

Biofuel Cities Update – August 2007

Issue #1/August 2007

Welcome!

Welcome to the first issue of the Biofuel Cities Update, your monthly electronic newsletter providing information on developments in the field and from the Biofuel Cities European Partnership.

What is the Biofuel Cities European Partnership? The Biofuel Cities European Partnership is a forum for the application of biofuels. Open to all stakeholders in the area of biofuels for vehicles, it offers access to the www.biofuel-cities.eu information and exchange portal; workshops and study tours; news, publications and tools. **The Partnership is supported by the European-Commission funded Biofuel Cities project. Participation in the Biofuel Cities European Partnership is free.** To join or find out more, visit www.biofuel-cities.eu or write to secretariat@biofuel-cities.eu

Biofuel Cities Update welcomes your contributions – just send your news to secretariat@biofuel-cities.eu. In addition to publication in the Update, your news will receive exposure on www.biofuel-cities.eu. News from Biofuel Cities European Partnership participants enjoy publishing priority.

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1. BIOFUEL CITIES EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP: SUCCESSFUL START

The launch of the new stakeholder platform in July has raised a huge amount of interest amongst different actors with an impressive 625 people registered to date as participants in the European Partnership. Participants can now access 220 information resources (e.g. publications, websites) and 120 projects on biofuels linked to interactive maps for easier viewing.

The European Partnership is designed for all stakeholders in the area of biofuel vehicles, such as local governments and local companies that, for example, work with local car fleets, businesses in the

biofuel supply chain, the research community, governments and standardisation bodies, NGOs and media.

Join the Biofuel Cities European Partnership by registering at: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu>

2. TASK FORCES FOR BIOFUEL STANDARD HARMONISATION FORMED

Since biofuels are a global trading commodity of growing importance, authorities in the USA and Europe have felt the need for global harmonisation on the quality standards. Together with Brazil, India, China and South Africa an International Biofuels Forum was set up in February. To make biofuels a success story, the Forum members agreed that joint standards are needed. Therefore, two task forces with experts from Brazil, USA and Europe have been established. The aim is to review existing documentary standards and identify areas where greater compatibility can be achieved in the short and long term. A White Paper is to be submitted to the Brazilian, European and US authorities by the end of 2007, to form the basis of further work at ISO level to establish global biofuel standards.

To obtain further details on the progress of the task forces or background information, please contact Mr. O. Costenoble of the Biofuel Cities project partner NEN Energy Resources at energy@nen.nl.

To download the full article: http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/fileadmin/template/projects/biofuels/files/Biofuel_Specification_Standards_Global_Harmonisation_Efforts.pdf

3. BIOFUELS HAMPERED BY 'SCALE PROBLEM'

First-generation biofuels - such as ethanol - must be seen as a "stepping stone" for the development of new, environmentally-friendly alternatives, such as fuel made from waste, because it will never be possible to produce them on a sufficiently large scale to contribute to the global fight against climate change – according to UOP, one of the leading companies in the development and licensing of processes and technologies for upgrading petroleum to end products.

Carlos Cabrera, president and Chief Executive Officer of UOP, believes that second-generation fuels can in the future play an important role in reducing CO2 emissions from transport. But, in an interview with EurActiv, he outlined a number of challenges that must be addressed before this can be achieved.

Source and to read more: <http://euractiv.com/en/energy/interview-biofuels-hampered-scale-problem/article-165612>

4. EU BIODIESEL CONSUMPTION RISES TO OVER 3.8 MILLION TONS

Biodiesel consumption in the EU has risen from 2.24 million tons in 2005, to 3.84 million tons in 2006. This was confirmed in recent figures from EurObservER, as published in the Biofuels Barometer. Germany uses the most biodiesel, with 2.41 million tons in 2006. France comes in second, with 532,000 tons.

To check the Biofuels Barometer: http://www.mvo.nl/biobrandstoffen/download/baro179_b.pdf

Projects - resources - contacts: new functions, we will keep you posted!

Keen to permanently improve its services for you, www.biofuel-cities.eu now includes some new user-friendly features: The Projects & Activities, Resources and European Partnership Participants databases have all been equipped with options to search for latest additions, thereby allowing you to at any time check what relevant new items have been added or who your new peer participants are.

