

**Günther OETTINGER**

EU Commissioner for Energy

Check Against Delivery  
Seul le texte prononcé fait foi  
Es gilt das gesprochene Wort

Speech of Commissioner Oettinger at the ManagEnergy  
Conference

**Brussels, 13 April 2011**

I am delighted to join you again this year at the ManagEnergy awards ceremony. This is the second year I participate and it is very encouraging that this year's awards scheme for local and regional energy actors has once again attracted such high quality submissions.

I could not join you earlier this morning because the College of Commissioners meets every Wednesday morning. This morning, you have been discussing important topics like the EU's 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, Energy Efficiency Plan 2011, the paramount importance of regions and the Covenant of Mayors and initiatives concerning smart cities.

Today, Wednesday, at the heart of the EU Sustainable Energy Week, is devoted to discussing and sharing information on sustainable energy actions which are being carried out by local and regional public authorities and their energy agencies.

Compared with when we met one year ago, there are now nearly twice as many signatories – almost 2400 signatories to the Covenant of Mayors, each of whom has given a binding commitment that their community will exceed the 2020 targets.

ManagEnergy helps such ambitious local actors to deliver on their commitments. It does this by providing information, by promoting best practices and by providing opportunities for networking across the EU, for example through today's annual ManagEnergy conference.

It is good to see so many local energy actors from across the Union here today. I hope that you will take this opportunity to network, to learn from each other, and that you will share your Best Practices in the field of sustainable energy.

In order to help you, I am very happy to announce the publication today of a new ManagEnergy brochure entitled "Sharing success – Local approaches to energy efficiency and renewable energy". This new ManagEnergy publication presents 13 outstanding projects carried out by local and regional actors who are committed to taking action on sustainable energy.

An important way to accelerate progress at the local level is through "partnerships". I know that you have been discussing partnerships between energy agencies and public authorities this morning. If you have not yet established such a partnership at home, perhaps now is a good time to do so.

At an EU level, what needs to be done has been clearly spelled out in our EU policy documents, Directives and Action Plans.

The recently adopted Energy Efficiency Plan stresses the important role of the public sector, and requires it to lead by example. A stronger emphasis on energy efficiency in the public sector is crucial, covering public purchasing, the refurbishment of public buildings and the encouragement of high performance in cities and communities.

I know that financing is important for all of you. EU regional funds have traditionally financed energy efficiency investments only in public and commercial buildings, but it is now possible to use these funds in the residential sector in all Member States. Moreover, the use of regional financial engineering instruments has recently been extended to energy efficiency in buildings.

I would also like to draw your attention to the European Local Energy Assistance facility "ELENA", which can provide grants to local and regional authorities. ELENA contributes to the costs of technical assistance for developing bankable packages of sustainable energy investments. You will hear more about this initiative later today and tomorrow afternoon.

The need for action to combat the risks of energy security and climate change has never been more urgent. As a result, we need to work more closely together across the EU to accelerate the implementation of sustainable energy policies at the local level.

The Intelligent Energy Europe Programme (which funds the ManagEnergy initiative), is a potentially valuable source of EU funding for local energy policy implementation, for creating more favourable local market conditions, and for promoting best practices.

Before closing, I would like to draw your attention to the “new look” ManagEnergy website, which has been given a major face-lift since we met last year. This now includes a new Energy Agency Corner, which is designed to encourage networking between energy agencies from all over Europe.

I would also encourage you to sign up for the ManagEnergy capacity building workshops which will be held in different regions of the EU during this year to support energy agencies and municipalities with the development, implementation and financing of their Sustainable Energy Action Plans.

Let me say warm “thank you” to all those who have kindly contributed to the success of this ManagEnergy event. I hope that you will take home some useful lessons from this event, and from your participation in other events at this European Sustainable Energy Week. I am very pleased to hear that 544 Local energy days are being organised all over Europe this week. Many of these are taking place with the support of Covenant signatory cities and energy agencies.

Lastly, I would ask all of you to consider very carefully how you might be able to replicate - on your home territories - the excellent initiatives which have won this year’s ManagEnergy local energy awards. Then, please come back next year and share your own success stories!