

Biofuel Cities Update – September 2007

Issue #2 / September 2007

Welcome!

Welcome to the second 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 more than 730 peers or to 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. OECD DELIVERS BLOW TO EU BIOFUELS PLANS

Government support for biofuels will cause food shortages and lead to the destruction of natural habitats, while making little impact on climate change - this is the warning from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The report from a study carried out by the OECD delivers a severe blow to EU plans to obtain 10% of its transport fuel from plants by 2020.

The OECD expresses grave concerns about the social and environmental effects of biofuels and, according to the recent report, in the 'best-case scenario' biofuels will only be able to achieve a 3% reduction in energy-related CO2 emissions by 2050.

The EU is promoting the use of biofuels as an alternative energy source for transport. In 2003, it set itself an indicative target of increasing the use of biofuels in energy consumption to 5.75% by 2010. But a 2007 progress report shows that it will likely only achieve a 4.2% biofuels share in that year. Therefore, the Commission proposed in its 2007 "Energy Package" to step up its effort and demanded a mandatory target of 10% by 2020.

Download the full report at http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/fileadmin/template/projects/biofuels/files/Newsroom/OECD_Biofuels_Cure_Worse_Than_Disease_Sept07.pdf

(source: EurActiv, September 2007)

2. VOLVO LAUNCHES BIOFUEL TRUCKS

Exhibited in Stockholm, Sweden, for the first time at the end of August, Volvo Group displayed seven FM trucks equipped with Volvo's own 9-litre engines that have been specially modified by the Group's engineers to illustrate the possibilities of carbon dioxide-free transport.

"Volvo is part of the climate problem, but today we have shown that carbon dioxide-free transport is a possibility and that we, as a vehicle manufacturer, both can and will be part for the solution to the climate issue," says Leif Johansson, CEO of the Volvo Group.

The current shortage of both biomass for the production of renewable fuels, and finished fuels, does not lead the Volvo Group to view CO2-free transport as a utopian idea. One of the reasons for this are the second generation of renewable fuels that are produced through gasification and that generate both large volumes and a greater number of fuels to choose between.

The trucks exhibited in Stockholm were operated on the seven following renewable fuels/fuel combinations: biodiesel, biogas, DME, ethanol/methanol, synthetic diesel, hydrogen gas and biogas.

To read more: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=4022>

(source: GAVE-news, Sept 2007/ Transport News Network)

3. BREWING UP BIOFUEL IN SCOTLAND

In Scotland, scientists at the University of Abertay Dundee are looking into the possibilities of using residues from beer breweries and whisky distilleries to produce bioethanol.

The project will look into new methods of turning spent grain into bioethanol, a more environmentally friendly alternative to fossil fuels. Scientists all around the world have been trying to find a simple and cost-effective way to produce more biofuels from waste or low value products. This will be the focus of the year-long Dundee project, led by Professor Graeme Walker.

To read more:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=news.simplifiedocumentLucene&RCN=28266>

(source: CORDIS-news, August 2007)

4. LINK TO US!

Help promote the Biofuel Cities European Partnership and at the same time show that you are actively engaged in advancing the discussion on broadscale use of biofuels for transport by displaying the Biofuel Cities logo on your website.

Find out more at <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=5416>

5. POLICIES UPDATE

13.09.07 Tax cuts in Germany slow down biofuels growth

Germany's biodiesel production capacity was set to rise to a record five million tonnes in 2007, but has now been curbed after the industry failed to block the government from reversing a tax relief scheme in July. Biodiesel industry sources in Germany estimate that only about half the five million tonne capacity will be used in 2007 following a dip in demand after taxes on biofuels were introduced. The government implemented the tax in response to a ruling by the European Commission that Germany's tax relief scheme overcompensated biofuel producers.

On 1 January 2007, the government introduced legislation for all fuel companies to add 5% biodiesel to conventional diesel sold, easing the simultaneous imposition of the tax of EUR 0.47 on every litre of biodiesel.

"The biodiesel industry has peaked; capacity has grown very quickly and outstripped production and now some companies might even go bankrupt as the industry consolidates", says Norbert Allnoch, director of the International Economic Platform for Renewable Energies, an independent research body located in Munster.

To read more: http://www.biofuels-news.com/news/german_tax.html

(source: Biofuels international-news, August 2007)

12.09.07 Tax relief for biofuels in the UK

The UK Government intends to introduce new regulations for biofuels production, relieving small biofuels producers of tax duty. The changes will affect those which produce less than 2,500 litres annually, and took effect from 30 June 2007.

