



EUROPEAN CIRCULAR

Newsletter for

ICLEI members, partners and friends

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Cities and water – the issues at stake

As long as it flows from the tap, water is rarely high on the political agenda. Until recently, inhabitants in most European cities had little reason for concern – and local decision-makers few incentives to treat water as a priority.



A changing environment for water management

However, this is no longer the case. Urban water systems across Europe are struggling to cope with changing conditions and increasing pressures. Urban expansion, more water-intensive lifestyles, a rising demand from all sectors and deteriorating infrastructure have raised the bar for those responsible for water systems and services. New legislation, such as the European Union Water Framework Directive, is also challenging cities to comply with stricter water quality standards. Combined with the prospect of a changing climate and concerns over excessive carbon emissions from the water sector it becomes obvious that traditional approaches to water management are no longer enough.

Significant impacts at urban level

The consequences of poor decisions and inaction are taking their toll. Since 1998, floods in Europe have caused some 700 deaths, the displacement of about half a million people and at least €25 billion in insured economic losses. Thousands of European cities and towns have been affected by loss of property and the disruption of services. At the same time, a growing number of cities are faced with

dwindling resources. The ad-hoc measures that cities often implement, such as hosepipe bans in London in 2006 and water transfers from other regions to top up diminished local supplies in Barcelona in 2008, are only a quick fix for overcoming emergency situations.

How ICLEI members have responded

Many of ICLEI's member cities, whether big or small, have already begun to counteract these problems. The Mayor of **London**, (United Kingdom) for example, is promoting a comprehensive water strategy aimed at improved leakage control and water conservation.

Barcelona (Spain) implemented measures that succeeded in cutting domestic demand by over 15 percent in eight years, while **Rotterdam** (Netherlands) is turning the threat of sea level rise into an opportunity to make the city more attractive and competitive by redefining how water interacts with urban planning and design.

Further north, **Hämeenlinna** in Finland has revised their approach to stormwater by developing a multi-disciplinary working process that aims to restore the aquatic eco-balance and control flow waters more naturally, implementing actions based on mobility, energy, consumption and water.

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More sustainable approaches needed

The variety and complexity of current and future water issues call for a holistic approach. Integrated and cyclical sustainability management, as advocated by ICLEI, will have to pay more attention to the role of water in urban development. By participating in initiatives such as the SWITCH project and the Istanbul Water Consensus, ICLEI works with cities in Europe and worldwide to improve urban water management and become more prepared for the challenges ahead.



The Local and Regional Authorities' Days at the Fifth World Water Forum in 2009

Strengthening the role of local governments in water management

The Fifth World Water Forum in Istanbul in March 2009, and the launch of a global initiative centred around the political document of the Istanbul Water Consensus provided a major opportunity for ICLEI to contribute to an increased recognition of the role of local government in sustainable water management. So far, the following European ICLEI members have signed up to the Consensus and thus committed themselves to improving water management in their cities: **Koprivnica** (Croatia), **Berlin** (Germany), **Rotterdam** (The Netherlands), **Alcoi**, **Barcelona** and **Zaragoza** (Spain).

Training Kit for water managers of the 'City of the Future' in preparation

In coordination with the 30 plus partners taking part in the SWITCH project, the ICLEI European Secretariat and International Training Centre are currently developing a series of training modules on strategic planning and implementation options for more sustainable urban water management. The materials will be particularly useful for local governments and water utilities. They will be available for download free of charge from the SWITCH Training Desk from summer 2010 onwards.



'SWITCH – Managing Water for the City of the Future' is working in 13 cities worldwide, including ICLEI members **Zaragoza**, **Birmingham** and **Hamburg**, to investigate and promote sustainable urban water systems through action research and multi-stakeholder Learning Alliances. SWITCH encourages a holistic approach to water management in cities by looking at the urban water cycle as a whole, which is essential to advance the sustainable management of water in an increasingly uncertain future.

SWITCH in Zaragoza, Spain

In response to its limited water resources, the City of Zaragoza made a commitment to reduce water consumption through domestic water conservation measures and the reduction of wastage from the city's supply distribution network. SWITCH activities focus on a pilot neighbourhood in the city where water demand management studies are analysing network leakages, household consumption and the potential of water supply tariffs.



SWITCH in Birmingham, UK

Faced with a growing population, urban expansion and increasing incidents of flooding, Birmingham set up a local Learning Alliance to develop a new vision and strategy for urban water management. SWITCH research in Birmingham is concentrating on the subjects of green roofs and groundwater pollution.



Water in focus at up-coming 'Breakfast at Sustainability's' in Brussels

Provisional timing: June 2010

Inspiring stories on urban water management can be found in many places: but is this enough to cope with increasing pressures? Can cities in Europe afford to do business as usual while future scenarios suggest that the water cycle might undergo radical changes?

Are the right water investments being made considering that population development and economic parameters no longer match the assumptions for which our water systems were designed decades ago?

