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DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS PROCEEDING WELL

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- Introducing Vastseliina Municipality, a SESAC observer city
- Interview with Bo Frank, Mayor of Växjö
- Grenoble Declaration – SESAC Mayors call on the EU for a more active Climate Policy
- Update from Grenoble:
 - Concert'Action: trial training programme for technicians in Grenoble
 - Exterior wall insulation – 1st results available
 - An Energy-Plus office building under construction
 - Motivating SESAC Study Tour to CONCERTO-SESAC sites in Grenobles
- Update from Delft:
 - First milestone reached for Work Package 5 for the Harnaspolder area
 - Delft Energy Agency has merged – now EREA
- European visibility given to the CONCERTO initiative in Växjö during the Energie-Cités Annual Rendezvous
- News snippets
- Events

Introducing Vastseliina Municipality, a SESAC observer city

Mayor Raul Tohv from Vastseliina in Estonia shares his views on SESAC and sustainable energy:

“Using renewable resources to produce energy is becoming more and more relevant, not only in big cities but even in rural areas and villages. To live in harmony with the environment and using clean energy must be a challenge that everyone should take on.

The SESAC project provides a very good opportunity for us to partner with Växjö, Delft, and Grenoble, as well as with the other two observer cities Kaunas and Miskolc. Together we have realised that saving energy is sometimes more important, and even easier than producing more and more energy.”

[Vastseliina](#) is a town located in the south-eastern part of Võru County, near the Russian and Latvian borders. Vastseliina has a population of 2410. The centre of the municipality is the Vastseliina borough. There are 38 villages in Vastseliina. The main economic activities are agriculture, forestry and a growing service industry. From the hills and ridges of the Haanja Heights, one has a marvellous view into the valley of the Piusa River.

The government of Vastseliina municipality aims at developing Vastseliina as a favourable living and working environment. Different projects have been initiated to support entrepreneurship, tourism, local handicraft and youth work.

Interview with Bo Frank, Mayor of Växjö

Mr. Bo Frank, Mayor of Växjö since 2006, has always had a genuine interest in issues concerning sustainable development throughout his career as a politician in Växjö, also as former Deputy Mayor. He has been involved in the SESAC project from the start, and was also present in 1996 when the City of Växjö decided to become a Fossil Fuel Free City.

In 1996 politicians in the [City of Växjö](#) decided in 1996 that Växjö would become a fossil fuel free city. The city is moving steadily towards this goal, with CO₂ emissions decreased by 30% per capita between 1993 and 2006. This means that every citizen of Växjö contributes 3,236 kg CO₂ to climate change - far below the global average. The next goal is to reduce CO₂ emissions per capita by 50% by the year 2010, and by 70% by 2025, compared to the baseline of 1993.



Why is the City of Växjö involved in a project such as SESAC?

For me, and I guess also for many of the inhabitants of Växjö, the environment is very important. In Växjö, we have made good experiences in successful environmental projects, mainly within the field of lake restoration and the use of bioenergy. One reason for the successful work is the political unanimity when it comes to high-impact environmental decisions, such as the decision from 1996 that Växjö would become a Fossil Fuel Free City.

It is not easy to reach such a target. Even if the fossil CO₂ emissions have already been reduced by 30% per inhabitant between 1993 and 2006, we still need to go further. We have to consider what kind of energy we use and how we use it. Actions need to be carried out in many sectors and activities, not only by the city administration and the energy company, but also by every citizen, company and organisation.

The actions carried out in SESAC are, in addition to what we learn from the results, therefore very important for our climate policy. This is why we are involved in SESAC.

What does the SESAC project mean to Växjö?

SESAC helps us take steps towards reaching our target of becoming a Fossil Fuel Free City. We also learn from this demonstration project for future changes, and it helps us to be a good example for other cities in Europe, which can adopt similar ideas and technologies.

What are some of the activities in the project?

Within SESAC, around 400 energy efficient dwellings are being built in Växjö. The energy consumption is 30-40 % lower than national recommendations. One part of the project is the construction of four wooden apartment buildings, eight stores high, called Limnologen. The media has shown a keen interest. Another part is the construction of passive houses, which more or less need no energy supply at all for heating. These will also be eight stories high and constructed from wood, making them unique.



