

Newsletter N° 3 – September 2010

Guiding communities towards sustainable energy – Implementation progress

Welcome to the 3rd edition of the **Sustainable NOW** e-Newsletter, of the project **European Sustainable Energy Communities - effective Integrated Local Energy Action today (Sustainable NOW)**. This newsletter provides an update on project developments and news from the partners, focusing on sustainable energy communities and integrated management. It is specifically aimed at local and regional governments, and their partners working in the field of local energy.

Additional news and events are also on the project website – www.sustainable-now.eu.

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1. Introducing four Consortium Partners

With a group of 15 project partners in **Sustainable NOW**, each partner plays a vital and specific role in the project. In every e-Newsletter a few partners are presented, highlighting their specific situation, interests and contributions to the project.

1.1 *ecovision* - a technical partner

Technical partners provide expert input and guidance in the **Sustainable NOW** project. *ecovision* was invited to join the consortium due to its interesting focus on planning and operating facilities utilising renewable energy sources and energy efficiency in Germany and abroad. The basic approach used by *ecovision* is to provide citizens with opportunities to engage in economic-ecological investments, by participating in jointly owned photovoltaic (PV) plants with shares starting at relatively low prices.



ecovision operates six co-owned PV plants and develops new concepts in collaboration with municipalities. The company also provides advice to municipalities and investors on planning energy contracting schemes and the development of their own solar plants or solar funds. Further to this it advises on energy management and environmental management processes.

One of the tools *ecovision* provides in this context is the *avanti GreenSoftware* (<http://www.green-software.org>) – a useful tool to support local and regional administrations ‘going green’ by switching to sustainable energy programmes.

The ecovision origin and vision: *ecovision Limited* arose from activities in the context of an ecumenical approach and Agenda 21. It was founded by KATE (the Centre for Ecology and Development, based in Stuttgart) and seven other members. Today, *ecovision* pursues the same original objectives, and has become professionally organised to supply sustainable energy with a fair buy approach. Implementing this vision is feasible, and *ecovision* is sharing its knowledge in the project **Sustainable NOW**.

One project example: the jointly owned PV project (referred to as a citizen solar project – ‘*Bürger-Solar-Projekt*’) is an initiative by the town of Emmendingen’s municipal energy supplier *SWE* and *ecovision*. The project addresses the installation and operation of PV panels on roofs of the town. To finance the project, an investment scheme was developed and a company with limited liability, *SWE Bürgersolarfonds GmbH & Co. KG*, was established. *ecovision* is responsible for planning and monitoring of the project, information dissemination and ongoing management. Today, more than fifty shareholders (individuals, businesses and associations) are benefitting financially from this successful concept. Five PV plants generate around 212,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) of green electricity, leading to a reduction of more than 4,050 tonnes of CO₂ over the next twenty years – a valuable contribution to climate protection. With a peak performance of 220 kilowatt, the jointly owned PV fund will be the most important PV plant operator in Emmendingen.

1.2 Municipality of Miskolc - a ‘Circle of Learning’ partner

Miskolc is the 3rd largest city in Hungary, and acts as a commercial and industrial centre for the North Hungarian Region and Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County. With a population of about 170.000, and covering an area of 237 square kilometres (km²), it stretches out over a long ‘spine’ of more than 27 km. An outstanding environmental feature of the city, which also adds to some governance challenges, is the inclusion of a large part of the city in the Bükk National Park, a nature protection area.



In the 1980s the biggest environmental issues the city faced were related to industrial air pollution and the disposal of waste. In 1991 the city started an active environment protection programme and adopted 14 municipal environmental protection ordinances. Moving on from here Miskolc became a member of ICLEI in 1992, and a local environment fund was developed to help solve environmental problems. In 1998 Miskolc became the second Hungarian city to join ICLEI’s Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Campaign - making a commitment to establish reduction targets, develop action plans and take action to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This year also saw the establishment of a city-wide Environmental Protection Programme.

