

Eight messages for the G8 and EU

Local government calls for a climate for change

1 Provide resources for action - from rhetoric to reality

National governments need to set aside long term financial and technical resources and put in place legislative frameworks to tackle climate change. Energy efficiency is the first step towards reducing our energy needs and essential for securing a competitive economy.

2 Enable local government to deliver local solutions

Using local knowledge and expertise is vital. Local government can target programmes by identifying where action is most needed.

3 Put policy coherence above political compromise

The G8 and EU must be prepared to carry out audits of major legislation and policies prior to adoption to improve coherency and raise national input into climate change and sustainable energy policies.

4 Lead by example

G8 members and the EU must ensure a consistent approach to climate change world-wide. They should lead by example, ensuring strong action on climate change at home and internationally, in development programmes, donor funding and trade agreements.

5 Recognise link between poverty and climate change

Poor and middle income countries need help from the G8 and EU members to develop strategies to deal with the effects of climate change, particularly taking precautionary action to enhance their resilience to climate change and by adopting efficient, clean and renewable energies.

6 Put procurement policy into practice

National governments should make sure their own contracts do not damage the environment, and provide incentives for others to follow suit. The EU must push for energy savings and renewable energy in public contracts.

7 Provide incentives for carbon reduction

Measures to cut greenhouse gas emissions and to tackle climate change need to be stimulated by financial incentives.

8 Recognise global benefits of local prosperity

Local action to reduce fuel poverty, malnutrition and skills shortages and improve regeneration brings global economic benefits.

The energy hierarchy

Reduce the need for energy



Use energy more efficiently



Use renewable energy



Any continuing use of fossil fuels to be clean and efficient

Local action, global benefits

Northern Ohio Public Energy Company (USA)

Power in numbers



Local authorities are achieving major CO₂ emission reductions by turning to renewable energy such as wind power
Photo © Photos.com

Five years ago, communities in Northern Ohio voted to create a public energy company which would allow the local authority to serve all utility customers within the vicinity.

The setting up of the Northern Ohio Public Energy Company (NOPEC) saw over 100 communities come together into a single buying unit acting on behalf of around 600,000 electricity consumers. This allowed NOPEC to negotiate a six year contract on behalf of its member

communities with electricity supplier Green Mountain Energy, a supplier which generates electricity from less polluting sources such as wind, thermal and natural gas.

By September 2002, 94 municipalities and 64 small towns were participating in the contract. These users were making savings on their energy bills and using energy from less polluting sources. The work of NOPEC has resulted in staggered savings for consumers on their electricity costs of 4% initially and then 6%, and has seen a shifting energy mix from 60% coal and 40% nuclear power to 98% natural gas and 2% renewable energy. Savings of CO₂ emissions of over 30% on traditional electricity uses have been achieved.

For further information, visit:
<http://www.nopecinfo.org>

Newark and Sherwood District Council (England)

Tackling fuel poverty

Newark and Sherwood has almost eliminated fuel poverty among residents in public sector housing. In 1984, just 6% of dwellings were capable of delivering affordable warmth - now, 98.4% do as a result of investment in energy efficiency.

Not only are houses warmer, but the average householder in Newark and Sherwood has saved £213 each year, which has resulted in an additional spending power of £1.25 million in the local economy, figures suggest. Local schools have found improved performance through better take up of homework and the mental health of those previously living in fuel poverty has significantly improved. The improvement programmes have created 30 jobs locally each year for 18 years.

The overall spend for 7,500 properties will have been approximately £16 million for the period 1988-2008. The council has found that the associated benefits paid for themselves within four years.

For further information, visit: <http://nsdc.rol.co.uk/pp/gold/viewGold.asp?ID=1944>

Local leadership, local results

Chalon-sur-Saône (France)

Leading change

The district of Chalon-sur-Saône is leading climate change mitigation by reducing greenhouse gas emissions more quickly and vigorously than required by targets agreed by France and the Kyoto Protocol. It has set itself a target of reducing its emissions by 5.2% within three years instead of the ten years required by legal targets.

This ambitious goal requires the involvement of the local authority, administrative services, public bodies, businesses and households. The programme is part of the Privilege project coordinated by the WWF, the global conservation organisation and supported by the European Commission, which aims to encourage cities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The district will be connected to a piped heat network, which is being extended with the installation of a wood fired generator to replace the old oil and coal burning one. This 4 MW system will meet the energy needs of the equivalent of 1,000 apartments and allow for a 94% cut in greenhouse gases on the emissions of the previous heating system.

Resilient Communities and Cities initiative

The initiative aims to develop greater resilience in physical infrastructure and buildings, as well as in the institutions, social and economic life of communities and cities worldwide.

It defines a resilient community or city as a city, town or neighbourhood that reduces its vulnerability to dramatic change or extreme events, that anticipates and responds creatively to economic and social environmental change in order to increase its long term sustainability.

For more information, visit: <http://www.iclei.org/rcc>

Cities for Climate Protection campaign

The campaign involves over 500 local authorities internationally. It provides them with a framework to develop local global warming reduction plans, whilst also addressing air pollution emissions, making the communities better places to live.

For more information, visit: <http://www.iclei.org/co2>

DISPLAY campaign



Children at the Wyvern School, in Dorset, England, hold up their energy usage certificate
Photo © Energie-Cités

One of the first steps local government can take to tackle climate change is to monitor and assess its energy usage. The Energie-Cités DISPLAY campaign helps local authorities and their municipal buildings calculate their energy usage. It also encourages them to display energy consumption data in a user friendly way in public buildings to help promote energy efficiency awareness. Over 850 public buildings are already involved.

For more information, visit:
<http://www.display-campaign.org>

Climate Star Awards

In February 2005, 22 local authorities and networks from ten countries were awarded the Climate Alliance's Climate Star for excellent performance in local climate projects and the promotion of renewable energy. Recent projects have centred on biomass and solar energy to help local authorities move away from sourcing energy from distant regions.

For more information, visit:
<http://www.klimabuendnis.org/aktuell/climatestar2004.htm>

Find out more from the signatories

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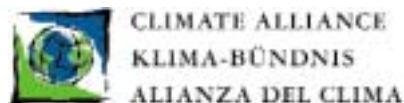
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