Thanks to SESAC, we can also work on changing peoples' behaviour, and the way they energy. Displays are installed in the dwellings, where the inhabitants can follow their energy use. This, in combination with energy information, has resulted in a reduction of energy use by 16%.

One innovative technology used in SESAC is to produce cooling from biomass-based district heating, instead of using electric air conditioning systems. We optimise the use of biogas and are developing the energy management system further.

What is the value of such a European project?

It means a lot being a part of an EU project. Thanks to the support we receive, we can try to realise ideas that take us a bit further than "business as usual". With so many interesting partners in the project, we gain a great opportunity to exchange experiences. Personally, I really appreciate the opportunity to discuss sustainable energy systems with Mayors of the other cities.

This type of project is also a way to show the citizens of Växjö what the concrete, positive effects are for Sweden as a Member State of the European Union.

Any final words?

I think that the SESAC project is a very good example of how the EU should work – to support co-operation and learning between cities in different countries. I am very proud to be Mayor in "Europe's greenest city" and am happy that the City of Växjö can develop even further, thanks to SESAC.

Grenoble Declaration – SESAC Mayors call on the EU for a more active Climate Policy

On 22 May 2008 the Mayors of Delft (The Netherlands), Grenoble (France), Växjö (Sweden), with the consent of the Mayors of Kaunas (Lithuania), Miskolc (Hungary) and Vastseliina (Estonia), signed [the Grenoble Declaration](#). The Declaration focuses on their commitment to achieve and even go beyond the European Union's energy and climate targets. The Mayors also urge the European Union to take action on a more active climate policy.

The Grenoble declaration has been signed during the Annual General Assembly of the CONCERTO-SESAC project hosted by the city of Grenoble.



Update from Grenoble:

Concert'Action: trial training programme for technicians in Grenoble

In Grenoble a test training programme was organised between January and May 2008, to address capacity development of technicians in various technical fields of work related to sustainable energy in buildings.

About 70 technicians tasked to install energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies in the Grenoble project ZAC de Bonne, were trained. The group included plumbers, electricians, also window and façade installers. Experts developed the capacity of on-site technicians on the correct installation of efficient technologies in the 435 new Concerto eco-buildings, addressing:

- testing air tightness
- installing external insulation with adequate width
- installation of a Double Flux Ventilation system
- installation of small CHP (Combined Heat and Power) systems in buildings
- installation of a collective solar thermal installation



This training programme was developed in response to the critical need that was identified for higher standards in installing new environmental technologies in the national «Grenelle de l'Environnement» study. Concert'Action, based on the CONCERTO initiative, gives a reference for ongoing discussion regarding this purpose in France.

Coordinated by the Local Energy Agency and the City of Grenoble, the training programme also provided the opportunity to bring together main building stakeholders addressing environmental issues, namely training organisations (Greta de Grenoble), the French federation for builders (FBTP38), funding organisations for training such as A.R.E.F., FAFSAB (Fonds D'Assurance De Formation Des Salaries De L'Artisanat Du BTP) and l'Agence De l'Environnement et de Maîtrise de l'Energie (ADEME), and the building owners.

The intention is to conduct similar training programmes with a broad group of companies in the future. The city of Lyon, in the Concerto Renaissance project, will also organise such sessions towards the end of 2008.

Exterior wall insulation – 1st results available

In the framework of the OPATB - the operational programme addressing improved thermal insulation in buildings - the building located in 61 Boulevard Foch was the first to receive exterior insulation.

OPATB = Opérations Programmées d'Amélioration Thermique et énergétique des Bâtiments. This is a French national incentive program, with national funding by ADEME to help private owners with building renovation (e.g. improved insulation, glazing of windows, etc...).

In this co-owned apartment block of 34 units built in 1954, the facades required renovation. The owners used this opportunity to consider exterior insulation. The OPATB offered an energetics diagnosis to identify the most important thermal losses. This diagnosis showed that wall losses represents more than 38% of total heat losses, and that the build energetic performance could be improved from 200kWh/m²/year to 126 kWh/m²/year just by insulating the walls. This performance increase represents an energy savings of almost 130 000 kWh per year and a reduction of 25 000 kg of CO₂ emissions.