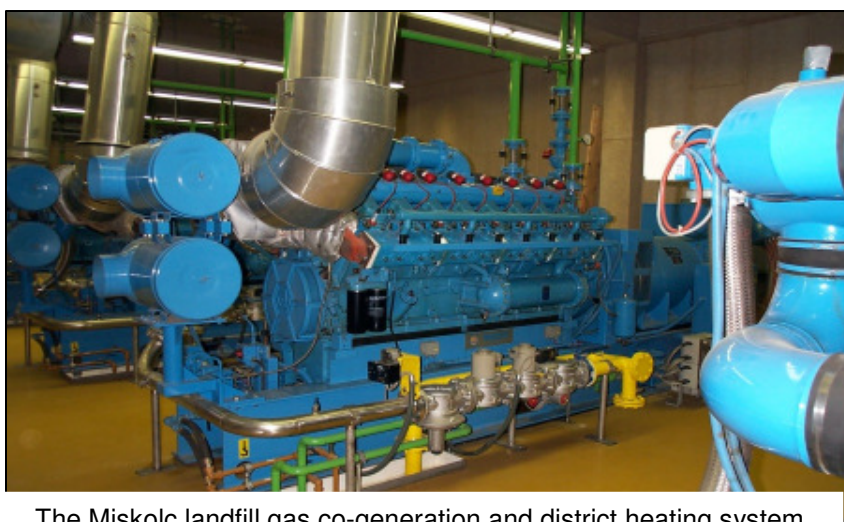
An ‘Energy Concept for Miskolc’ was produced in 2002, and a ‘Climate and Air Quality Protection Action Plan’ in 2005. The latter included information about the quality, controls and monitoring regime, also listing major air pollution sources in the city. The major energy and climate protection issues identified related to the City’s dependence on natural gas as a heating fuel, many energy inefficient (prefabricated) buildings and a poorly performing municipal district heating system that was designed to use waste heat from an iron & steel factory. As the steel factory closed down, the boilers were too large to function efficiently for the total heat-load required by the district heating system. These were clearly areas where action was needed. A positive development in terms of GHG emission reduction resulted from

the reduction in energy intensive industries within the city, due to political changes in Eastern Europe. Total emissions from the city in 2005 were about 30% below 1990 figures.

The development of the 'Energetic Study of Miskolc' in 2006 identified further actions to improve energy efficiency and strengthen the development of renewable energy sources. The objectives and strategies presented in these climate and energy documents indicated that stronger economic, social, cultural, tourism and environmental outcomes were possible – thus also improvement to the quality of life in the city. All of these aspects were brought together in the City's 2008 Integrated City Development Strategy. Meeting these objectives was a prime reason for Miskolc to join the **Sustainable NOW** project as a learning partner.

The City aims to gain ideas and inspiration from good practice energy and sustainability projects implemented by other **Sustainable NOW** partners – also to link to the Eco Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), which was implemented by the City's Department of Architecture and Environmental Protection and the Department of Public Education in 2008.

In 2010, the City and the municipal district heating company issued new Energy-Efficiency Regulations to every municipal institution. Further to this a revised Energy Concept for Miskolc - an energy strategy especially for municipal institutions and companies - is under preparation. The **Sustainable NOW** project will contribute to its development.



The Miskolc landfill gas co-generation and district heating system

Over the last few years the City of Miskolc has implemented many important sustainable energy management measures. This includes the reconstruction of prefabricated buildings; utilisation of biogas from an old landfill, and adding further connections to the district heating system. Recognising that citizen engagement is important, awareness raising campaigns for citizens have included smart ideas and easy tips for energy savings and composting at home, including the introduction of the “Environmental Friendly House”, and “Environmental Friendly Family of Miskolc” awards. Energy efficient public transport projects were implemented, including the “Green Arrow” tram project and renewable energy projects aim at increasing the use of geothermal energy and biomass in the district heating system.