The regulations will also reduce how frequently large producers must submit tax returns from monthly to quarterly. Currently, UK law requires biofuel producers to pay duty of L 0.28 (EUR 0.42) on every litre they produce, hold a permit and submit returns to the UK tax office.

There are 1,400 producers of biofuels in the UK, a large proportion of which produce biofuels for their own usage. After a year of monitoring, the Government will deliberate whether to raise the threshold further.

To read more: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=4022>

(source: CORDIS-news, August 2007)

05.09.07 Dutch government plans to make polluting cars pay more

Parking fees to park cars that pollute the atmosphere (e.g. diesel cars and Sport Utility Vehicles) are to be increased. In contrast, parking will become less expensive for those cars that have less impact on the environment, for instance, cars that run on biofuels. Two Dutch Ministries (Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment - VROM - and the Home Office) are working on a legislative proposal which will allow Dutch local authorities to differentiate between parking tariffs.

The latest advanced parking meters allow cars to be charged according to their licence plates. Via the Internet, these new machines can be coupled to the database used by the Government Road Transport Agency, which contains information on all vehicles in The Netherlands.

If the Dutch parliament approves the plan, the new legislation is expected to come into force in 2008.

To read more: <http://gave.novem.nl/gave/index.asp?id=25&detail=1743>

(source: GAVE-news, August 2007)

04.09.07 Polish and Austrian Ministers support pure vegetable oil powered tractors

Pure vegetable oil might be one of the most promising of all renewable fuel sources. Particularly in agricultural transport and other agricultural applications, pure vegetable oil could play a key role in future farming strategies.

Supported by the Polish and Austrian Agricultural ministers, a consortium of seven organisations - from industry and agricultural, including The Netherlands Standardisation Institute - have submitted a proposal to leverage experiences from former research and development projects on rapeseed oil powered machinery into future emissions regulations.

Download press release at http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/fileadmin/template/projects/biofuels/files/Newsroom/press-release_john_deere_.pdf

6. PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

14.09.07 'Seeing is believing' - join study visits in Stockholm

Visits to Stockholm, which is represented with a range of participants in the Biofuel Cities European Partnership, from foreign delegations of politicians, civil servants and journalists have been frequent during the last year. Many want to see and hear about the trend towards biofuels and clean cars in Sweden with their own eyes and ears - and on site.

The visits provide participants with hands on experience of fuelling the cars at a filling station, riding in an ethanol bus and driving FFVs (flex-fuel vehicle), for instance. The tours are being organised as part of the European BEST project - Bioethanol for Sustainable Transport.

In the end of 2005 the Clean Vehicle Fleet in Stockholm amounted to over 10.000 vehicles, both private and public, and with a developed and rapidly growing refuelling infrastructure with around 40 fuelling stations for bioethanol in the Stockholm Region.

About BEST: The project Bioethanol for Sustainable Transport deals with the introduction and market penetration of bioethanol as a vehicle fuel, the establishment of infrastructure for supply and fuelling of bioethanol, the introduction and wider use of ethanol cars and flexible fuel vehicles on the market. For more information visit: www.best-europe.org

To read more: <http://www.best-europe.org/Pages/ContentPage.aspx?id=476>

(source: BEST Newsletter #1)

06.09.07 Report from 1st Biofuel Cities Study Tour now available

A group of interested biofuel end-users participated in the 1st Biofuel Cities study tour, organised on 21 May 2007, to show some excellent examples of biofuels in use in Stockholm. The participants represented local governments, as well as commercial fleet owners and research institutes.

Stockholm is an advanced community in the field of biofuels, with interesting projects and activities. The participants learned about flexi-fuel vehicles, the local approach to building research and production facilities, and the development of an extraordinary market demand in Sweden. Site visits included an E85 fuelling station and a public transport bus depot. A particular highlight 'in action' was learning how the City of Stockholm approached the BEST project - 'BioEthanol for Sustainable Transport' (see above).

More details are available in the Workshop Report.