The ICLEI Brussels Office will address such issues at one of its morning meetings that form part of the series 'Breakfast at Sustainability's'.

For more information, contact: peter.defranceschi@iclei.org.



SWITCH in Hamburg, Germany

Hamburg promotes 'Water Sensitive Urban Design' that aims to combine innovative water management with the planning and development of attractive urban landscapes. SWITCH activities in Hamburg focus on the river island of Wilhelmsburg, where local stakeholders developed a vision for integrating water into urban regeneration to protect against flooding and improve the amenity of the landscape.

Climate change makes sustainable solutions more urgent

Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of extreme weather conditions making water-scarce regions in Southern Europe even drier and increasing heavy rainfall in the wetter regions of the North. Cities are vulnerable to such changes in weather patterns because their infrastructure, governance arrangements and management set-ups are all based on historical records that do not apply any more.

Heavier rainfall will therefore result in more floods and where drought is intensified, local water supplies will struggle to meet demand. Reactive and fragmented measures are no longer enough. More coordination between local government, water authorities and all institutions responsible for water is required, as is more flexibility and adaptability in management to ensure sustainable services in the future.

European ICLEI Water Programme in preparation

ICLEI will continue to assist cities in upscaling their water policies and practices so that they can meet both the challenges of today and tomorrow. The European Secretariat has started to develop a broader programme with and for cities across Europe in order to pool expertise, strengthen the exchange and application of good practice and foster leadership in sustainable urban water management. ICLEI welcomes the thoughts and ideas of all members and friends on this issue as it strives to ensure water is recognised as an essential resource.

For more information: <http://www.switchurbanwater.eu> • <http://www.worldwaterforum5.org/index.php?id=2126&L=0%22%20>
or contact: barbara.anton@iclei.org.



Participants at a SWITCH pilot training workshop in Dublin, December 2009

ICLEI NEWS

Carbon cuts start at home for London

Image: cc rafiorres



London City Hall provides converts light into electricity with no waste and no emissions

ICLEI member city London (United Kingdom) is rolling out a new scheme to reduce carbon emissions from public sector buildings.

By facilitating sustainable procurement and tendering, while at the same time making funding more easily accessible, London aims to reduce both the public spending and the city's impact on the environment. Buildings are the source of around one third of England's carbon emissions and play a huge role in London's fight against climate change.

London, Boris Johnson, said: "With a third of carbon emissions coming from our buildings, giving them a green makeover is supremely good for the planet and for the public purse".

Currently 42 public sector buildings have taken advantage of the scheme, and it is estimated that if every public sector building took part, approximately £500 million could be saved. The Mayor of

For more information, visit: <http://www.london.gov.uk/server.php?show=ConWebDoc.3513>.

Bologna sets the standard for sustainable mobility in Italy

ICLEI member and CIVITAS city Bologna (Italy), has emerged as the most eco-friendly and environmentally sustainable from a study of the urban mobility practices of the fifty most populated cities in Italy. This was the conclusion of the report, *Sustainable Mobility in Italy: An examination of the 50 principal cities*, published by Euromobility and Kyotoclub, and supported by the Italian Department of Natural Resources.

Researchers took municipal innovations, such as car and bicycle sharing, public transport and cycle path availability, traffic planning and the use of alternative fuels for vehicles into account. Bologna stood out for its efficient public transport service, its progressive urban mobility management practices, considerable reductions made in pollution and the number of high-emissions vehicles on the city's roads. Bologna came out ahead of Florence, Parma, Trento and ICLEI member Milan.

For more information, visit: http://www.euromobility.org/documenti/atti_di_convegna/2009_50_citt%C3%A0/index.html.

Malmö recognised for its local solutions on sustainability

The City of Malmö (Sweden) an ICLEI Member since 1998, won the prestigious Scroll of Honour Award from the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) for its innovative approach to becoming a 21st century eco-city.

A leading signatory of the European Union's Covenant of Mayors on greenhouse reductions, the city took the chance to start over after being hit by recession in the 1980s. It created eco-friendly neighbourhoods, many of which now run solely on renewable energy, including wind and solar. The city is also investing in centres of learning on urban sustainability and plans to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 25 percent between 2008 and 2012, well above the Kyoto Protocol's target of 5 percent.



Solar power is one of the many renewable energies utilised in Malmö's eco-friendly neighbourhoods

For more information, visit: <http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=588&cid=7291#Sweden>.

Aalborg's sustainable waste management reverses greenhouse trend

Research from ICLEI member city Aalborg (Denmark) found that cities can progress from consuming energy and emitting greenhouse gases (GHG) to actually producing energy, all through sustainable waste management.

The research was published in *Waste Management & Research* and showed that the energy produced can also save on GHG emissions. Between 1970 and 2005, Aalborg changed its waste treatment strategy to include organic waste incineration for heat and power production, wastewater treatment, as well as composting, transport, and land application of treated waste. Altogether these new processes created net energy production and GHG turnover.