Miskolc is an observer city in the Sustainable Energy Systems in Advanced Cities (SESAC) CONCERTO project, also learning how advanced technologies and measures can be included in local energy planning (www.concerto-sesac.eu). The involvement in these two projects is providing useful information, contact and exchange with peers, and motivation for carrying on in becoming a sustainable energy community.

1.3 Province of Siena – a ‘Circle of Excellence’ partner

The Province of Siena, Italy, joined the **Sustainable NOW** project to share its experience in the field of sustainable energy and climate protection. In addition to supporting capacity development, Siena will also organise an annual Energy Week to inform local citizens.



Provincia di Siena

A major new project that Siena Province has recently initiated is called SIENA CARBON FREE 2015. The goal of this project is to achieve carbon neutrality, and for to achieve their Kyoto Protocol GHG reduction objectives. To reach this goal Siena Province has activated a project for the certification of GHG emissions reduction and sequestering offset actions to achieve a carbon neutral balance. Following a study and analysis of emissions sources, reduction activities were planned and are being implemented.

The methodology for the calculation of the carbon neutral balance is similar to the one approved by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). The sectors investigated include Energy (electricity, oil products, incinerator), industry (industry processes), waste (dump, compost, effluent waters), and Agriculture, Forest, and Land Use (AFOLU) (soil use, agriculture, breeding, forest absorption). The calculation of the carbon neutral balance is based on a large quantity of data that comes from a variety of sources, integrated to provide a “control panel” to monitor the flow of GHGs and to plan environmental policies to achieve the Kyoto goal.

The Siena territory will be the first case in Europe where this carbon neutral balance will be implemented on a big scale – the Province has a surface area of 3.821 km², includes 36 municipalities with 266.000 inhabitants, a forest area of 122.157 hectares and tourist numbers of over 4 million visitors per year.



This project has a positive starting situation: all electrical energy used in the Siense territory is produced from renewable sources (geothermal). Siena Province also has an ISO 14064/1 certified GHG Balance, which will be recalculated every year.

To achieve the goal Siena Province has initiated a range of sustainable energy and renewable energy projects. The most significant initial projects are:

- Incentives for solar and photovoltaic panels
- Incentives for the diagnosis of energy efficiency of real estate within the Municipalities
- Municipalities buildings inventory to assess potential to install renewable energy plants
- Energy management systems
- Energy audits for Provincial buildings
- Photovoltaic plants being installed on Provincial schools
- Vegetable oil on agriculture plants
- Scientific and technologic Pole of renewable energy in Siena Province
- An “energy front office” for local residents is being established in every Municipality
- Safeguard wood fire campaign
- Trees forest implementation
- Controls on thermal plants.

1.4 Climate Alliance – a city network partner

Climate Alliance is an European network of more than 1500 local authorities in 18 countries with the objective of preserving the global climate. By joining, member municipalities have committed themselves to tangible targets, e.g. to cut their CO₂ emissions by 10% every five years and to enter into a partnership with indigenous rainforest peoples.



Since its foundation in 1990, Climate Alliance provides advice to its members on the implementation of local climate change policies / strategies, involving members directly in European projects for concrete implementation of measures - mainly in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable urban planning and transport. The comprehensive methodology developed includes a series of tools, handbooks and guidelines for the elaboration of local climate plans, e.g.: a *catalogue of proposed measures*, a *benchmarking system* for comparing achievements with similar cities, and an *internet-based tool* to prepare a local CO₂ balance. Climate Alliance also develops and runs its own campaigns ready to be implemented in the member municipalities. Examples are the *ZOOM – Kids on the Move* campaign for children on climate change and mobility, the *Ice Block Bet* and the *Cycling City Councillors* campaign.

Climate Alliance is part of the coordination teams for two major EU initiatives: the *European Mobility Week* that promotes sustainable urban transport each year from 16 to 22 September and involves over 2,000 local authorities throughout Europe, as well as the *Covenant of Mayors*. This initiative of the European Commission engages more than 1400 local authorities to take the lead in combating climate change. All Covenant of Mayors signatories make a voluntary commitment to go beyond the EU objectives in terms of CO₂ emissions reductions (www.eumayors.eu). As part of the consortium managing the Covenant of Mayors Office, Climate Alliance is in charge of the Helpdesk, as well as the technical support and monitoring functions.

