

QUARTERLY UPDATE

Contract reference no.: 2598/03-2003/061399 (Asia Pro Eco Programme)

Project Title: Partnership support for renewable energy between European and Asian towns

Name of Beneficiary: Leicester Energy Agency (Leicester City Council)

Period covered by this Quarterly Update: 11th December 2003 to 10th March 2004

Due date of this Quarterly Update: 11th March 2004

I. Introduction

During the period covered by this third quarterly update, preparation has been taking place for the seminars to be held in Leicester, Rajkot and Vila Nova de Gaia, and work has been underway to prepare case studies and training material, and to consider local energy scenarios/strategies.

II. Description of Activities

Activity 4: Preparation: case studies, training material

ENERGAIA are using the ENTHUSE toolkit (www.enthuse.info) to help with the preparation of case studies and training material for the Asia Pro Eco workshop in Vila Nova de Gaia. The process of translating this material to Portuguese has begun. Information on national best practice renewable energy projects is also being collected. Local renewable energy scenarios/strategy are currently being developed, using the methodology report from the SIREN project. The scenarios for the development of renewable energy in Gaia will be presented and discussed in the workshop. It is intended that all the relevant information for the preparation of the workshop will be made available soon on the website www.energaia.pt/asia.

In Leicester, it is intended to utilise the ENTHUSE toolkit at the Renewable Energy Workshop, with other material on renewable energy for the workshop attendees.

In Rajkot, education packages for generating awareness among school children on the use of renewable energy sources are under development, to educate the children on the efficient use of energy and benefits of the use of renewable energy. A list of agencies which are involved in various production activities in the renewable energy sector such as solar cooker producers, equipment for gasifier production and other equipment etc. has been prepared. A mini power plant (Pilot Plant) of 300 kW (kilowatt) for the production of power using bio mass gasifier technology has been under development and is to be included in the project. It is expected that the project will be completed by the end of this month.

Activity 5: Interim virtual meeting between partners (using video conferencing)

Although no further virtual meetings between the project partners have been held since the Leicester Energy Agency and ENERGAIA tested internet-based video conferencing and held a virtual meeting in December, communication between the partners has continued by telephone, email and post. Future possibilities for using video conferencing between the partners are being considered.

Activity 6: Website development

A website for the project on the Leicester Energy Agency website has been extended (<http://www.energyagency.co.uk/pages/asiaproeco01.html>), for example giving more information on the project methodology and links to relevant websites. ENERGAIA have developed a website, in Portuguese, (www.energaia.pt/asia) exclusively to support the promotion of renewable energy in Gaia. The website will be used as a tool to prepare the Asia Pro-Eco workshop in Gaia, to disseminate information on renewable energy (training material and case-studies) in order to involve the community and to help develop partnerships between local actors.

Activity 7: Preparation for seminars/workshops

The partners in the project have been speaking to relevant local actors about renewable energy in the lead up to the workshop in their town, as in Rajkot for example.

Rajkot Municipal Corporation have visited the industries that manufacture renewable energy products such as producer gas producing plants and briquetting production units replacing coal known as white coal and other small power plants etc. The most commonly used product is the briquettes of agriculture products such as sugarcane husk etc. as substitute for coal for production of heat.

Manufacturers involved in the production of equipment for solar energy applications have been met and different issues have been discussed with them.

Possible users of this technology from various sections of the society, like solar cookers for domestic use and solar water heaters for household needs and industries in particular have been consulted to know their views as to the applicability of such technologies in industries. The Rajkot area is surrounded by a number of tile manufacturing units, which consume a large amount of coal and crude oil for heating purposes. As the price of coal and oil is on the rise and so the alternative sources were sought. This white coal is an accepted option for the same.

It has been planned to hold a workshop in Rajkot at a weekend in May or June. The date is to be finalised although possible dates are: 8-9 May 2004 (1st Workshop), 12-13 June 2004 (2nd Workshop).

The Leicester Energy Agency has been in contact with various community organisations interested in developing renewable energy and recently has been interviewing some local businesses about renewable energy. The Leicester Renewable Energy Workshop is being arranged for Friday 26th March 2004 at the National Space Centre in Leicester. The first part of the workshop involves considering a future vision for renewable energy locally, with the second part looking at identifying actions to support renewable energy in the local area.

ENERGAIA, together with ADENE, published a booklet on the renewable energy potential of Gaia. This is the report of the study conducted under European Commission Altener project OPTIRES "A planning tool for the optimal regional integration of renewable energy sources". This booklet presents the renewable energy technologies with the greatest potential for Gaia and specific proprietary renewable energy projects. The OPTIRES project presentation seminar, which is expected to be held in early April, will be an excellent opportunity to invite all the interested actors for Gaia's Asia Pro Eco workshop.

ENERGAIA are in the process of agreeing a date, venue etc. for the Gaia Asia Pro Eco renewable energy workshop. The workshop is likely to be held on the 28th of May (ENERGY DAY); however confirmation is awaited from interested parties. The workshop will bring together businesses, local politicians, citizens, NGO's and experts. A representative from the central government is also attending the workshop. Local media will also be invited to participate in the event. Targeted people and institutions are already being contacted.

III. Other Issues

In Portugal, the "Primeiro de Janeiro" daily newspaper published, on the 20th January 2004, an extended news report on renewable energy in Vila Nova de Gaia. The report included a summary of ENERGAIA's activities in the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy, with a special focus on an aim of the Asia Pro Eco project of developing a local network for the promotion of renewable energy in Vila Nova de Gaia.

The next activities by the partners in the project include further work on case studies and training material, and detailed preparation for the seminars to be held in Leicester, Vila Nova de Gaia, and Rajkot in the coming months.