

25/01/2007 China to replace quarter of refined oil with liquid biofuels

Text of report in English by official Chinese news agency Xinhua (New China News Agency)

Beijing, 25 January: The Chinese government aims to develop liquid biofuels like ethanol and bio-diesel in rural areas to cut usage of refined oil by 10 million tons, or more than a quarter, by 2020, senior official said on Thursday. The development of biofuels would solve the country's energy shortage and ensure national energy security, said Shi Yanquan, deputy director of the Ministry of Agriculture's department of science, technology and education.

As the world's third largest oil importer after the United State and Japan, China imported record-high 36.38 million tons of refined oil last year, 15.7 per cent up on 2005, to fuel an estimated annual economic growth of 10.7 per cent.

Shi said using crops and excrement in rural China to produce Biofuels would meet the country's growing energy demands and boost rural economy. Apart from liquid biofuels, the government will focus on developing methane, compressed stalks for burning and oil-rich crops in the rural areas in the next five to 10 years, said Shi. Shi said the ministry planned to provide 40 million rural households with access to methane by 2010, more than double the number at the end of 2005. Experts say biofuels are the fourth most important energy source after coal, oil and natural gas.

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