Researchers calculate that the energy potential tied up in municipal organic waste in Denmark is equivalent to 5 percent of the country's total energy consumption, including transport. Within the European Union municipal waste management has already reduced GHG emissions significantly, and according to current predictions, between 2012 and 2020 it will become a net saver of these emissions.

For more information, visit: http://www.eurekaalert.org/pub_releases/2009-11/spu-dec112609.php.



ICLEI World Congress 2009 report now available

Find out more about how 600 delegates from 51 countries came together to drive rapid action and find radical solutions.

To download the report, visit: <http://www.iclei.org/worldcongress2009> or contact: publications@iclei.org.



New staff at the European Secretariat

The Urban Governance and Sustainability Management team has two new Project Officers. **Daniel Morchain** has an academic background in Economics, Latin American Studies and Environmental Management and Policy. Prior to joining ICLEI he worked in energy and renewable energy projects in Spain and in his native Venezuela. Contact: daniel.morchain@iclei.org.

Hannah Kegel has also joined the team. She has a background in agricultural economics and rural sociology and worked in development aid, mainly in the Former Soviet Union. She was also an elected member of a German local council. Contact: hannah.kegel@iclei.org.

The Sustainable Procurement team also welcomes two new members. Project Assistant **Franziska Singer** previously worked in the field of development in Guatemala, Indonesia and Australia. She will work on projects in the Sustainable Procurement team such as Procura+, the SCI-Network on examining links between sustainable construction and procurement, and Sustainable Procurement trainings for German cities. Contact: franziska.singer@iclei.org.

Abby Semple joins the team in the role of Project Officer. Abby will be working on a range of projects including the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Public Procurement and the SCI Network. Her background is as a public procurement consultant in Ireland, where she worked with a number of central and local government authorities. Contact: abby.semple@iclei.org.

The International Training Centre welcomes **Joseph Wladkowski** as a Project Assistant. Joe received his M.Sc. in Environmental Governance from the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität in Freiburg. He works on projects related to Local Renewables, including the GTZ-funded Model Communities Network project, the conference series and the Local Renewables web portal. Contact: joseph.wladkowski@iclei.org.

DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE CITIES: THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

6th European Sustainable Cities and Towns Conference 19-21 May 2010, Dunkerque, France

The Dunkerque 2010 Sustainable Cities and Towns Conference will explore how sustainable development can help local governments to face the current economic, social and climate challenges. The conference also seeks to identify how sustainable development can be further implemented in the actual context of the crisis. Key actors in the field will gather in the French city to identify what changes to our political frameworks are needed and to explore how different sectors can cooperate to advance sustainable development in Europe. The event is the largest conference in Europe to address climate change following COP15 in 2009, and offers a unique opportunity for local governments to position themselves as willing partners in leading and cooperating on emission reductions and innovative solutions.



Dunkerque's busy harbour

The programme: Quality, variety and relevance

The conference, organised by the Metropolitan Council of Dunkerque and ICLEI Europe, brings together the expertise of numerous European and national networks of local governments and several partner organisations, including the private sector. These groups will gather in a joint effort to reach out to local governments all over Europe and present the latest and most innovative solutions.



The coastal city of Dunkerque

The largest networking event and a milestone for local sustainability in Europe

Dunkerque 2010 follows the series of conferences that has shaped the history of local sustainability in Europe and empowered local governments to influence policies. After the success of past events, from Aalborg 1994 to Sevilla 2007, more than 1,500 representatives from European local governments, local government networks, EU institutions, international organisations, NGOs and businesses are expected to join the event. The concluding highlight of Dunkerque 2010 will be a political message delivered to Europe and the world, on climate and the wider local sustainability agenda.

Take part in the conference and share your experiences

We invite you to present your local sustainability initiatives in the Agora. The Agora - a place of assembly and exchange - will offer a structured space for participants to meet, discuss and present their local initiatives during the three days of the conference. Presentation places are limited. Visit the programme section of the conference website for information on the application procedure.

For more information, visit: <http://www.dunkerque2010.org> or contact: secretariat@dunkerque2010.org.

Sustainable Development in Dunkerque

For the last 15 years, the Metropolitan Council of Dunkerque has combined two ambitious goals: remaining one of the leading industrial and port areas of Europe and engaging in sustainable development. It seeks to maintain and reinforce the pillars of its economy, all the while increasing its efforts to be innovative in the social and environmental spheres. Beyond local cooperation, Dunkerque connects and cooperates with European and world-wide local governments in order to achieve this goal.



SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

SCI-Network on sustainable construction and innovation launched

ICLEI Europe has launched the Sustainable Construction and Innovation Network (SCI-Network) to help public authorities implement new, sustainable solutions in public construction projects across Europe.

The network brings together a committed group of public authorities active in sustainable construction, along with other key stakeholders in the construction sector. ICLEI Europe is currently inviting interested public authorities to actively participate in the network, to share their own experiences and benefit from the expertise of others. The focus of the network will be experience exchange and idea sharing between the participants. This exchange will be based on their current construction needs and interests, with the assistance of sustainable construction experts. The network will also promote active engagement with private sector actors.

