

## Guiding communities towards sustainable energy – Introducing further partners

Welcome to the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Sustainable **NOW** e-Newsletter! It provides an update on the project **European Sustainable Energy Communities - effective Integrated Local Energy Action today (Sustainable NOW)**. The focus is on sustainable energy communities and integrated management, aimed at local and regional authorities, and their partners working in these fields.

More news and events are also on the project website – [www.sustainable-now.eu](http://www.sustainable-now.eu).

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### 1. Introducing Sustainable NOW Consortium Partners

With 15 partners in Sustainable **NOW**, each playing a unique role in the project, this section focuses on three different consortium partners:

#### 1.1 Trecodome - a Technical Partner

“Towards sustainable levels of greenhouse gas emissions” is the focus of Trecodome. This company provides advice to design teams and cities about low energy buildings and acts as expert partner in other European Commission (EC) supported research and implementation projects. Trecodome is led by Chiel Boonstra, who has a profound understanding of low energy design and the energy performance of buildings and cities. Chiel is also Secretary General of the International Solar Cities Initiative ([www.isci-cities.org](http://www.isci-cities.org)), an independent international body aiming to build a bridge between research and cities to achieve sustainable greenhouse gas emissions in cities throughout the world.

*Right: Example of a passive house standard retrofit for social housing in Kroeven, Roosendaal, The Netherlands (Image by Trecodome)*

The building sector contributes significantly to the global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, typically at some 40% of global emissions. Both new and existing buildings can be made to perform at 80% lower emission levels than currently is the case, by incorporating passive-house (Passivhaus) design principles and applying renewable energy technologies. The Trecodome



focus is embodied in the sentiment: “Sustainable development is development that meets the need for the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland Commission, 1987). The Trecodome objective is to be involved with projects that are designed to help limit greenhouse gas emissions to no more than 2 – 3 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> per capita for every citizen in the world. Energy conservation, renewable energy application, and the creation of just social environments are essential for the creation of a sustainable society.

Chiel Boonstra – Trecodome, Roosendaal, NL

For more information see [www.trecodome.com](http://www.trecodome.com) or contact: [chiel.boonstra@trecodome.com](mailto:chiel.boonstra@trecodome.com)

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## 1.2 Rosignano Marittimo - a ‘Circle of Learning’ Partner



The Municipality of Rosignano Marittimo joined the project as a “learning partner”, although it has been active on a wide range of activities as part of their commitment to develop and implement a sustainable energy action plan (SEAP). A few examples of recent actions are described below.

### **Sustainability in a redeveloped industrial area**

An industrial area, called “Le Morelline” is being redeveloped and the Municipality has taken the strategic position to include sustainable development aspects. These include:

- The establishment of a new centre for the collection and separation of municipal solid waste, as this area is close to the city and it will help to minimize waste transport.
- A hierarchy of traffic flow will include pedestrian and bicycle paths to improve safety and enhance mobility options and the use of environmentally friendly means of transport.
- A new local network for rainwater control
- Planting of native plant species that are the basis of the autochthon trees (petrified trees), helping to improve access to green areas for citizens and contribute to a reduction of visual impacts, noise and emissions.
- This is further enhanced by the installation of equipment for citizen outdoor enjoyment (seats, tables etc), and facilities for bike parking.



### **Public transport and bike sharing project**

There is a major proposal to reorganise the urban public transport system to improve the connections between the municipality and the surrounding territory. The provision of bike-sharing within the City of Rosignano Marittimo has been identified as one tool to help promote sustainable mobility and reduce private motor vehicle traffic. The bike-sharing element will ‘extend’ the public transport service to help cover the “last mile” - the distance that separates a transport stop from a final destination. It will improve flexibility of routes and timetables and encourage exchanges between different modes of transport. The location of bike-share facilities is at strategic intersections of rail and other public transport (the bus-way) and private vehicle car parks.