In **Sustainable NOW**, Climate Alliance shares its experience in drafting and developing local energy action plans with the consortium partners and facilitates the mutual learning / exchange of know-how in the field of sustainable energy.

Its main tasks aim:

- to improve an understanding on local sustainable energy planning and implementation;
- to identify the main challenges, key issues and barriers through peer-to-peer exchanges of experience;
- to facilitate mutual learning via a range of more technical / specialised learning opportunities: a combination of study tours, staff training programmes and specialised workshops on different topics (CO₂ monitoring, financing etc.).



More information is available on www.climatealliance.org.

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2. Focus on Capacity Building

2.1 Greenhouse Gas Monitoring in the Spotlight

Identifying where GHG emissions come from and planning how to reduce them and monitoring the process are major issues of interest to cities and towns alike. Hosted by the City of Munich in late April 2010, a GHG Emissions Monitoring Workshop was organised for **Sustainable NOW** project partners. All the local and provincial governments involved recognise the importance of this topic, and are focusing on getting useful GHG data. Those participants travelling by train managed to beat the 'Iceland volcanic ash-cloud challenge', which resulted in air travel chaos across Europe.

Experts from Climate Alliance and ICLEI Europe addressed why the development of an emissions inventory is an important initial step in the process of implementing a Local Energy Action Plan, also how to establish credible baselines and ensure continuing support for GHG actions from senior officials and Council leaders. Ian Shearer from ICLEI Europe and Miguel Morcillo from Climate Alliance presented and lead discussions, providing practical recommendations on how to collect energy data, and tools and methodologies that could be used, including:

- Climate Alliance's ECORegion Tool - <http://ecospeed.ch>
- ICLEI's GHG inventory spreadsheet and manual. Details on <http://www.iclei-europe.org/ccp>
- International Local Government Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis Protocol – www.iclei.org/ghgprotocol



An additional CO₂ Monitoring Training Workshop will be organised later this year (date and venue - tbc). **Please register your interest with us** – l.blondel@climatealliance.org.

2.2 Munich Study Tour – sustainable energy in action

On 22 April 2010, Gerhard Urbainczyk shared many of the City of Munich excellent examples – including local sustainable energy policies, the development of the local action plan, the implementation of the City's buildings retrofit programme, and financing instruments used to support project implementation.

The tour started with presentations and a visit of the Munich-Riem geothermal district heating plant, which provides heating to around 4,000 households. From here the tour went to the Ackermannbogen estate, developed on a former army barracks area. About 300 households live in low-energy and passive energy houses, with a solar district heating scheme using 3000 m² of roof-top solar thermal collectors, 3000 m² of PV panels on local buildings and a buried 6000 m³ hot water storage facility..



The Munich City energy efficiency information and demonstration centre (Bauzentrum - Bauz) was very informative for the tour participants. It provides detailed information on energy efficient technologies and techniques to citizens of Munich, and is also important for the

training of building related technicians from the Munich area. Energy efficiency advice for citizens is provided at the Bauz through a network of approved architectural, engineering and interior design consultants, who offer the first one-hour consultation for free. The Bauz has demonstration models of energy efficient technologies so the citizens can be shown the concepts of innovative systems. The City insists that the Bauz does not promote any individual consultant or product during the free process, but all people offering their advice are available for later consultations. Examples of similar energy efficiency information services are now being implemented in other European cities.

The tour concluded with a walk through a motorway tunnel control centre to demonstrate the energy efficiency savings available from changes in lighting technology and control techniques. This demonstration was related to one aspect of the City's public lighting, where more than 200,000 lamps and 1,100 sets of traffic lights are in use, and these changes have resulted in substantial savings being made.