The Project & Activities search is available for the everyone, while the Resources and the Participants databases are for exclusive use by Participants of the Biofuel Cities European Partnership.

5. POLICIES UPDATE

17.08.07 UN calls for reconsideration of bioenergy strategy

The Secretary-General of the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Jacques Diouf, has called for a high-level meeting to be held in June 2008 'to lay down rules for the international bioenergy market'. According to Diouf, the bioenergy strategy should focus on ensuring that a large percentage of the revenues generated from producing bioenergy actually benefit the farmers and rural economies in developing countries.

Access by these countries to the international bioenergy market should thus be improved by:

- * lowering the trade barriers implemented by some OECD countries to imported ethanol;
- * encouraging (including via micro-credits) collaboration between small farmers wishing to cultivate, process and trade in raw materials for bioenergy;
- * setting up a certification system to guarantee that the bioenergy traded meets certain environmental criteria

Source and to read more: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d9345496-4a84-11dc-95b5-0000779fd2ac.html>

29.07.07 EU may free up land for biofuel crops

Biofuels, if meant to partially offset a coming oil shortage and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, will require much more farm land, forcing the European Union to cultivate fields that have lain fallow.

With global cereal production falling, the European Commission said in July it would propose ending restrictions in effect since 1998 that had forced farmers to let some land lie fallow. Currently around 10 percent of EU farmland is affected by the measure, or around three million hectares (7.4 million acres). Allowing it to be cultivated would increase cereal production by 10-17 million tonnes next year, the Commission estimated.

Additional farmland would also contribute to securing stable prices for agricultural produce. However, amid growing public concern about the impact of biofuels production on land-use and cereal prices, both the European Commission and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) claim that this impact should be smaller than the impact feared by some concerned parties: The Commission has found that 10% biofuels use in transport by 2020 would produce only limited pressure on agricultural markets. According to Loek Boonekamp of the (OECD), an increase of 20 percent in the price of basic agricultural products results anyway only in a rise of 1.0 percent on store shelves.

Source and to read more: <http://www.eubusiness.com> (user registration required)

11.07.07 Members of the European Parliament call for strong EU renewables policy

The European Parliament's Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) Committee has given strong support to upcoming Commission proposals designed to increase the share of renewable energy in the EU's future energy mix. On 10 July, MEPs in the ITRE committee voted in support of an own-initiative report presented by Danish Socialist MEP Britta Thomsen. While the report is non-binding and not connected with any existing legislative proposal, it provides an indication of how the Parliament may position itself with respect to the Commission's upcoming package of legislative proposals on renewables, expected in September 2007.

Source and to read more: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/meps-call-strong-eu-renewables-policy/article-165428>

6. PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

15.08.07 Cork City Council fuels the Earthrace Initiative

Biofuel Cities European Partnership participant Cork City Council, Ireland, recently underlined its strong commitment to biofuels, by donating 1,500 litres of biodiesel to the Earthrace boat, when it made a stopover in Cork Harbour on its round-the-world trip. Earthrace is a not for profit non-governmental organisation promoting the use of biodiesel as an environmentally friendly alternative to fossil fuel.

In the words of Cork City Senior Executive Engineer, Brian Cassidy, among the Councils goals is to "highlight the capabilities of biofuels and the role they can play in reducing our dependence on fossil fuels". This sentiment is very much in line with Cork City's identity as the eco-capital of Ireland. The biodiesel that was donated was 100% locally grown and produced.

Source and to read more: <http://www.corkcity.ie/news/mainbody,7454.en.html>

13.08.07 Biofuels and PPP in Belgium

From 20 August onwards the Belgian bus company, De Lijn, will use a hybrid hydrogen bus on some routes near Antwerp. The bus in question is manufactured by Van Hool.

This scheme is an example of a public-private partnership, which sees public works made possible with private involvement. In this particular case, the partnership is comprised of the Flemish Government, UTC Power, Siemens, IWT-Vlaanderen, Air Liquide and De Lijn.

A similar effort is already in place in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, where the local public transport company (GVB) has been running three Mercedes hydrogen busses on a number of routes.

