

# Rovigo Outreach

**“Small and medium sized communities are called on to vigorously engage in climate protection, and build on Local Renewables best practice. It is time for radical change.”**

**This is the main message from the European Climate Conference  
“Climate protection and Renewable Energy: Medium and Small Communities facing the challenge”  
Rovigo, Italy, 2 - 4 April 2008**

## **COMMUNITIES – MITIGATION & ADAPTATION – MOVEMENT**

Since 1993 local climate protection in Europe and internationally has been developing, with actions primarily on mitigation, now expanded to include adaptation. Action in both areas is required, in particular in Europe where 80% of the population lives in cities, and up to 80% of the energy is consumed. Local governments, as the governance level closest to citizens, must take the lead in climate protection. To address this important issue, a series of ICLEI Climate Conferences have sent several clear, strong messages over the past few years:

In May 2006 – the Stockholm Climate Conference sent a clear message that ambitious cities lead the way in mitigation and adaptation, by **setting ambitious targets and consistently working towards these**.

The central position from the Local Renewables Freiburg Conference held in June 2007 was that **local action is essential**, and that **100% sustainable energy is a reality** in model communities.

Now in April 2008 in Rovigo we **build on local successes in mitigation and adaptation**. A radical change in the management of our cities and communities, our resources and decision-making, is needed for effective climate protection.

## **REPLICATE GOOD PRACTICE, BUILD ON ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Rovigo Climate Conference focuses on climate change and renewable energy. It takes place within the framework of ICLEI's **Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Campaign**, and is also linked to the **Local Agenda 21** and **Local Renewables Initiative** that focuses on sustainable energy implementation at a community level, through:

- **Policy and strategy** – effective local policies have emerged, commit and move to wide-scale roll-out
- **Implementation, technology and measures** – build on excellence, transfer knowledge, release financing
- **Community involvement, people and lifestyle changes** – redefine quality of life

A central element of the Rovigo Conference is the **transfer of good practice and know-how** from experienced and successful communities to other communities interested in starting up or learning more about climate protection at a community level. The diverse examples have helped to build capacity through city/town peer-to-peer exchange and expert support, addressing:

- **Climate protection**: Local action plans and targets – how to develop and implement these
- **Energy conservation and energy efficiency**: Strategies, procedures, tools, local rules and regulations that lead to energy savings, and a more efficient use of local resources
- **Renewable energy**: Special focus on solar energy and biomass – local framework conditions to promote the use of renewable energy sources for electricity, heating and cooling
- **Urban and land use planning**: Special focus on instruments and policies to support planning procedures oriented to climate change and local energy production
- **Engagement of citizens and local stakeholders**: Motivate for change towards more sustainable energy use
- **Adaptation to climate change**: Strategies to improve local resilience and the capacity of communities to adapt.

## A PROCESS AND FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

This Conference feeds into European climate and energy discussions through ICLEI's network, which includes the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, the European Presidency, the European Commission and the cities, towns and local government associations that form ICLEI's membership network. The event also feeds into the new **Local Climate Roadmap**<sup>1</sup> process.

Linked to this process, and one of the major outcomes of the Bali Conference on Climate Change, was the launch of a **World Mayors and Local Governments Climate Protection Agreement**<sup>2</sup> to collectively achieve the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions required to avoid catastrophic impacts from climate change. Further the European Commission launched the **European Covenant of Mayors**, which is supported by ICLEI as a cornerstone in the EU Local Government positioning on climate change.

### A Call for Engagement

Participants and organisers of the Rovigo Climate Conference calls on all cities and towns – in particular small and medium communities – to vigorously engage in climate protection action, and keep global warming below 2 degrees C.

We invite all European local governments to link up to existing frameworks created to support action, such as the Local Climate Roadmap and ICLEI's Cities for Climate Protection Campaign.

We call upon all European cities and towns to actively endorse the Covenant of Mayors, to achieve a critical mass of motivated cities active in climate protection that will move beyond EU targets on greenhouse gas emission reductions.

We call upon all European local governments to undertake a radical change in local energy production, distribution and consumption, to become climate neutral communities. The transition to a sustainable energy future means implementing Local Renewables.

#### EIGHT ARGUMENTS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY LEADERS TO USE LOCAL RENEWABLES<sup>3</sup>:

- (1) Renewable energy (RE) sources are available locally, with RE technologies *ready for use* today.
- (2) The use of local resources to produce energy locally ensures a decentralised *secure energy supply*, making communities more resilient and less dependent on imported fossil fuels.
- (3) Switching to Local Renewables bring *financial benefits* – saving money and generating an income over the short to long-term.
- (4) It creates jobs and *stimulates the local economy*.
- (5) Local Renewables give an impulse to *urban development* and encourage technical and social innovation in communities.
- (6) Moving away from fossil fuels, towards Local Renewables, will *reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions* and support climate protection.
- (7) Local action is critical in *achieving targets* – national, regional and international - on sustainable energy and climate protection.
- (8) The local community is key to reaching and *involving various stakeholders*, including citizens, business, industry, local researchers, NGOs, etc.. – a driving force for innovation and change towards sustainable energy.

**Local Renewables –**  
Combining renewable energy sources (RES), energy efficiency (EE) measures and energy conservation at a local level.

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<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali, Indonesia, 3 to 14 Dec. 2007 ([www.iclei.org/bali2007](http://www.iclei.org/bali2007)) determined a roadmap for nations towards a post-Kyoto framework on climate change for the period after 2012 which is to be worked out at COP-14 in Poznan (Poland) in 2008 and should generally be agreed at COP-15 in Copenhagen (Denmark) in 2009.

<sup>2</sup> [www.globalclimateagreement.org](http://www.globalclimateagreement.org)

<sup>3</sup> The arguments are a result from the Local Renewables Freiburg Conference held in June 2007