2.3 Financial Mechanisms for Local Governments and Sustainable Energy

Co-organised by the Coordinamento Agende 21 Locali Italiane (CA21L) and Banca Popolare Etica at the Terra Firma fair in Florence, Italy on 28 May 2010, a **Sustainable NOW** workshop was organised for Italian partners on financing good practice to support local governments with energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Here the role of private sector financial resources for such projects was also explored.



Presentations on experiences made by the Municipality of Padua, the Province of Modena, the Province of Siena, Lelmi Studio (re. experiences of Municipality of Vicchio), as well as Banca Popolare Etica, Cariplo Foundation, Azzero CO₂, Sinergie S.p.a. and Fortore Agroenergie, provided valuable insights into this important area.



Based on the positive results and the need for more information on this topic, a 2nd Financial Mechanisms Workshop will be offered – only open to **Sustainable NOW** partners in Magione on 6th October 2010. A public report will be released later in the project, with useful information to guide other cities, towns and provinces.

3. News snippets

Reports on financing

Research on financial mechanisms for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects for European local governments is being undertaken by Banca Popolare Etica, as part of the development of material for the financial workshops. This report will be released soon on the **Sustainable NOW** project website.

ICLEI has brought out a financial study 'Cities in a Post-2012 Climate Policy Framework - Climate Financing for City Development? Views from Local Governments, Experts and Businesses' – available for download from <http://www.iclei-europe.org/ccp/tools-and-links>

Towards COP16 – connect!

Cities and towns around the globe are invited to share their climate targets in the City Climate Catalogue. Help us build on the impressive collection! The collective data will be used to call for recognition of the key role played by local governments



www.climate-catalogue.org

in climate protection – with a view to the ongoing international climate negotiations. Is your community a Covenant of Mayors signatory? Then share your data and show your commitment in this great tool and gain visibility at the COP16 in Mexico - www.climate-catalogue.org

Covenant of Mayors going from strength to strength

Nearly reaching the 2,000 mark - cities and towns from all over Europe have signed up to the Covenant of Mayors (CoM). They are assisted by 80 Supporting Structures – networks and sub-national levels of government that are assisting local communities with their concept development and implementation.



Visit the website - easy to navigate, with up-to-date information - www.eumayors.eu. Those communities that have not yet joined the CoM, please consider signing up, or let us know why you cannot do so at this stage through the LG Action project – www.lg-action.eu. We are interested in your views: what is blocking local climate action in your community?



“Local governments are key to meeting renewable energy targets” – YES we know!

A new report produced for Friends of the Earth in the UK by the Sussex University Energy Group confirms that local authorities are key to effectively tackling climate change - and they are best placed to deliver community-scale green electricity schemes that will help us meet renewable energy targets, as well as create jobs and slash fuel bills for people living in the area. However, it is also clear that framework conditions need to be improved, with a wide range of policy reforms and incentives required to boost community scale generation. The full report is available on: http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/transforming_uk_energy.pdf

4. Events list

Open Days – 8th European Week of Regions & Cities Europe 2020

Competitiveness, co-operation and cohesion for all regions

Date: 4 - 7 October, 2010

Place: Brussels, Belgium

Web: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/od2010/index.cfm



Covenant of Mayors Thematic Workshop - new ways of local governance

Date: 6 October, 2010

Place: Brussels, Belgium

Web: <http://www.eumayors.eu>



Local Renewables Conference Freiburg 2010 - Changing fuels or changing patterns?

The role of renewables in sustainable urban mobility

Date: 14 - 15 October, 2010

Place: Freiburg, Germany

Web: <http://www.local-renewables-conference.org/freiburg2010>



European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR)

Place: Europe

Date: 20 - 28 November 2010

Web: <http://www.ewwr.eu>



Sustainable NOW CO₂ Monitoring Training Workshop

Place: tbc

Date: tbc, November 2010

Please register your interest with us – l.blondel@climatealliance.org.



Any questions, comments or information you wish to share?

Please get in touch

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