The Municipality has promoted the use of bicycles since 1987, and has created bike paths to form a network connecting the various places of interest including Rosignano Solvay (factory, sanitary district, theatre, village school), and tourist destinations such as Mazzanta and Vada to allow tourists and residents to reach camping areas and beaches on the coast.

### Enhancing sustainable energy education

Rosignano Municipality is continuing to give children at local schools information and training on important sustainability issues including climate change, renewable energy and energy efficiency. They work with the Energy Agency of Livorno Province to provide energy and environmental education to raise awareness of young citizens and their parents.



Activities vary depending on the age of pupils and range from showing the youngest how to “make a change” of their energy behaviour at home and at school. They learn how to read the energy meter at home and monitor consumption, using the energy bill for their family every 2 months. This helps to form a baseline for measuring impacts from their future actions. The children are then taught how to save energy at home: “zero” or “low” cost measures that they can do with their parents and brothers and sisters. They compare the results of their actions with their baseline and work out how much energy (kWh) they have saved, the size of the cost savings for their family, and how many kg of CO<sub>2</sub> they have avoided putting into the atmosphere.

They also invite their grandparents to a class to compare the two generations in terms of energy behaviour and consumption. The answers to questions such as “how did you light your home”; “how did you keep food fresh”; “how did you heat your home”; and “how did you travel to school” impresses the young children - who tend to take for granted all the things they do with energy.

Other students are reviewing the energy consumption of their school, to identify good behaviour that people can practice, and will provide “energy saving messages” all over the school areas. An energy day at school allows the students who took part in this project to make presentations to parents, other students and teachers. We hope that these children will grow up and pay attention to energy consumption and reduce use of fossil fuels for the good of the planet. More results will be published at the end of the school year.

### 1.3 CA21L as City Network Partner

The Italian Local Agenda 21 Association (CA21L) is a voluntary national association of more than 400 Local Governments that have the promotion of Agenda 21 processes and the diffusion of the principles and the realisation of actions for sustainable development at heart, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects.

The mission of the Association is to:

- facilitate the exchange of best practices of the associates
- spread the knowledge and practice of these actions
- favour new projects
- promote the growth of the technical and operative skills of the local administrations
- act within the government and other national and European institutions to promote policies inspired by the principles of sustainability.



Local Action 21, as defined at the *World Summit on Sustainable Development* in Johannesburg in 2002, is the natural evolution of Agenda 21. It is necessary to develop

projects, concrete and effective, which follow as closely as possible the principles, the commitments and the Action Plans.

The activities of the Association are therefore strongly oriented in the direction of awareness-raising and promotion aimed at the many municipalities and territories where implementation of the sustainable development process has not started. CA21L activities are also aimed at supporting the implementation of concrete actions through the diffusion of best experiences and actively contributing to participation in projects in partnership with other European local authorities.

Thus it is easy to understand CA21L interest in the project **Sustainable NOW**, which has the main aim is to support local governments in their transition towards sustainable energy communities by means of an effective integrated local energy action.

It is from cities that 75% of climate-altering emissions are produced, and in which more than 80% of the population lives, and where the effects of climate change are strongly felt. It is local governments, together with our regions and national government, must become key players in the implementation of actions for the mitigation of climate change and adaptation to the inevitable impacts.

This is the reason why CA21L, together with the Italian national associations of Cities and Provinces, have developed [The Charter and the Commitments for the Climate](#) which is a reference document for territorial policies from urban planning to mobility, and from energy planning to eco-efficient and sustainable management of public buildings. There are many actions that each Local Authority can implement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to increase the social, environmental and economic equilibrium of the territory.

The Plan for the Climate, envisaged in the Charter, will be the fundamental planning document for the coordination of such policies. The Plan will be divided into two parts. The first part follows the directions of the European Union Covenant of Mayors and deals with the measurement of the emissions and plans for mitigation actions. The second part deals with the coordination, planning and implementation of actions for adaptation to the local level negative effects including floods, landslides, extended periods of drought, new illnesses, migration of populations and loss of biodiversity. The Plan for the Climate is not a new tool – it is a restatement of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment of the European Union, and CA21L is offering coordination of the resultant actions.