Working groups will be set up to work on a number of topic areas, according to the needs of the participants – these could include, for example, energy efficient retrofitting of school buildings, incorporation of renewable energy systems in office buildings or social housing renovation. An interactive online platform will also be set up in the second half of 2010, providing access to useful information from across Europe, as well as the opportunity to join online discussion groups.

For more information, contact: simon.clement@iclei.org.



Sustainable buildings can produce renewable energy while cutting CO₂ emissions

Innovation through sustainable procurement – SMART SPP guidance and tools available for testing



A guidance document on driving energy efficient innovation through procurement, together with a tool for calculating both life-cycle costs (LCC) and CO₂ emissions in procurement are now available for testing.

The guidance and tool are free to download from the SMART SPP project website, and are available in English, Spanish, Danish and Portuguese. The German version is coming soon.

For more information, visit: <http://www.smart-spp.eu> or contact: philipp.tepper@iclei.org.

Book a training on green public procurement in Germany

Learn about the latest approaches to green public procurement (GPP), such as how to calculate the whole life costs of products, by booking an interactive tailor-made in-house training seminar.

ICLEI Europe and the Ökoinstitut have joined forces to develop, organise and carry out a series of training sessions on GPP. The training sessions are geared towards public authorities in Germany, with a particular focus on procurers working in local and regional government administrations. The goal of the training sessions is to equip public authorities with knowledge on how to practically implement green procurement strategies and promote the approach in their own administration.

For more information, contact: franziska.singer@iclei.org.



Sustainable biofuels: practical step-by-step guide for European purchasers



The end of 2009 saw the release of the *Guide to sustainable biofuels procurement for transport*, published by the Biofuel Cities European Partnership, a neutral platform designed for all stakeholders in the area of biofuels for transport.

This Biofuel Cities guide highlights the current discussion on sustainable biofuels and provides advice on how to overcome challenges related to implementing biofuelled transport. The recommendations for sustainable procurement have been inspired by the experiences of pioneer cities in this field, such as **Stockholm, Rotterdam, Lille and Graz**.

While the topic of biofuels is still being strongly debated by policy makers internationally, particularly in the European Union, sustainable biofuels is a form of alternative fuel, which can help European cities achieve their environmental goals.

Download the guide: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=5604>.

For more information, contact: peter.defranceschi@iclei.org.

CLIMATE AND AIR

City Climate Catalogue a huge success

With more than 3,200 climate commitments from communities around the globe, the Copenhagen Climate Catalogue was a huge success during the UN Climate Change Conference (COP15) in December 2009 in Copenhagen. Cities demonstrated their engagement and countries took note of the ambitious local targets.

Copenhagen Mayor for the Environment, Klaus Bondam and ICLEI President, David Cadman, sent a powerful message when handing over the Catalogue commitments to the Danish Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Lykke Friis. The Catalogue will be used again during the next COP in Mexico and all cities and towns are invited to join this local to global action.



The Danish Government's message at COP15

For more information, visit: <http://www.climate-catalogue.org> or contact: ccp-europe@iclei.org.

Cities calling for improved framework conditions



Mr Zvonimir Mrcic, Mayor, City of Koprivnica, (Croatia) at the LG Action Event

With the largest local government delegation to ever attend a climate COP, political leaders of cities and towns from around the globe, together with network representatives made a huge impact in terms of visibility and sending key messages.

The Local Government Climate LOUNGE provided an ideal platform for the Local Government Climate Roadmap message, an offer of partnership with national governments. During the LG Action session in the LOUNGE; representatives from Central and Eastern European local government networks welcomed new financial tools, such as the ELENA initiative (European Local Energy Assistance), but called for capacity development and updated information on climate impacts and response options.

While financial tools such as ELENA are needed, capacity development and updated information on climate impacts and response options are vital. “Covenant of Mayors Supporting Structures play a crucial role to provide support and expertise,” explained Mariana Kancheva, Executive Director of the Union of Bulgarian Black Sea Local Authorities.

ICLEI Europe is in the process of becoming a Supporting Structure and will provide a range of technical and strategic services to its members and other municipalities requiring assistance.

For more information, visit: <http://www.lg-action.eu> • <http://www.eib.org/elena> • <http://www.eumayors.eu> or contact: lg-action@iclei.org.

ICLEI proudly presents local climate and energy cases

In December 2009, just prior to COP15, ICLEI Europe joined the Copenhagen Climate Exchange – an exhibition and workshop series highlighting work done by civil society and networks in the field of climate protection.

At the Local Climate Action Exhibition, ICLEI proudly presented a number of cases illustrating effective climate protection and sustainable energy actions in communities involved in the Local Renewables Initiative (LRI) and the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Campaign.

