

ATOMS IN INDUSTRY

Rays of hope for development

What are the uses of radiation technology, and what benefits does it bring to our lives? The public has little awareness of how widespread the use of nuclear techniques is beyond the generation of power and cancer therapy.

This year's Scientific Forum, to be held on 15 and 16 September 2015 on the margins of the 59th IAEA General Conference, will showcase how radiation technologies are used in a broad range of industries.

Entitled 'Atoms in Industry — Radiation Technology for Development' and bringing together experts, industry leaders and researchers, the Forum will examine best industry practices from around the globe and serve as a platform to exchange ideas on how these technologies can be applied to propel development efforts.

"Helping countries to benefit from the peaceful use of nuclear technology is a central area of the IAEA's work. Our assistance covers areas including human and animal health, food security, water management, electricity generation, and environmental protection — to name just a few," said IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano.

In 2014, over 130 countries received support through the IAEA's technical cooperation programme, and while nuclear technology is often equated with nuclear power in the eyes of the general public, 80% of IAEA Member States are in fact non-nuclear power countries.

From the cars, trains and aeroplanes that people board daily to the cables that power day-to-day activities and the instruments that measure the safety of our homes, nuclear techniques are used extensively to meet the needs of modern life.

Radiation is an effective tool to kill germs and harmful organisms in health care and food industries, and radiation techniques used, are environmentally friendly ways to measure and clear pollutants in rivers, as well as to test and change the properties of materials in order to improve their structure and resilience.

The Forum will also look at innovative uses of radiation technology, such as in the preservation of cultural heritage and in the processing of new, environmentally friendly materials, and at how these techniques can contribute to boosting productivity.

"We want to take a closer look at the role nuclear techniques can play in industry in developing countries, and in cooperation with Member States and other partners, identify how we can assist in priority areas where nuclear techniques can add value," Mr Amano said.

For more information visit www-pub.iaea.org/iaea meetings/46532/Scientific-Forum-Atoms-in-Industry-Radiation-Technology-for-Development

— *By Luciana Viegas*

