

PRESS RELEASE

How can local governments implement clean(er) fuel policies in transport? Former Dutch Prime Minister supports handbook for local implementation of cleaner fuel policies in Europe

Freiburg, 9 February 2009 – With increasing concerns about climate change and the environment, local governments are recognising their role by implementing environmental policies to fight global warming. Using the right clean(er) fuel and vehicles policies is important to achieve CO₂ reduction targets, but often local governments face challenges on how to make such measures operational. In order to help them in overcoming these, Biofuel Cities has developed a handbook revealing key success factors for the local use of clean(er) fuels and vehicles.

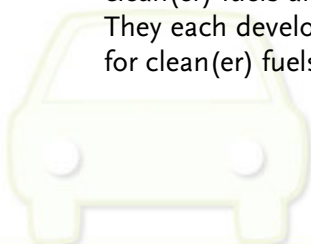
More than ever before politicians - national, European and international- are calling upon all to Think Globally and Act Locally. It is commonly agreed that the local development and implementation of environmental policy, and in particular of clean(er) fuel policies, can be extremely effective and play a major role in national policy implementation, since local governments are closer to the market and to main stakeholders. However, this also implies that local governments are confronted with the many existing challenges in the implementation of clean(er) fuel policies in the local market. These challenges may constitute a risk, unless workable solutions are implemented at the right time and in the right place. But how can local governments overcome these challenges? How can they make local policies on clean(er) fuels operational?

To answer these questions, Biofuel Cities has developed a handbook for local implementation of clean(er) fuel policies in Europe, which will be presented for the first time at the Biofuel Cities Workshop to be held in Rotterdam on 19-20 February 2009.

Former Dutch Prime Minister Dr Ruud Lubbers, in his foreword for the handbook, describes it as a “**necessary and useful instrument**” to support the local use of clean(er) fuels. “**The main added value of this handbook is that it is based on the lessons learned from real projects which have successfully been completed in European Cities**”, Dr Lubbers continues. The experiences of Stockholm (Sweden), Graz (Austria) and Lille (France) are described in detail and offer good practice examples for all cities interested in achieving clean(er) fuel/ vehicles targets.

Key for success proved to be the creation of a local market for clean(er) fuel and vehicles. In the establishing this market, local governments realised that they themselves are a crucial piece of the chain. As such, they took the lead in the process to establish long lasting market conditions for clean(er) fuels and vehicles, an approach that succeeded in involving local enterprises and end users. They each developed a framework of policy measures that supports and creates a viable local market for clean(er) fuels and vehicles.

www.biofuel-cities.eu



To learn more about the findings and experiences described in the handbook, representatives of local governments and entrepreneurs are welcome to join the discussion and to participate in the Rotterdam workshop, where their comments will contribute to finalise the handbook. Hosted by the Rotterdam Climate Initiative (RCI) as part of the Clinton Climate Initiative, a support initiative for cities that have pledged to accelerate their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the workshop offers a rich programme open to questions and debates.

Words: 533

Background Information:

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 www.biofuel-cities.eu - a one-stop-shop for information on biofuels application; online facilities, workshops and study tours to exchange and network with your peers and learn from experts; news, publications and tools to provide information, guidance and support.

Biofuel Cities European Partnership participants have full access to all features and participation is free. The Partnership was unofficially launched in August 2007, when 625 biofuels professionals and other interested stakeholders signed up. The official launch of the European Partnership took place at the Clean Vehicles and Fuels Symposium in Stockholm on November 2007.

The Biofuel Cities European Partnership was created and is managed by the Biofuel Cities project, which aims to demonstrate the broadscale use of new and innovative biofuel technologies. Biofuel Cities covers the complete chain from feedstock to biofuels production, distribution and utilisation in vehicle fleets. The project is co-ordinated by seven partners* that share unique and extensive experiences, not only on biofuels research and application and sustainable mobility, but also on the specific needs of local governments and private enterprise. It is supported by the European Commission under the EU's Sixth Research Framework Programme.

*SenterNovem, Exergia, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, INEM – International Network for Environmental Management, IPIEO – Institute for Fuels and Renewable Energy, NEN – Netherlands Standardisation Institute, VITO - Flemish Institute for Technological Research

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