeting the climate change challenge. Challenges associated with sustainable development of such renewable energy options identified results from:

- Environmental issues not being addressed in a sustainable manner and current solutions are based on politics and which party is in power.
- These issues only come publicly to the forefront of government agenda when they are being used as a means to push a political party’s agenda.

- Sadly, the main focus when such decisions are being made is not the people/community but the agenda of a particular group.

Solutions highlighted on how these challenges can be addressed include:

- People and communities should be more involved in decision making.
- More education on environmental issues and their impacts should be provided to the people as they are life-threatening challenges that endanger all.
- More information should be provided to the people through open forums like Eco Rendezvous to improve understanding of these issues in an informal environment.
- During election, candidates should be given an open forum to debate in detail how they plan to solve current environmental issues as they do all other topics.
- There should be opportunities created for the community to listen to all sides whether there is a coming election or not and each side should be given equal time in the media.
- There should be environmental studies taught in elementary and high schools in the same way social studies, health science and business/economics are taught.

Participants were fully engaged in the event. The content of the workshop enabled participants leave with a clearer understanding of solar energy, how it can be accessed individually and as a community and the challenges surrounding decision making when it relates to solving environmental issues. Feedback from participants was excellent. The event met its objective and more sustainable partnerships were developed. An awareness of the necessity for organizations to participate in sustainable development of communities and to promote clean technology was generated and the understanding that actions that are taken need not be done singly but as a group was promoted. Presentations from speakers have been made available at <http://environfocus.com/library/> or view by clicking here

The next renewable energy workshop will be on Biomass/Biofuels and Wind energy and is scheduled to take place on May 4, 2013 at Holiday Inn Express & Suites Toronto – Mississauga, 40 Admiral Blvd, Mississauga, ON. More information is available at <http://environfocus.com/envirbuzz-events/2013/05/renewable-energy-workshop-series-eco-biomassbiofuels/>