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PRESS RELEASE

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BASE- BASEL AGENCY FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY – officially launched

Tri-national foundation and UNEP partner founded to promote investment in sustainable energy

BASEL, SWITZERLAND, 20 May 2001--The new international agency for the promotion of sustainable energy – BASE – has been formally founded in Basel, Switzerland as a tri-national foundation. The founding partners are the Swiss foundation Oekomedia, the German foundation Canopus, and the French "Centre pour la Coopération dans le Rhin Supérieur". BASE is headquartered in Basel and plans to open regional offices in Freiburg, Germany and Colmar, France in early 2002.

BASE's mission is to facilitate investment in **energy efficiency** and **energy-saving technologies** and in **renewable energies**. The BASE approach is to pool the know-how and experience in the field of sustainable energy available in the tri-national region at the Upper Rhine, combined with the financial centre Switzerland, and link the entire package to the global UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and its planned network of centres for sustainable energy.

BASE initiator Dr. Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, signed a formal agreement with Barbara Schneider, President of Basel City Government, on 13 March 2001, establishing BASE as a UNEP Collaborating Centre.

BASE aims to promote local and regional markets for renewable energy and energy efficiency in both developing and industrialized countries.

„The world power market is huge, far bigger than the Internet and telecommunications market“, says Virginia Sonntag-O'Brien, BASE Managing Director. „The challenge is to steer a significant chunk of the trillions of dollars that will be invested in energy over the next 20 years towards sustainable energy projects.“

BASE serves as a broker, finding projects for investors and investors for projects. The **International Investment Forum for Sustainable Energy**, which BASE will hold on 19 September 2001 at the SUN21 Congress in Basel, will bring together investors and project promoters to enable them to talk directly about projects and discuss options for investment.

Donors to the BASE Foundation are national, regional, and local governments, businesses and financial institutions, and persons primarily from Switzerland, Germany, and France. BASE is open to partners from all countries.