



# European Conference for Renewable Energy 'Intelligent Policy Options'

Berlin, 19-21 January 2004

## Session Conclusions 19<sup>th</sup> January 2004

### Session 1: The Campaign for Take-Off 1999-2003: Sharing Skills and Achievements to foster Renewable Energy Development in Europe

#### The Renewable Energy Campaign for Take-Off 1999-2003 - The Background

The "European Conference for Renewable Energy – Intelligent Policy Options" represents the **Closing Conference** of the Renewable Energy Campaign for Take-Off. The Campaign, launched by the European Commission in 1999, was an essential element of the strategy outlined in the White Paper on Renewable Energy Sources which was confirmed by the Green Paper on the Security of Energy Supply (2000).

The European Union is committed to a **strong and growing policy framework for renewable energies** whilst aligning the greater use of renewables with the necessary trends for intensifying energy efficiency. The general European target is now supported by two pioneer Directives on Green Electricity and Biofuels. More recent packages include the energy performance of buildings, energy services and co-generation.

In line with the general European target of a 12% renewable share in 2010, the Campaign for Take-off firstly assessed and set **ambitious targets for near-market renewable energy sectors** to serve as benchmarks for decision makers, planners and local communities to objectively measure progress in the markets. Based on those, it drew up **communication plans and tools** as vehicle to disseminate successful initiatives in Europe, to spread best-practice, to raise critical awareness of decision makers at local, regional, national and European level, to ensure a strong level of public support and to stimulate the necessary trends towards increase private investment in renewables. Cooperation with Member State's action was a crucial starting point for the success of the Campaign.

The Session focused on the following key issues:

- **Panel 1a:** Experience in the utilisation of Renewable Energy Sources in cities – How feasible is it to develop Renewable Energy generation in an urban environment?
- **Panel 1b:** Renewable Energy Sources deployment at regional and local level – From dependency to security of supply: How far and fast can regions improve their energy mix?
- **Panel 1c:** Paving the way towards 100 % Renewable Energy based communities & islands: utopia or ambitious reality?

In each of these panels, high-level panellists contributed with their experience and know-how to identify the key-elements for successful RES implementation in the respective areas. They discussed the motivations and difficulties encountered in the implementation of renewable energy projects as well as shared lessons learnt with the conference delegates.

Based on the debate during this Session, the following conclusions were taken:

### **Fostering the up-take of renewable energies:**

The Campaign for Take-Off was designed to act as a catalyst for the development of promising key sectors in the field of renewable energy sources by setting objective targets for 2003. The Campaign is considered having been highly successful in **providing clear benchmarks for progress and policies** and for providing clear signals for decision makers at all levels to take up similarly ambitious targets. **Set objectives were reached or even surpassed** in some sectors (wind, PV), whereas others are still lagging behind (solar thermal, biomass). Wind, for example, reached the CTO target of “10.000 MW” already in 2000.

### **Energy Planning and targeting:**

Pioneer regions, cities and municipalities in Europe **owe their success in achieving a genuine change in their energy supply mix to reliable, coherent and ambitious energy plans** covering a consequent portfolio of the main parameters determining energy-related decision making. It was well illustrated that in order to further promote renewable energy sources and demand-side management, integrated energy planning incorporating a mix of legal, regulatory, financial, communication and training measures is crucial. It was acknowledged that a **European Campaign is an effective tool to raise awareness on these parameters, to showcase those pioneer programmes and initiatives and to stimulate replication.**

### **Integrating policies and concepts for sustainability:**

The debated showcases demonstrate that **integrated policies and concepts** aiming at increasing the share of renewable energy sources in combination with a conscious application of leading energy efficiency measures in the various end-use sectors are highly successful. European legislation in the energy field, such as the Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings, or newly designed support areas such as the 6<sup>th</sup> RTD Framework Programme's CONCERTO area and horizontal areas of the Intelligent Energy-Europe Programme push forward this integrated approach.

### **Developing the potential of renewable energy generation in urban environments:**

Urban areas represent the largest group of energy consumers in Europe. Several large urban areas across Europe have demonstrated an outstanding level of excellence with regard to the integration of sustainable energy concepts, including renewable energies. It has been shown that improving living conditions, as well as qualification and regeneration of declining industrial areas are objectives linked to RES implementation, for instance in the framework of Agenda 21. The discussion agreed on the urgent priority for decision makers to **plan sustainable energy strategies at short- medium and longterm perspective** in order to provide **clear signals to the private sector and those facilitating investment.**

Integrated concepts covering all **main commodities, public services and building standards** which include energy efficiency and renewable energy equipment were presented and strongly recommended by the City Authorities.