The main CA21L contribution to Sustainable **NOW** is to make the project results widely available, especially in Italy, through its communication tools and ad hoc initiatives. CA21L will form a hub and continuum for dissemination and support to Local Governments. CA21L also acts as an advocate for Sustainable **NOW** and the Plan for Climate in their promotion to national and regional bodies.

For more information: [www.a21italy.it](http://www.a21italy.it) and [kaulard.a@provincia.modena.it](mailto:kaulard.a@provincia.modena.it)

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## 2. Financial mechanisms for city climate projects

Banca Popolare Etica, a technical partner in the **Sustainable NOW** project, is the first financial institution in Italy to base its investments on the principles of ethical finance. It has a wide experience in financing projects for sustainable energy – and is associated with the European Federation of Ethical and Alternative Banks (FEBEA), with the purpose to provide the necessary tools for the development of socially and environmentally responsible banks and financial structures.

Local governments are able to access a wide range of tools to cover financial needs for projects in the field of sustainable energy. These tools vary according to the funding agency and the kind of mechanism.

At the European level, the European Investment Bank (EIB) (<http://www.eib.org>) is the main proponent of two specific financial initiatives: the European Local Energy Assistance (ELENA) [http://www.eib.org/products/technical\\_assistance/elena/index.htm](http://www.eib.org/products/technical_assistance/elena/index.htm) and the Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions (JASPERS) <http://www.jaspers-europa-info.org>. Using ELENA Funds, a total of 15 million Euro for up to 90% of the technical costs can be covered. JASPERS can be used to assist Member States prepare relevant projects to present to the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund for funding. The focus of JASPERS is large projects in the environmental field, costing more than 25 million Euro.

The Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) programme <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent> is one of three programs in the wider Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) of the Directorate General for Energy and Transport of the European Commission. The IEE funds projects directly, through periodic autonomous "Call for proposals". Finally, still within IEE programme, there is Sustainable Energy Europe (SEE) <http://www.sustenergy.org> which is a permanent campaign aimed at increasing public awareness and promoting the production and use of sustainable energy.

In most countries there are three forms of support available to public bodies that are generally very similar and widespread across EU: this support is in the form of grants, medium and long-term loans, and incentives like the feed-in tariff.

Many initiatives are supported through policies at a local level, often with financial support from higher levels, for example, from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/funds/feder/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funds/feder/index_en.htm). If local authorities adopt specific urban development plans, interventions and actions can be supported through the instrument Joint European Support for Sustainable Investments in City Areas (JESSICA) [http://www.eib.org/products/technical\\_assistance/jessica](http://www.eib.org/products/technical_assistance/jessica), which is promoted by the EIB and the Development Bank of the Council of Europe (CEB).

Another source for financing contributions is the private sector. Many banks offer special loans reserved for local institutions, which provide conditions suitable to their specific needs. Lenders frequently work in partnership with local authorities, building and developing together suitable projects to be financed through Project Financing activities.

Another option available for public bodies is third party financing. This generally consists of establishing and/or using the services offered by an Energy Service Company (ESCO) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy\\_service\\_company](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_service_company). There are many examples, for example the public body maintains some form of control but is relieved from duties related to the implementation of projects. By acting through such a private company, the public body can avoid operational constraints.

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### **3. Data challenges for cities developing an emissions inventory**

The project partners have discussed the main challenges they face with greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions monitoring. The dominant issue that arises is the difficulty in finding data related to the consumption of energy by the whole community.

Most local governments are able to collect accurate and comprehensive energy consumption data related to their own facilities. However, it is much more challenging to gather data from

buildings not owned or managed by the municipality. **Sustainable NOW** partners have reported the difficulties in obtaining suitable data from energy suppliers and grid operators.