City displays included **Bhubaneswar, Nagpur, Coimbatore** (India), **Porto Alegre, Betim** (Brazil); **Freiburg** (Germany); as well as **Malmö** and **Växjö** (Sweden). A group of energy experts from developed and developing countries discussed progress in their cities on the Sustainable Energy Panel. The updates included political and technical challenges, and ways to accelerate sustainable energy rollout in communities. ICLEI President, David Cadman, spoke to a packed house, calling for more ambitious targets and action: “There will be no tomorrow if we don’t act today”. All eyes are now on national governments to develop an international, comprehensive and inclusive climate agreement.



ICLEI President David Cadman with new European Commissioner for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard

For more information, visit: <http://www.local-renewables.org>.

For more information on the European CCP Campaign, visit: <http://www.iclei.org/europe/ccp>.

Decoupling emissions from economic growth – the way forward



Technology explained during the Växjö study tour

One of the most prominent global examples of effective climate action is Växjö, (Sweden) a CCP participant and a partner in the SESAC project, which aims to accelerate innovation in renewable energy solutions. The city has already reduced its CO₂ emissions by 32 percent per capita since 1993, yet has also shown a solid trend in economic growth – proof that these are not mutually exclusive areas for sustainable development.

This trend is closely linked to the renewable energy transition, with more than 50 percent of all energy used coming from renewables. During a Local Renewables study tour to Växjö delegates from Europe and Asia had the opportunity to learn more about the use of bio-energy: the Sundet sewage water purification plant uses anaerobic co-digestion of biological waste materials, producing biogas used for

the polygeneration of electricity, heat and vehicle fuel. The Sandviksverket Biomass Combined Heat and Power plant was another drawing card, accounting for 80 percent of Växjö’s heating and 40 percent of the city’s electricity demand.

For more information, visit: <http://www.vaxjo.se> • <http://www.concerto-sesac.eu>.

Regional renewable energy strategies key to achieving ambitious climate goals



Anyone following the events at the COP15 climate change conference in Copenhagen last December couldn't fail to notice the difficulties world leaders faced in signing up to ambitious climate targets and reaching a definitive climate agreement.

Now four German municipalities, brought together through the RE Regions (Renewable Energy Regions) project, are exploring decentralised renewable energy schemes, in order to draw conclusions that others can benefit from. The energy generation strategies of the counties of **Lüchow-Dannenberg**, **Schwäbisch Hall** and

the municipalities of **Morbach** and **Wolpertshausen** will be analysed in detail, with a focus on their socio-ecological effects in particular.

Five modules managed by the Universities of Freiburg and Hohenheim and the Institute for Ecological Economic Research, who are supporting the municipalities involved, will deliver the results of the analysis. These organisations will take a close look at decision-making and communication processes, energy supply concepts and land-use and habitat effects of biomass cultivation, as well as perceptions and behaviour surrounding regional energy strategies activities. The financial possibilities arising from such strategies will also be explored.

ICLEI Europe has also been examining regional renewable energy generation focusing on bio-energy (MAKE-IT-BE) and sustainable energy communities and sustainable energy communities projects (Sustainable NOW). With numerous good examples of local and regional energy efficiency and generation, not least those of RE Regions, perhaps global political leaders can indeed be inspired by cities, towns and regions in time for the next climate conference in Mexico City.



Renewable energies such as wind and solar technology are now mainstream

For more information, visit: <http://www.ee-regionen.de> or contact: ciara.leonard@iclei.org.

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Join the movement

Send your stories and successes to:
information.services@iclei.org



URBAN GOVERNANCE & SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT

Hints on developing local sustainable energy action plans

Cities and towns of all sizes throughout Europe have recognised their responsibility to contribute to a more sustainable future, and in doing so have moved energy up the political agenda. Over 1,200 Covenant of Mayors signatories have agreed to go beyond the European Union's 20/20/20 target set for Member States by 2020.

These cities and towns understand that setting more far reaching targets than those set at national and EU levels is necessary, and also feasible. Achieving sustainable energy systems and an improved quality of life for citizens is worth the effort. Numerous cities have learned through their own processes that the preparation and implementation of local sustainable energy action plans can be enhanced in a number of ways.

For instance, encouraging the constituency and other stakeholders to participate from the beginning of the discussion can create a shared ownership of the plan with a broad representation of the community.

Multi-directional information flow will prove beneficial and will grant authorities access to valuable local knowledge. This shared ownership with citizens allows the process to be non-partisan, and thus increases its chances of being long lasting. Nevertheless, it is crucial to be able to count on political commitment throughout the process, and to conceptually align the plan with regional and national policies, and their general direction. This increases the chance of achieving financial security.

Having a multi-departmental, integrated approach to managing the energy plan has also proved beneficial. This approach follows five important steps: baseline review, target setting, securing political commitment, implementing and monitoring, evaluating and reporting. A balance between firmness and flexibility when implementing the energy plan is recommended, as targets may need to be adapted to circumstances. It is a living and flexible process. Finally, pursuing behavioural change in achieving sustainability goals may well deliver significant results. It is, truly, one of the most powerful tools available. Join the growing group of energy innovative cities in Europe.