In addition to the environmental impact, these savings will also help the owners to finance the renovation investment. On average each apartment will have less need for heating and thus a reduced energy bill of 290 € per year, and a return on investment is expected in less than a year.

An Energy-Plus office building under construction

An office block producing more energy than it requires is under construction in the Boulevard Gambetta, Grenoble.

The heating requirements of the four-storey building, with 1,600 m² floor space, will not exceed 10 kWh per square metre per year. This will be covered by the site's natural resources, namely solar power and groundwater. An array of photovoltaic panels covering 430 m² will make the building self-sufficient in terms of electricity.



More details (in French) on :
www.debonne-grenoble.fr

Motivating Study Tour to CONCERTO-SESAC sites in Grenoble

On the 21st of May, Grenoble hosted the first CONCERTO-SESAC community site visit.

The study tour brought together 67 people, representing the 3 SESAC pilot cities: [Delft \(Netherlands\)](#), [Grenoble \(France\)](#) and [Växjö \(Sweden\)](#), as well as the 3 SESAC observer cities: [Miskolc \(Hungary\)](#), [Kaunas \(Lithuania\)](#) and [Vastseliina \(Estonia\)](#). Furthermore, several communities participating in other CONCERTO projects ([cRRescendo](#), [TetraEner](#), [act2](#), [Renaissance](#), [Holistic](#)) joined the study tour, as well as representatives from [CONCERTO Plus](#) and the European Commission.

The visit started at the Viscose site in Echirolles followed by the new stadium equipped with PV panels and the De Bonne eco-district in Grenoble. Several stakeholders and experts delivered presentations and explained the status and development of the local CONCERTO projects.

Informal discussions with other CONCERTO project representatives contributed to mutual learning and exchange on own project status and challenges.



Update from Delft:

First milestone reached for Work Package 5 for the Harnaschpolder area

In December 2007 the City of Delft and the development partners of Harnaschpolder, Delft finalised their negotiations with the heat distribution company Eneco Energy B.V. Contracts for heat distribution were signed at the end of 2007.



Laying the foundations for grid connection in Harnaspolder, Delft

The planning of the Harnaspolder area required a prompt start of construction, and the energy grid engineering received priority, with work already starting during negotiations.

In the second week of January 2008 ENECO Energy started with the construction of the distribution grid. Now the grid is in place for approximately 600 dwellings (including 300 SESAC dwellings), and awaits the first household connections early 2010.

Although the first building activities only start towards the end of 2008, Delft handed over several building areas to the developers by May. This meant that all the municipal preparations for the building sites had to be finished by that time. Why is this the case? This is a typical approach in Delft (to a Dutch soil-specific challenge) to ensure that the soil can settle, before building construction starts. As the grid connections are made under the dwellings, it helps to allow the soil to settle and thereby reduce unforeseen costs, e.g. for road (re)surfacing.

Poptahof, Delft

The design and construction of the first buildings in the Poptahof have drawn a lot of interest from the public. The actual building of 93 refurbished dwellings, 58 new homes and 153 sub-surface parking lots (the latter under the surface of the square between the buildings) started in November 2007. Already 95% of the available housing has been sold or rented.



Apart from the quality improvements the image shows the 10 kW peak PV system on the southern façade of the new building.

Delft Energy Agency has merged – now EREA

Yes, it is true! The rumour that there has been a merger between the Delft Energy Agency and the Energy Agency Zoetermeer has been confirmed.

As experienced 'energetic' managers are in great demand (DEA's manager moved on to new challenges), the idea of a merger with the Energy Agency of the neighbouring city of Zoetermeer was discussed. Both agencies were of similar size, had an identical mission, faced similar difficulties as small organisations, and had dedicated and professional teams.



EREA opening event in November 2007

In November 2007, a new name and logo were presented to stakeholders, partners, clients and friends. The new organisation is known as 'Eerste Regionale Energie Agentschap' (First Regional Energy Agency) or EREA.

