

Local communities unite to take action against the consequences of rising energy prices in Europe

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The 'CONCERTO Opening' brought over 100 representatives together from 28 local community projects actively demonstrating innovative integrated energy concepts. At the three day meeting held in Brussels 3rd - 5th July 2006, Dr. Brigitte Bach, Project Coordinator of CONCERTO Plus (arsenal research) was delighted with the progress made in helping to set out the road map for working together over the next five years.

She stated that the event represented the vital step in reinforcing cross communication between those involved in the unique initiative and facilitating networking at all levels. 'Importantly', she said 'CONCERTO is laying the crucial foundations for the innovative energy policy of the future and providing the impetus for driving forward the energy concepts of tomorrow'.

Speaking on the fringes of CONCERTO Opening, Ms. Sarah Nilsson, project coordinator, sesac, explained 'Växjö decided to stop using fossil fuels for its energy needs and Sweden did the same last year with the target of becoming independent from fossil fuels by 2020'. 'Through CONCERTO' she hopes 'the EU is taking steps in the same direction'. Also speaking at the CONCERTO Opening Mr. Reinhard Martinsen, project coordinator, act2, emphasised 'demonstration in Hannover aims to reduce the energy consumption for heating by up to 50% over the next 20 years and we regard this as a contribution which European cities can make in order to meet EU energy target'. Mr. Rudy Rooth, project coordinator ECOSTILER which includes the communities of Amsterdam New West, the Netherlands; London Southwark, United Kingdom and Måbjerg, Denmark, stressed 'the common approach is biomass based energy production which is seen as a way for reaching a significant reduction in the demand for fossil fuel and the combination of activities ensure better social conditions for all inhabitants'. Mr. Marc Jedliczka, project coordinator, Lyon, which is part of the Renaissance project together with the community of Zaragoza in Spain, highlighted 'the significant early impact which CONCERTO actions are having on energy targets even before concrete CONCERTO actions begin'. Furthermore, 'CONCERTO aims are accelerating the process of change on a large scale in Lyon and the mind set of all involved. Lyon is a reference point at the national level in France', he said.

CONCERTO is co-funded by the European Commission, in the context of European research and technological development. The essence is to help promote and achieve a more sustainable future for Europe's energy needs at an affordable cost. The initiative supports 28 local communities in 9 project across 12 European countries in demonstrating actions that are both sustainable and highly energy efficient. The spirit of CONCERTO manifests itself through the integration of the use of renewable energy sources with effective energy efficiency measures.

The European initiative works with the cooperation and attention of market actors such as technology providers, installers, decision makers, utilizers, politicians, businesses and citizens. CONCERTO is a European initiative which supports the work and efforts of local communities in their actions and provides them with a platform for cross sharing their experience with one another and towards the European decision makers.

CONCERTO Plus supports the demonstration communities by providing a broad platform for cross sharing of experiences and know-how transfer. It also delivers a framework for European wide dissemination of information on CONCERTO communities and general actions. CONCERTO Plus is committed to help removing accessibility barriers for all CONCERTO actions and information. CONCERTO plans to work aggressively to promote the energy concepts for the future and feed into the policy making process.

For more information on the CONCERTO initiative please refer to the CONCERTO Website

<http://www.concertoplus.eu/>