For more information, visit: <http://www.sustainable-now.eu> or contact: daniel.morchain@iclei.org.

How to make research work for local sustainability

The first Informed Cities Forum, 14-16 April 2010, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK



Image: cc Daniel Greene

Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom

With such a wealth of urban sustainability research being produced in Europe every year, we should all be living in green, resilient, prosperous cities, confidently looking forward to a bright future. Instead, we still struggle with pollution, poverty and the consequences of climate change. What is the problem?

Bringing together European local governments and leading European researchers in the field of urban sustainability management, the Informed Cities Forum will provide a platform to discuss the successes and shortcomings in the local adaptation of tools for urban sustainability developed through European research in recent years. Share experiences and expectations regarding the role of research-based tools in implementing local sustainable development; learn about the wide range of existing tools and help to translate them into practice – your voice counts.



Renewable energies form an important part of local sustainability energy action plans

The Informed Cities Forum is organised by the partners of the Informed Cities Initiative in cooperation with Northumbria University and Newcastle upon Tyne City Council, recently crowned the most sustainable city in the United Kingdom. The Initiative is a three-year European project co-funded by the 7th Framework Programme of the European Union under the name PRIMUS – Policies and Research for an Integrated Management of Urban Sustainability. The project is coordinated by ICLEI and implemented in partnership with Northumbria University (United Kingdom), Ambiente Italia (Italy) and Åbo Akademi University (Finland).

For more information, visit: www.iclei-europe.org/informed-cities or contact: informed-cities@iclei.org.

Managing natural capital for the well-being of the city



Cities can have high levels of biodiversity

Many local governments have started to understand that to balance the true trade offs of their decisions they have to consider the value of natural capital – ecosystems, biodiversity and natural resources. This is key to implementing a successful strategy, one that brings development and nature together, and promotes the well-being of its city and citizens.

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) study for local and regional administrators, led by UNEP and coordinated by the Helmholtz-Zentrum für Umweltforschung gives an excellent overview of what local governments can do to improve the management of natural capital. ICLEI Europe is involved in the report and explores the various environmental management instruments used by local governments to incorporate environmental considerations into the overall public management structure.

Environmental management instruments can be subdivided into tools and systems. Local governments apply different tools, according to the different purposes, such as reporting, planning or monitoring. Environmental management systems support the coordination of these tools and provide good ground for local governments to internally organise themselves and externally influence and regulate the management of natural capital.

With the appropriate environmental management tools and an environmental management system, local governments can develop the necessary environmental pillar in public management, sustainably fulfill their goals and obligations and promote the well-being of citizens.

For more information, visit: <http://www.teebweb.org> or contact: leonora.lorena@iclei.org.

SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY

Defying the traditional concept and understanding of mobility

Investing in transport infrastructure has traditionally meant building new roads for motorised vehicles, expanding the current network, or retrofitting the existing skeleton. It's time to stop the paving machines.

The transport sector accounts for about 13 percent of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide, and while numerous cities and regions have taken action to reform it, the transport culture remains disheartening. Through projects such as CARE-North, the Global Alliance for EcoMobility and the CIVITAS Initiative, ICLEI Europe is one of the multi-specialist teams promoting a new understanding of mobility and accessibility.



In the face of climate change and declining oil supplies, the system is conceptually based on a comprehensive, strategic, innovative and practical approach to urban and regional transport. Low and no CO₂ emissions, reduced energy consumption and an increased quality of life for citizens, understood in the broadest sense possible, are the ultimate goals.

For more information, visit: <http://www.care-north.eu> • <http://www.ecomobility.org> • <http://www.civitas.eu>
or contact: daniel.morchain@iclei.org.

CIVITAS city wins award for sustainable urban distribution

The CIVITAS City of Utrecht (the Netherlands) won the first National Award for Sustainable City Distribution for its innovative inner city freight distribution scheme. The €250 000 prize is intended to stimulate cooperation and innovation in city distribution.

Utrecht and two companies, Hoek Transport and Gepu catering wholesaler, were rewarded for their efforts to make mobility and goods distribution more efficient and sustainable. CIVITAS is a European Commission sustainable mobility initiative involving cities from around Europe.



Utrecht's cargohopper in action

As part of the CIVITAS Utrecht has introduced a number of sustainable urban mobility measures. One of the most remarkable is the Cargohopper - a solar powered electric mini-train that is used to deliver goods around the city centre. The vehicle has zero emissions, removes up to 100,000 van-kilometres from the city streets and saves approximately 30 tonnes of CO₂ annually. The city's second beer boat, which is in the process of becoming completely electrical, is another innovative initiative. The boat is a sustainable and efficient means of transporting various types of goods along the city's waterways.

For further information, visit: http://civitas.eu/news.phtml?id=650&lan=en&read_more=1 or contact: ciara.leonard@iclei.org.