Since the liberalisation of gas and electricity markets throughout Europe, the supply of energy consumption data has become a commercially sensitive issue. The number of potential energy suppliers in each community has increased, and many suppliers are reluctant to provide consumption data for confidentiality, commercial secrecy, or administrative burden reasons. Valuable data may be available at regional or national level from statistics, energy, environmental, or economic ministries or agencies, or from regulatory authorities for the gas and electricity industries.

Within the **Sustainable NOW** project, advice on data collection issues was provided by COE partners, and the city-network experts during peer-to-peer exchanges and the CO<sub>2</sub> Monitoring Workshops that took place in Munich (April 2010) and Freiburg (February 2011). Climate Alliance and ICLEI Europe provided practical recommendations on how to collect energy data, and presented tools & methodologies for compiling a reliable GHG inventory. The tools presented included the Climate Alliance's ECORegion Tool and ICLEI's CCP Europe GHG Inventory tool. The methodological issues included in the International Local Government Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis Protocol (IEAP) were also discussed.

**More information:** [ECORegion Tool](#), [CCP Europe GHG Inventory Tool](#), [LG Protocol IEAP](#)

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#### 4. Sustainable NOW events

Event name: **Sustainable NOW final conference:  
Congress "Local and regional energy concepts" / Kongress "Kommunale und  
Regionale Energiekonzepte"**  
*(German-English simultaneous translation)*  
Date: 30 June 2011, 10:30 to 16:30  
Place: Filmakademie (Film Academy), Ludwigsburg, Germany  
Web: <http://www.sustainable-now.eu>

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#### 5. Other Events (to October 2011)

Event name: **ICLEI European Convention 2011  
- "Cities in Europe 2020 - Enhance sustainability now!"**  
Date: 12 - 14 September 2011  
Place: Brussels, Belgium  
Web: <http://convention2011.iclei-europe.org/>



Event name: **Local Renewables 2011: Green Buildings and Renewable Energy**  
Date: 27 – 28 October 2011  
Place: Freiburg (Germany)  
Web: <http://www.local-renewables-conference.org/freiburg2011>



Event name: **IEE co-funded MAKE-IT-BE final conference:  
bio-energy guidance and tools for bio-energy regional partnerships**  
Date: 5 October 2011  
Place: Brussels, Belgium  
Web: <http://www.makeitbe.eu/events>



## 6. News snippets



### **Covenant of Mayors success keeps increasing**

More than 2,700 cities and towns have now signed up to the Covenant of Mayors, supported by 57 Covenant Supporters (networks) and 82 Covenant Coordinators (different government levels and national energy agencies).

Feel free to contact ICLEI Europe, Climate Alliance and CA21L – three Covenant Supporters, for details on the type of support they offer, or visit the website [www.eumayors.eu](http://www.eumayors.eu) to get up-to-date information about the CoM initiative.

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### **Launch of Toolbox – resources on local climate and energy action**

A new online Toolbox was launched during the European Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW) in April 2011. It was created to capture methodologies and tools that are relevant to local climate and energy actions – for local governments and organisations that are assisting them with sustainable energy planning and action.



Many different types of resources in multiple languages are collected.

- Search for tools you need
- Support the collection of material
- Evaluate available resources!

The Toolbox is available on [www.energyformayors.eu/toolbox](http://www.energyformayors.eu/toolbox). It has been created as part of the ENERGY for MAYORS project, co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe programme.

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### **Funding opportunity - LIFE + 2011 Call for Proposal**

Interested local governments have until 18 July 2011 to apply for the LIFE+ call for proposals by sending project proposals to the relevant national authorities. To be eligible, proposals must fall under one of the LIFE programme's three components: LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity, LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance, and LIFE+ Information and Communication. The deadline for submission is the 18/07/2011.

More details on: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm>

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### **For any questions, comments or information on events, please get in touch with us:**

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