



SolarAid awarded European Solar Prize for its outstanding achievements tackling both climate change and poverty in Africa

Thursday 28th November 2013: Tomorrow evening SolarAid will be awarded with the EUROSOLAR European Solar Prize 2013 at an awards ceremony at the Berlin Branch of KfWBankengruppe in Germany.

EUROSOLAR and SolarAid have a shared vision for a world that doesn't depend on fossil fuels and where everyone has access to clean, safe renewable energy.

The European Solar Prize awards organisations taking innovative and pioneering action in promoting widespread use of solar energy. SolarAid have been awarded this prestigious prize, now in its twentieth year, for their work combatting both climate change and poverty with solar lights in Africa.

In Africa 600 million people do not have access to electricity and many rely on dirty kerosene for light. Kerosene is extremely dangerous and contributes to the indoor air pollution that causes a million deaths worldwide every year. Burning kerosene emits black carbon, the second biggest contributor to global climate change. It is also extremely expensive for rural African families, who can spend around 25% of their income on kerosene every week.

For about \$10 SolarAid provides families the opportunity to buy a clean, safe solar alternative. Not only is the light brighter, safer and better for the environment – it gives free light and provides more time for studying, working and socialising. SolarAid distribute these solar lights in East Africa through their social enterprise SunnyMoney. By selling rather than giving, it is building a sustainable market for solar products in Africa that is growing at an exponential rate.

The people that need solar lights most live in the remotest rural corners of the continent, far from the electricity grid. Getting solar lights to places that have little infrastructure is a huge challenge and the charity raises money to cover the expensive cost of this distribution. It also works to lobby governments to have fair tax policies for importing solar, so that the economy can flourish.

Jeremy Leggett, Founder and chairman of SolarAid and Solarcentury, said: *“Receiving this award is a hugely gratifying recognition both of what SolarAid has achieved, and the potential prize we see ahead of us. Our goal is to rid Africa of the kerosene lantern by 2020 and with our cumulative solar light sales surpassing 750,000 in October, with over 72% sold in the last 12 months, we are on track. It's an exciting time. We have the potential to create a vibrant microcosm of how relatively easily clean energy can replace fossil fuels if people pull together.*

SolarAid was founded by Solarcentury in 2006 and Solarcentury continues to support the charity with 5% of its profits each year. It would be wonderful if the wider solar sector could get behind SolarAid too. There would be few legacies as compelling as helping us to reach our first major milestone – a million lights by March 2014 – and then replicating the success across the continent.”

To support SolarAid in its mission contact their SolarAid Ambassador in Germany - Greg Marriott or their Corporate Partnerships Manager – Tessa Kipping

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Notes

Contact information:



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To speak to our SolarAid ambassador in Germany please contact greg.marriott@t-online.de

For more information about EUROSOLAR please contact: SP@eurosolar.de

About SolarAid

SolarAid's goal is to eradicate the kerosene lamp from Africa by 2020. To provide an alternative, SolarAid set up SunnyMoney, a social enterprise that uses an innovative business model to distribute small solar lights at scale. Rather than giving aid, SunnyMoney sells lights in order to build viable sustainable markets in areas where little retail or transport infrastructure exists. SunnyMoney is now the largest seller of solar lights in Africa.

www.solar-aid.org

About The European Solar Prize

EUROSOLAR recognises outstanding achievements in promoting widespread use of renewable energy through the annual European Solar Prize, now in its twentieth year. The award will be presented in collaboration with KfWBankengruppe on 29 November 2013 at the Berlin branch of KfWBankengruppe. The European Solar Prize is given to make pioneers and leaders the focus of public attention and to give fresh impetus to a renewable energy-based and decentralised energy turnaround. It honours important and innovative projects and initiatives from all parts of society in eight categories.

www.eursolar.de