TRAINING AND EVENTS

Resilient Cities 2010: First World Congress on Cities and Adaptation to Climate Change 28-30 May 2010, Bonn, Germany

Resilient Cities 2010 is an annual global forum organised by ICLEI, the City of Bonn and the World Mayors Council on Climate Change. This breakthrough event on urban resilience and adaptation to climate change unites local government leaders, international organisations, civil society and academia to network, debate, and develop innovative approaches and solutions to climate change adaptation and resilience.

The call for contributions received an outstanding response with more than 200 submissions from international participants from various sectors and backgrounds. The congress will include plenaries with keynote speakers, interactive sessions, discussions with renowned panelists and local adaptation cases. A "researcher's studio" will provide space for selected young academics to present their work.



Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, one of the many South American cities affected by climate change

The exhibition area will act as a networking spot for partners and businesses working on strategies for adaptation to climate change to showcase their work. The congress partnership is the largest formed on cities and adaptation, and is made up of city institutions from around the world. Online registration is now open.

For more information, visit: <http://www.iclei.org/bonn2010> or contact: bonn2010@iclei.org.

Become a European Capital of Biodiversity

Municipalities in France, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and Spain are invited to enter a competition to become the Capital of Biodiversity in their country. Interested municipalities can benefit from extensive support, through training workshops, sharing of information and the availability of experts.

For more information, visit: <http://www.capital-biodiversity.eu>
or contact: training.centre@iclei.org.



Image: cc Gilles Gonthier

Squirrels are a common sight in many city parks and gardens

Seminar on sustainability for city staff

In cooperation with the City of Bonn, ICLEI's International Training Centre offers an introductory seminar on sustainability, climate change, sustainable procurement and biodiversity for interested local government officials. Employees of cities and towns can refresh their knowledge and find out how they can foster sustainability in their daily work. The seminar can be delivered in any city and the materials currently available are in German.

For more information, contact: training.centre@iclei.org.

Local Renewables for sustainable mobility Freiburg, Germany, 13-15 October 2010 (tbc)



The provisional date for the international conference for local governments and their partners in relation to the Freiburg Solar Summit has been announced. Further details coming soon.

For more information, visit: <http://www.iclei-europe.org> •
<http://www.local-renewables.org> or contact: local.renewables@iclei.org.

First International Journey on Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Local Government in Betim: Technological Innovation for a New Economy 17-19 March 2010, Betim, Minas Gerais, Brazil

Focusing on available and ground-breaking technologies, the event marks the conclusion of the five-year GTZ-funded Local Renewables Model Communities Network project, a cornerstone of ICLEI's Local Renewables initiative.

Brazilian and international representatives of local government, academia and the private sector will share their learnings and proposed solutions to today's energy needs, discussing the benefits and successes they have had in the fields of local renewable energy and energy efficiency. Success stories will be presented, featuring issues such as local waste to energy, economic gains from renewable energy in social housing and advancements in local wind energy and energy efficiency. Technical visits and workshops will accompany the programme (tbc).



Image: cc José Ezequiel Junior

Housing unit Decalino Cabral in Betim

For more information, contact: crer@betim.mg.gov.br • redelo@iclei.org • ccp-europe@iclei.org.

BOOK REVIEWS

Climate Change and Agriculture in Africa – Impact Assessment and Adaptation Strategies

Even without climate change, there are serious concerns about agriculture in Africa because of both water supply and variability. Vast areas of Africa do not have enough water to support crops and are highly vulnerable to water variability. Droughts are common, with the number of people affected by drought in Africa almost equal to the entire world population affected by drought in certain years. Climate change is expected to aggravate these impacts.

This book provides a comprehensive assessment of the potential economic impacts of future climate change, and the value of adaptation measures in Africa for different zones, regions, countries and farm types. It also contains details about the impact of climate change on the continent, serving as a guide to policy intervention strategies and investment in adaptation measures.

A. Dinar/R. Hassan/R. Mendelsohn/J. Benhin, Earthscan, USA 2008, ISBN-13: 978-1-84407-547-8

Ressourceneffizienz – Der neue Reichtum der Städte Impulse für eine zukunftsfähige Kommune

Leere Kassen – reiche Städte? Ein scheinbarer Widerspruch, der in diesem Sammelband aufgeklärt wird. Kommunale Praktiker und Wissenschaftler verschiedener Disziplinen zeigen die Potenziale auf, die im ressourceneffizienten Wirtschaften liegen.

Überall kann der Rohstoffverbrauch gesenkt, können Prozesse optimiert und dabei gleichzeitig die Kosten gesenkt werden. Mit einem aktiven Stadtmanagement, das langfristig plant, Netzwerke nutzt, BürgerInnen und die eigenen MitarbeiterInnen einbezieht, lassen sich zwei Ziele auf einmal erreichen: Geld zu sparen und nachhaltiger zu werden. Anregungen und Beispiele aus den Bereichen Stadtmanagement, Energie, Mobilität, Wasser und Abfall zeigen Möglichkeiten auf, die auch andere Kommunen für sich nutzen können. Es bleibt zu hoffen, dass – trotz oder gerade wegen knapper Kassen – diese Anregungen auf fruchtbaren Boden fallen.