Download the full report at http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/fileadmin/template/projects/biofuels/files/Newsroom/End-user_WS_1_STK_Final_Report.pdf

04.09.07 Blooming Futures

Blooming Futures is a not-for-profit workers' cooperative that has established itself as one of the UK leaders in promoting the use of Pure Plant Oil in diesel engines. Blooming Futures have built a wealth of knowledge and experience in actually converting engines to run off vegetable oil, and it continues to advise government, industry and the general public on routes to more sustainable transportation, powered by cold-pressed, Pure Plant Oil

To read more: <http://www.bloomingfutures.com>

(source: Biofuel Cities Project Database)

21.08.07 La Ribera in biodiesel

Using waste products as an energy source offers both financial and environmental benefits. The wastes are safely disposed of, while the low raw materials cost makes production of fuels more commercially viable. This was demonstrated by The Agència Energètica de la Ribera (AER), Spain, which created a project called 'La Ribera in biodiesel'. During 2004, 260 698 litres of waste vegetable oil were collected from 418 local businesses and converted into biodiesel. Initially, the fuel was used by municipal vehicles. However, the scheme is being extended to private vehicles, helping to reduce the region's dependence on fossil fuels.

In addition, the project aims to extend the collection of waste vegetable oils to domestic homes. However, local councils are reluctant to locate oil collection tanks on streets, due to the risk of accidents.

To read more: www.aer-ribera.com

(source: Biofuel Cities Project Database)

7. NEW PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES

05.09.2007 Biofuel Cities End-user Workshop Stockholm 2007 Final Report

This report provides the results from the first Biofuel Cities workshop for biofuel end-users that took place in Stockholm on 22 May 2007. The aim of the event was to discuss - with a diverse group of end-users - their needs, wishes and perceptions of biofuels, the barriers and challenges they, and where opportunities have arisen. Considering the complex issues at hand, it proved helpful that the workshop was organised in collaboration with a city that has extensive experience with biofuels – Stockholm.

Download the full report at http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/fileadmin/template/projects/biofuels/db/resource_upload_folder/237/End-user_WS_1_STK_Final_Report.pdf

28.09.07 New resources in the Biofuel Cities Resource Centre

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

New resources this month range from downloadable publications such as:

- Biofuels – At What Cost? Government support for ethanol and biodiesel in the United States
- Biofuel Cities End-user Study Tour Programme_Stockholm_2007_Final Report

to links to relevant online resources such as:

- Renewable Energy Industry website
- IEA Bioenergy Task 39 'Commercializing 1st- and 2nd-Generation Liquid Biofuels from Biomass'

In addition to the Resources Database, the Resource Centre offers information to Biofuel Cities European Partnership participants, e.g. Study Tours, Workshops, Twinings.

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

8. EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

26.09.07 Biofuel Cities online events centre

To keep you up-to-date with the many conferences, workshops and seminars taking place across Europe, we have compiled a calendar of events for you to plan your attendance and contribute to various debates. The user-friendly interface allows you to find events corresponding to your specific interests by entering keywords, the date or venue in the search engine. The database holds information on an increasing number of events to be held in different European countries over the next six months.

Organising an event? Tell us and our partners about it! Send us the details to secretariat@biofuel-cities.eu and connect to your audience.

To visit the events centre: <http://www.biofuel-cities.eu/index.php?id=4023>

Highlights include:

01.10.07 The CEE Biofuels Forum, London, UK

"Maximising the Financial Potential in the CEE Biofuels industry" is the strategy behind the Forum. The forum targets companies in biofuels production and distribution, investment and the oil and automotive industries to discuss current issues in the field and to expand their business network.

Website: <http://www.energy.easteurolink.co.uk/index-Biofuels.html>

15.10.07 Biofuels Conference and Biodiesel Expo, Newark, UK

The Biodiesel-Expo 2007 will be the place to meet existing and new suppliers as well as network with both large and small scale producers. The Biofuels Conference will run alongside the Expo.

Conference website: <http://www.biofuelsmedia.com/conference>

Expo website: <http://www.biodiesel-expo.co.uk>

24.10.07 Financing Indian Biofuels and Carbon Markets, London, UK

The one-day conference will cover numerous topics such as, the status and potential of the Indian biofuels and, carbon markets and investment opportunities and risk management for investors.

Conference website: <http://www.easteurolink.co.uk>

08-09.11.07 Clean Vehicles and Fuels, European Symposium and Exhibition, Stockholm, Sweden

Clean Vehicles and Fuel aims at addressing climate change and reducing the dependency of the transport sector on oil. Products and services for cleaner vehicles and cleaner fuels will be displayed, current initiatives and projects presented and national and international policies and trends will be discussed.

The official launch of the Biofuel Cities project will take place during this event.

Website: <http://www.cleanvehicles.net>

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.

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Editors: Stefanie Lay (responsible) / Amalia Ochoa / Norma Schoenherr

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