

11th Energie-Cités' Annual Conference
Delft-Zoetermeer, 23rd-24th March 2006

**Facing the challenge of energy and climate change
Local actors working together more effectively!**

Ladies and gentlemen, Dear friends,

It is now clearly established, that our world is not only unsustainable, from the energy and climate point of views, but the continuation of the current trend is absolutely IMPOSSIBLE! Here are the conclusions of the Director of the International Energy Agency, when presenting the figures of the last World Energy Outlook.

In our countries we probably are finishing a long period of abundance of energy. The rapid entry of China, India, Brazil, etc; on the energy scene is changing radically the situation.

Doubling or tripling energy capacities is impossible. Doubling CO₂ emissions is impossible. But these are the current trends.

However, figures are clear. This diagnosis is now more or less shared but the policies that are implemented largely continue to do the same as the past.

We need more radical changes.

Only slight changes of the curbs are not enough!

However, if we are – in this room - more convinced about this reality, what can we say of:

- Our colleagues in our municipalities,
- Local stakeholders and citizens in our cities,
- Our national and EU representatives
- Etc.

We may be disappointed in reading the last Green Paper on European Energy Strategy that has been published two weeks ago by the European Commission. This document is totally focused on energy supply, talking only about investments for energy supply and transmission and not for the control of energy demand, improvement of comfort, decreasing of fuel poverty. Strong reactions, even from national governments like Germany, have already pointed out the weaknesses of the European Commission proposals.

It is not enough to say that energy efficiency is not in contradiction with the Lisbon strategy. We have to act in this direction. Intelligent energy is good for growth, innovation, employment and social equity.

We have no chance to change anything if such diagnosis is not shared by an increasing part of the society.

As elected people, no doubts we would be more active if the “political” demand from society was stronger! Intelligent energy is a cultural issue before being a technical one!

It is the reason for organising the 11th Annual Conference of Energie-Cités on the theme:

Facing the challenge of energy and climate change
Local actors working together more effectively!

and for launching officially the “BELIEF” project, supported by the European Commission.

What does BELIEF mean? « **BELIEF - Building in Europe Local Intelligent Energy Forums** ». In 20 municipalities from 11 countries, local sustainable energy communities will be formed or strengthened. That means that hundreds of partners will be involved in activities at local level.

Congratulations to all of you! You show the example that should be implemented everywhere. Intelligent energy policies require using the INTELLIGENCE of everybody!

The whole programme is organised around this concept and its implementation.

However doing so at local level is good, but is not enough!

Last year in Clermont-Ferrand, when voting the orientations of Energie-Cités for the next two years, one of the six priorities was:

“Building of ”interest communities” with all the sustainable energy players, including private companies with a direct interest in energy efficiency and renewable energy activities.”

One year later, time is come to transform punctual contacts and partnerships that Energie-Cités has developed with public, associative and private bodies in a European Local Intelligent Energy Partnership or Forum, bringing together the main European players on intelligent energy issues at local level.

Indeed, we need to be stronger. And to be stronger we must join our forces!

Ladies and gentlemen, Dear friends,

Take profit of your participation at this Conference

Enjoy these two days in the Netherlands!