O. Reutter (Hrsg.), Wuppertal Institut oekom Verlag, München 2007, ISBN 978-3-86581-085-4

Corporate Social Responsibility – Trend oder Modeerscheinung?

Dieser Sammelband, der zum 10jährigen Jubiläum des Doktorandennetzwerkes Nachhaltiges Wirtschaften entstanden ist, stellt eine konzeptionelle Diskussion des Begriffs Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) im Kontext der unternehmerischen Nachhaltigkeit dar. Es werden begriffliche Grundlagen vermittelt und Methoden der Messung sowie Instrumente der Umsetzung dargestellt. Eine Vielfalt von Untersuchungen zeigen die neuen Ansätze in der Forschung, skizzieren aber auch den weiteren Forschungs- und Entwicklungsbedarf. Dieser Band richtet sich vor allem an ein wissenschaftliches Publikum.

M. Müller/S. Schaltegger (Hrsg.), oekom Verlag, München 2008, ISBN 978-3-86581-053-3

Der WASSERATLAS – Ein Weltatlas zur wichtigsten Ressource des Lebens

Zunächst waren es vor allem die Themen Energie und Klima, die die weltweite Aufmerksamkeit über die globalen Zusammenhänge des Umgangs mit unseren natürlichen Lebensgrundlagen geschärft haben - jetzt rückt auch das Wasser zunehmend in den Mittelpunkt des Interesses. So sind Konsumgewohnheiten und der damit verbundene Wasserverbrauch in den industrialisierten Ländern keineswegs nur eine Herausforderung vor Ort. Sie vergrößern auch den Druck auf die Wasservorräte in vielen trockenen Regionen in weniger entwickelten Ländern, aus denen ein Großteil unserer Produkte importiert werden. Kleidung, oder besser: Baumwolle, ist dafür ein klassisches Beispiel.

Der kürzlich auch auf Deutsch erschienene "Wasseratlas" veranschaulicht die globale Dimensionen des Wassers in vielfältiger Weise. Übersichtlich gegliedert, mit kurzen, prägnanten Texten und vor allem gespickt mit vielen farbigen Grafiken vermittelt der Atlas einen hervorragenden Eindruck über die Verfügbarkeit der "wichtigsten Ressource des Lebens" und wie der Mensch damit umgeht. Eine leicht zugängliche Lektüre mit schwerwiegendem Inhalt, die auch in Kommunen zum Nachdenken anregen kann.

M. Black/J. King, EVA Europäische Verlagsanstalt, Hamburg 2009, ISBN 978-3-434-50628-7



NEW RESOURCES FROM ICLEI

Online resources

Stay informed on ICLEI and member activities, by subscribing to our monthly e-Newsletter, ICLEI in Europe. Visit: <http://www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?id=1574>.

The website for the new Informed Cities initiative – making research work for local sustainability, is now online. Visit: <http://www.iclei-europe.org/informed-cities>.

Looking for support with sustainable public procurement? Then SMART-SPP has materials to offer to you for testing purposes: A practical guide explaining the steps public authorities can take to encourage energy efficient innovation through public procurement, and a tool (with a User Guide) for calculating both life-cycle costs (LCC) and CO₂ emissions in procurement. The documents are available in English, Spanish, Portuguese and Danish at: <http://www.smart-spp.eu>. Please note, that the publications are not final versions and will be finalised in early 2011.

Publications

The tenth and final Biofuel Cities Quarterly has been released and reflects the outcomes and outlooks of the project. It is available for download on: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu>.

Stay up to date on urban mobility with MOVE - The CIVITAS Initiative Quarterly Newsletter. The second issue has been released and reports on developments in the field, including the pioneering activities taking place in CIVITAS cities and policy updates from the EU. Contributions are sourced from participating cities and organisations, as well as from the Directorate General for Transport and Energy. The newsletter is available for download on: <http://www.civitas.eu>.

Members - send us your news!

If you want to profile your community's work for local sustainability by contributing an article to the European Circular or to the <http://www.iclei.org> and <http://www.iclei-europe.org> websites, feel free to contact the Information Services Team at the ICLEI European Secretariat.

The team will help you with presenting your work and edit your articles – contact them today at: information.services@iclei-europe.org

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Comments and questions are welcome – please write to Ciara Leonard at: information.services@iclei.org or Leopoldring 3, 79098 Freiburg, Germany, Tel: +49-761/36 89 2-0, <http://www.iclei-europe.org>.

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The ICLEI mission

ICLEI's mission is to build and serve a worldwide movement of local governments to achieve tangible improvements in global sustainability with special focus on environmental conditions through cumulative local actions. ICLEI's general mandate is to build an active and committed municipal membership of local spheres of government (local and regional governments and authorities) as well as international, regional, national and sub-national local government associations.