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Over 1000 local action plans point the way towards sustainable energy transition and pursuit of social welfare

To date, over 1000 cities have developed Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAPs) and begun implementing them, reducing CO₂ emissions and creating more liveable and economically prosperous cities. Through these plans, cities commit to reducing their CO₂ emissions by 128,5 million tonnes by 2020, representing more than the total emissions of Belgium in 2009.

Each plan outlines a comprehensive set of energy actions across different sectors of activity, set to improve citizens' quality of life and address social issues related to housing and fuel poverty. Examples of actions include replacing conventional street lights with energy efficient lighting, installing biogas engines in buses, upgrading insulation of office buildings and private homes, and generating energy locally by placing photovoltaic panels on roofs of municipal buildings.

The steady increase in the number of local authorities implementing SEAPs owes a lot to the active involvement of those regions and provinces which have assumed the central role of Territorial Coordinators. Most recently, at the Covenant of Mayors ceremony held in Brussels on 29 November 2011, the Presidents of the Alicante and Barcelona provinces, presented bundles of 70 and 61 action plans respectively on behalf of their municipalities active in the Covenant.

The Spanish region of Andalusia demonstrates how regional authorities can help municipalities in implementing these plans on the ground. Thanks to an EU-supported pilot project coordinated by the region, 33 Andalusian municipalities managed to invest a total of €26 million for implementing energy efficient actions which should lead to a reduction of eight million tonnes of CO₂ emissions, equivalent to the yearly emissions of three coal-fired power plants. As a next step, the region of Andalusia will coordinate the allocation of €350 million of European funding for all 500 of its municipalities active in the Covenant, which will unlock €3.7 billion of local investments, leading to the creation of an estimated 26,000 direct jobs between 2011-2020.

"The Andalusian Sustainable Energy Action Plans are special projects aimed at mitigating the impact of climate change and reducing CO₂ emissions, and are also roadmaps towards a new production model and the pursuit of social welfare," said José Antonio Griñán, President of the Andalusia region.

The Covenant of Mayors is an ambitious European movement of towns, cities and regions fighting climate change by committing to reduce their CO₂ emissions beyond the European 2020 energy targets. At present, over 3,500 local authorities have signed up to the Covenant of Mayors, touching the daily lives of 155 million citizens.

Note to editors

- Covenant of Mayors www.eumayors.eu
- Consult Sustainable Energy Action Plans

http://www.eumayors.eu/actions/sustainable-energy-action-plans_en.html

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