Source and to read more: <http://gave.novem.nl/gave/index.asp?id=25&detail=1706>

01.08.07 UK launches CO2 car-ranking website

The British government has set up a website designed to lure consumers towards buying the greenest cars available as the EU prepares to set binding caps on the amount of CO2 that new vehicles can emit.

The "Best on CO2" website, launched by the UK's Department for Transport on 31 July, aims to orient consumers to the cleanest car model within the vehicle category that they prefer, ranging from the "super-mini" and family car categories to executive, 4x4, luxury and performance cars.

Source and to read more: <http://euractiv.com/en/transport/uk-launches-co2-car-ranking-website/article-165985>

12.07.07 Participate in European Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technology Platform

Now is the time to register your interest in participating in the European Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technology Platform. The main goal of the platform is to facilitate and accelerate the development and deployment of cost-competitive, world class European hydrogen and fuel cell based energy systems and component technologies for applications in transport, stationary and portable power.

If you wish to be involved in the work of the steering panels and initiative groups or participate in platform operations, please visit: <http://www.kowi.de/en/2/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-138/aid-archivedetail/telnr-10760/itemnr-9/aidlang-EN/>

22.08.07 Searching for a specific project on biofuels?

You can find 120 projects registered in the Biofuel Cities European Partnership by visiting: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=4024>. The number of projects is steadily growing and the searchable database function makes it even easier to carry out detailed searches, for example, to find recently added entries.

New projects include:

- * Measures to Influence transport Demand to Achieve Sustainability (<http://www.midas-eu.com>)
- * Best Stockholm buses (<http://www.best-europe.org>)
- * LIB - Local and Innovative Biodiesel (<http://www.fedarene.org>)
- * RENEW - Renewable fuels for advanced powertrains (<http://www.renew-fuel.com>)

Participants of the Biofuel Cities European Partnership (BCEP) are invited to present their projects. To register your participation in the BCEP (registration is free of charge) visit: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=4025>

7. NEW PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES

08.08.07 Focus on pure plant oil: Biofuel Cities Quarterly online

The first issue of the Biofuel Cities print newsletter, Biofuel Cities Quarterly, is now available online. With a different focus each issue, Biofuel Cities Quarterly keeps you informed about technology and policy developments related to the application of biofuels. The focus of this first issue is 'Pure Plant Oil'.

Download it from here: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=5032>

Or subscribe to the print newsletter at: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=5203>

22.08.07 Searching for a Publication or Resource on biofuels?

The Biofuel Cities Resources Centre is for exclusive use by participants of the BCEP. Through the Centre's database, participants are invited both to present resources as well as to search and find hundreds of relevant resources. Over 220 different resources are available.

New resources this month range from downloadable publications such as:

- * Renewable Energy Road Map. Renewable energies in the 21st century: building a more sustainable future (publication, pdf-file)
- Sustainability of Brazilian bio-ethanol (publication, pdf-file)
- * The impacts of creating a domestic UK bioethanol industry (publication, pdf-file)

to links to relevant online resources such as:

- * European Biofuels Technology (<http://www.biofuelstp.eu/>)
- * Miljö Fordon (<http://www.miljofordon.se>)

In addition to the Resources Database, information on offer to BCEP participants, e.g. Study Tours, Workshops, Twinning – are being added to the Resource Centre. Information on these is exclusive to BCEP participants

To register your participation in the BCEP (registration is free of charge) visit: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=4025>

8. EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

One month following the launch of the Biofuel Cities European Partnership, the Events Calendar (see: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=4023>) already holds information on over 20 different European events that will be held in the next six months. Please send us your events to include in the Events Calendar and in next months Biofuel Cities Update.

Highlights include:

08-09.11.07

Clean Vehicles and Fuels, European Symposium and Exhibition, Stockholm, Sweden, which will see the launch of the BCEP, and

15.10.07 Biofuel Cities Expert Meeting - Practical barriers for the application of biofuels, Arnhem, The Netherlands, a workshop organised by the Biofuel Cities project

9. Editorial and legal information

The Biofuel Cities Update is a monthly e-newsletter that aims to keep you informed of developments in the field of biofuels and in the Biofuel Cities European Partnership.

Over 4000 people receive the Biofuels Cities Update.

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