



This event has always intrigued me. It is small, select and held in one of the world's smallest nations. Each year it follows the same format, yet each year it is fresh, informative, fun and different. If you are in any way interested getting a sneak peak at the clean technologies of tomorrow this date must be on your calendar.

Although the event is held in such a glamorous city-state, it manages to be discrete and understated. Perhaps the key to its success is the unrelenting commitment to year on year improvement that London based investment bank, Innovator Capital, insists on.

Conceived of by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco and Mungo Park, Innovator Capital's Chairman, CleanEquity Monaco has one overarching ambition: to introduce emerging clean and green technology companies to all the contacts they need to become commercially viable and sustainable. I attended the first CleanEquity because by chance I was down the hill at a UNEP conference. It seemed extraordinary to me that the two events were not more connected so we at UNEP Fi got involved and remain involved today.

The event began on the evening of Wednesday 2nd of March as the delegates met for the first time in the Atrium of the beautiful Monte Carlo Casino. At 8 o'clock the CEOs and CleanEquity supporters slipped off to a quiet dinner at The Grill. Most of us were meeting for the first time but all was made easy because of the placement; each of the 60 guests had a specific seat carefully selected with language, area of interest and business discipline taken in to consideration. This 'welcome' dinner meant that all the CEOs arrived at the conference the following morning to see friendly and supportive faces.

The agenda kicked off, after brief introductory speeches by the hosts, with a talk by George Frampton, Senior Counsel at Covington & Burling on of Washington DC's leading law firms. George has served under a number of US Presidents and more recently as Chairman of President Obama's Environmental Transfer Team. His address set the scene perfectly leaving the audience with a clear idea of which direction America was going regardless of Washington policy.

The next two days, punctuated by the Gala Dinner where we were spoilt by a beautiful recital by English classical pianist Jamie Rogers, ran like clock work. Fascinating plenary sessions and workshops, where real experts discussed their opinions openly and frankly, were interspersed between the real business of the event; the technologies.

Company after company stood up and told the delegates of their dreams, plans and projects. Each being in one of three categories, pre-proof of principle, post proof of principle and ready for market. The companies, listed below, were represented, in almost every case by their founding CEOs or engineers. We were not 'treated' to slick, over

hyped, career chief executive presentations. Instead during the 25 minute sessions we were really able to get involved with and understand the motivations and objectives that each company had. What was extraordinary was that in almost every case, the technology in question represented a dramatic leap in efficiency, a reduction in cost or a disruption of the status quo. Furthermore the markets that the companies were addressing were monumental. It was easy for me to imagine how these technologies would take off if adopted by China or India given the environmental hurdles these and other countries face today. In fact, if I were in the job of having to make the decision on which technology to adopt in a given situation, the final move would not be made without asking Innovator Capital for their opinion; just for a little extra insurance.

The conference closes with an award ceremony presided over by HSH Prince Albert. His speech is always to the point and appreciative of the extraordinary work that the assembled engineers are doing. He takes care to demonstrate that he understands the need for each of the various groups to attend CleanEquity; the technology companies, the financial investors, the strategic investors, the legislators, the world media and the end users. It is essential that all are represented to optimise the time to market for the products.

The finale is the awards, beautiful objects, different every two years and created by artists such as Damien Hirst and Michael Joo. (I wonder who the next artist will be).

The award categories are Excellence in the Field of Environmental Technology Research; Development and Commercialisation - each of the key steps that must be taken to reach commercial sustainability.

- The Research award went to HaloIPT, wireless charging technology for electric vehicles and the runner up was the vertical farming company, Aero Farms.
- The Development award went to Enecsys, next generation micro inverters for the solar industry. The runners up were Ecotemis and NGenTec.
- The Commercialisation award went to Whitefox, the membrane technology company. The runners up were Oxford Catalysts and Cho Power.

In my opinion and in those of others to whom I spoke, CleanEquity Monaco 2011 was a resounding success. All aspects of the event showed improvement and/or efficiency gains, no mean feat given the strength of the conference in previous years. Above all, the technology companies were first class. Whilst these extraordinary new scientific developments give us hope, we must not forget that they are only part of the solution to the problems we face.

It is clear though that these 35 companies are doing their bit.

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