



Olympic London is open for green business

On Wednesday (June 10), several London-based groups gathered in San Francisco to begin the “clean tech” portion of a road show called Route to 2012 — a marketing tour to encourage North American companies to take advantage of business opportunities leading up to the 2012 Olympics in London.

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The British capital is “open for business,” said Janet Coyle, director of the 2012 Games for Think London, which promotes foreign investment in the city.

London is building an Energy Center — with a combined heat-and-power system that uses biomass — to provide green energy for the Olympic park (and the city’s electrical grid), and last year it selected Cofeley,, a subsidiary of the French energy company GDF Suez Energy International, as the provider.

So as far as providing clean energy goes, “the main opportunity’s sort of gone,” said Dan Epstein, the head of sustainability for the Olympic Delivery Authority.

Still, other big opportunities remain, he said. The Olympic authority has just begun looking for solar lighting and small wind turbines for the park, for example, and also is looking at energy-efficiency and waste technologies, he said.

The city also hopes to use the Games to jump-start its broader sustainability initiatives, such as its goal of cutting carbon emissions 60 percent by 2025.

London expects it will cost some \$30 billion to meet that target, said Padmesh Shukla, the head of finance for the London mayor’s office. “We don’t have \$30 billion,” he said.

The mayor’s office is proposing a green fund of both public and private money to launch different “template” projects, aiming to prove their financial viability and help give banks the confidence to finance similar efforts, he said.

The first projects will probably retrofit some of London’s many old buildings to make them more energy-efficient. The city recently issued a solicitation for bids to retrofit some 24 million square feet of public buildings, and anticipates 8 billion to 10 billion British pounds’ (\$13.1 billion to \$16.4 billion) worth of public and private retrofit projects, Mr. Shukla said.

Other priorities include increasing London's share of locally produced, decentralized power, greening its industrial market and boosting alternative transportation, including hybrid buses, light-emitting-diode traffic lights and electric-vehicle charging stations, Mr. Shukla said.

Over all, the city is planning hundreds of clean tech projects, presenting opportunities for many businesses, be they R.&D. companies or law firms, he said. Businesses can find solicitations for the Olympics [here](#) and can register to get alerts about London opportunities [here](#).

Source: [The New York Times](#)