### **Improving the energy mix at local and regional level:**

The closeness of energy decisions to the citizens and the creation of extensive partnerships between the different actors involved were demonstrated to be favourable conditions for RES that especially occur at a local level. **The decentralised nature of RES** has been a pre-condition of success, bringing RES closer to the private sector and to the citizens. Experience has shown that RES can be instrumental in revitalising rural and industrial areas by creating new local markets, expertise and employment. **Local policy can have a considerable impact in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**, if the objectives, the targets and the top down message are precisely formulated. The transfer of know how between the regions, with specifically developed technology, will contribute to a balanced EU and Member States energy mix. The creation of Partnerships between the different actors and the European Commission has importantly contributed to stimulating the implementation of RES at local and regional levels. **Excellent examples of RES implementation in the regions needs to now become part of the “business as usual” activities accross the EU**, in an integrated concept aligned with measures towards a true intensification of energy efficiency.

The panels acknowledged the continued necessity to tackle sustainable energy concepts directly in reach of the local communities and to foster exchange and knowledge transfer throughout Europe in a pro-active way.

### **Paving the way towards 100% Renewable energy based communities:**

An increasing number of communities in Europe head for a 100% renewable energy basis. Islands and remote rural communities have demonstrated along the campaign that they can be considered as privileged laboratories for renewables in all their dimensions. In these communities, the renewables option was favoured by the difficulty to get at conventional resources and their high supply costs, in direct contrast to RES potential. It is in these areas where 100% RES initiatives had a stronger development and actual repercussion, decisively contributing to guarantee security of supply and to the protection of the environment as well as economic welfare. One of the most relevant conclusions is the fact that islands and isolated communities **can and should turn themselves into exceptional showcases and demonstration centres** of sustainable energy communities' viability. Main success factors reported were **leadership and clear policy frameworks**. In particular, for islands and remote rural communities, 100% RES solutions are being successfully developed when these key factors were clearly defined.

### **Promoting Sustainable Energy through Community intervention:**

Lack of awareness and information is still one of the most important barriers towards the utilisation of renewable energy sources and investing in best available energy efficiency technology. The **Campaign's innovator aspects allowed the search of new market niches for RES development** and contributed with an extensive ensemble of cases to the replication capacity of projects and initiatives, which has to be strengthened in the future.

Today, the Campaign allows showing not only innovator solutions in the field of RES, but also their application to emerging sectors within industry, construction, transport, or other fields such as tourism, services, and water production. **Likewise, its innovative spirit reached advanced and imaginative formulas of financing and management**, which will help lifting still existing barriers to RES development. **Future Community action** is considered essential to fill gaps in **level of awareness** and to **produce replication** of best-practise throughout Europe.

## **Committing key stakeholders to the European Renewable Energy Targets:**

One of the main vehicles of the CTO to attract the commitment of key market stakeholders, planners and decision makers at all levels in Europe, was the 'Renewable Energy Partnership' scheme. Member States, regions, cities, municipalities, industries and their associations were called upon to join the network by signing up to strong commitments and tangible targets. 130 renewable energy programmes and projects involving more than 700 partner organisations in the EU, in Accession Countries and beyond – have successfully joined the Campaign in 2000 – 2003. These lighthouse initiatives serve as credible pacemakers to other communities. They acknowledged the true benefit of forming part of a committed European network and the unique visibility of their initiatives to a large European public enabled by the Campaign Measures.

### **Summary of Key Recommendations for a Successor Initiative: European Public Awareness Campaign for Sustainable Energy 2004-2007**

- 1. Integrate renewable energies and energy efficiency in a single approach for future action for public awareness on sustainable energy**
- 2. Assess and set tangible targets for the renewables and the end-use sector within a future Campaign – in line with the legislative pillars set in place by European Policy.**
- 3. Take-up strong commitments from the ground and involve market actors and decision makers at all levels in a direct way with the European targets and action.**
- 4. Disseminate and spread information on the benefits and success stories of sustainable energy concepts through effective, well balanced promotional programmes and in cooperation with the Member States, in order to overcome resistance of local politicians and planners, who currently lack of awareness and information.**
- 5. Use the unique potential of promotional schemes to identify lighthouse initiatives and to raise their profile as show windows in order to boost replication of best practise and innovative sustainable schemes throughout Europe.**