

INTRODUCTION OF THE LINNEBORN AWARD AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2005 WINNER LAUDATIO

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The Johannes Linneborn prize was established in 1994 for outstanding contributions to the development of energy from biomass. Joannes Linneborn lived 1899-1991. He was a pioneer in modern biomass utilisation. In his professional life, his interest covered a wide range of activities from agriculture and energy to transport. His credo was the necessity to integrate all human activities in their natural cycle of life.

The winner of the Linneborn award this year 2005 is Wolfgang Palz.

We honour today Wolfgang Palz for his life work and achievements, in particular for his role as a leading manager of European biomass development. It's a happy event that this ceremony is placed under the umbrella of Dr. Linneborn's memory. I remember, Wolfgang, that we met together with Johannes Linneborn somewhere in Germany in the early 80s. He presented to us his very lively technical and historical experience notably about gasification.

It is significant too, that his prize is given in front of the world's largest Biomass Conference. One of the series that Wolfgang Palz has set up in 1980 in Brighton and developed into the milestone events they have become since then. You asked, Wolfgang, I remember well, David Hall and myself to co-chair that first event.

Wolfgang Palz holds a PhD in physics; he was involved in photovoltaics at the French Space Agency in Paris for more than ten years. He moved to Brussels at the end of the 70s and became for 20 years the manager of the European R&D Programme on Renewable Energies. This activity has probably been the "master" piece of his carrier. He was also proactive with Giuliano Grassi to promote the biofuels strategy in the European agricultural policy (CAP) since the mid 80s.

He initiated in 1997 that bioenergy was given priority in the European Commission's "White Paper" on renewable energies.

From 2000 to 2002 he was a member of the Energy Commission of the German Parliament. He received the German honour of merit, the European Awards for Merits in Photovoltaics and Wind Power respectively, and he is currently a chairman of the World Council for Renewable Energies.

Wolfgang Palz' name counts in the European Biomass Community as it is represented in this room. We honour today his outstanding role for the advancement of bio-energy to achieve a more sustainable Europe and a more sustainable world.

I am going to conclude also with a more personal note. We share since our first meeting in 1973, the same vision about the role of renewable energy and biomass to prevent an unsustainable world development; this joint vision was one of the reasons why it was so easy to work together. I learned also from you Wolfgang, a lot about best practices concerning project management. You were really important for me when I became the biomass project leader of the Commission's programme and afterwards, when I've been elected Chairman of the overall R&D Non- Nuclear Energy Committee in Brussels. I never forget your contribution.

We wish you and your family and friends many pleasant years to enjoy, and I hope that the biomass community can benefit from your active support for a long time to come. With all our best wishes,

Merci Wolfgang.

The prize was handed over by the son of Johannes Linneborn in the presence of the former Prize Winners Giuliano Grassi, Italy, Philippe Chartier, France, Ralph Overend, USA, Spyros Kyritsis, Greece, and the Conference Chairman Lars Sjunnesson and the representatives of the EU and ADEME in front of the audience of the festive Opening Session.