EREA is one of the partners in the SESAC project, and coordinates a project where house owners are approached, informed and stimulated to take appropriate energy savings measures. The geographical area involved is the 'Haaglanden' area, which is roughly the city of The Hague with the surrounding southbound municipalities - an area with approximately one million inhabitants.

Another large scale project is the 'energy information desk', an idea presented by Delft Deputy Mayor Lian Merckx. This desk is unique - it will provide different types of information needs to different target

groups, from the general public, to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), politicians and scholars, on different topics – housing, food or transport. The aim is to provide direction to good answers.

More information can be found under: www.stichtingerea.nl (in Dutch, under construction) or send an email to info@stichtingerea.nl.

European visibility given to the CONCERTO Initiative in Växjö during the Energie-Cités Annual Rendezvous



Nearly 200 representatives from local authorities, associations, European and national institutions and businesses met beginning of April in the Irish city of Cork for [Energie-Cités'](#) 13th Annual Rendezvous.

During this event, Mr Carl-Olof Bengtsson, former Mayor of Växjö, explained the CONCERTO-SESAC experience in Växjö. The presentation was followed by a lively discussion about the difficulties and opportunities faced in Växjö within the framework of the CONCERTO-SESAC project. During this event 50 SESAC leaflets were distributed to fellow European local authorities.

News snippets

New CONCERTO call open

A new call is open under the EU CONCERTO programme within the 7th Research Framework Programme to support communities to demonstrate advanced, innovative and sustainable energy solutions (Identifier: FP7-ENERGY-2008-TREN-1). Deadline for proposal submission is 8 October 2008.

More details on the [website](#).

An Information & Partnering Day will take place in Vienna on the 2 July 2008.

We invite interested cities and towns to explore this funding opportunity with us. ICLEI and Energie-Cités are interested in partnering with local governments, and in particular to support with dissemination, as well as training and capacity development.

Successful EU Green Week 2008



Green Week 2008 is the biggest annual conference devoted to European environment policy. This year, under the slogan "Only one Earth - Don't waste it", the event focused on the need for Europe and the rest of the world to make its use of resources more sustainable.

The event provided a unique opportunity for debate, exchanges of experience and best practice among non-governmental organisations, businesses, various levels of government and the public.

The event was a combination of 38 conference sessions and an exhibition. More details on the [website](#).

Invitation to link to the [European Covenant of Mayors](#)

The Covenant of Mayors consists of the commitment by the cities to go beyond the objectives of the EU energy policy in terms on reduction of CO2 emissions through enhanced energy efficiency and cleaner energy production and use.



Events

ICLEI's European Membership Convention: "More than hot air - Local Action on Climate Change"

Space : Zaragoza, Spain

Date : 23 - 25 June 2008

Web : iclei.org

The convention focuses on "More than hot air - Local Action on Climate Change". Themes will be discussed that relate to the impact of global warming effects on cities in particular - practical responses in various sectors and effective mitigation and adaptation action.

2nd International Conference for Sustainable Tourism

Space : Rimini Riviera, Italy

Date : 10 - 11 October 2008

Web : iclei.org

EcoProcura 2009 conference: Climate Neutral through Procurement

Space : Reykjavik, Iceland

Date : 25-27 March 2009

Web : iclei.org

This seventh EcoProcura conference is part of a series, as the only European conference to provide a platform to promote exchange and dialogue amongst purchasers from all levels of governments, suppliers, policy-makers and multipliers on strategies and the latest practical solutions for implementing sustainable procurement

Energie-Cités Annual Rendezvous

Space : Brussels, Belgium

Date : April 2009

Web : energie-cites.eu

More information soon available on the Energie-Cités website.

We invite your comments on the newsletter.

Do you have articles or events of interest relevant to sustainable energy systems in advanced systems or to climate protection? Please pass these on to [ICLEI](#) or to [Energie-Cités](#)

Other projects:

For further information on the CONCERTO initiative and other CONCERTO projects, please visit the CONCERTO homepage www.concertoplus.eu.

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