

**Identifying biofuels opportunities and user needs in 5 European communities -
Establishing sustainable regional biofuels networks to increase the take-up of biofuels in
the transport sector.**



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News from North West England (UK)

LANCASHIRE

Lancashire investigate the potential for biogas



Biogas is derived from waste streams and agricultural crops. Once upgraded to biomethane it can be used in vehicles that can currently operate on natural gas. Unlike natural gas biomethane results in very low CO₂ emissions and can be CO₂ negative in some cases making it the lowest CO₂ vehicle fuel currently available. In Lancashire biogas is presently produced within landfill sites and waste water treatment facilities. Biogas production is likely to increase significantly in the next few years as a new generation of anaerobic digestion (AD) facilities come on stream within the county. Many of these new facilities will be associated with Lancashire County Council's two new waste technology parks. Other facilities will include agricultural AD plants and commercial

organic waste processing facilities.

In the UK there have been very few gas vehicles available but commercially available gas vehicles are becoming increasingly common. Natural gas/biomethane is particularly well suited to large commercial vehicles where fuel tank volumes and weights are less of an issue. UK based gas vehicle specialists Clean Air Power have recently agreed to supply Volvo Trucks, the World's largest truck engine manufacturer, with their dual-fuel system which allows a diesel truck to operate on up to 90% gas (natural gas or biomethane). Whilst haulage companies can install gas storage tanks at their depots, the wider development of this sector is reliant on an accessible fuel supply chain. As yet no such supply chain exists within the UK.

At present most AD systems in the UK seek to convert biogas to electricity in order to generate ROC's (Renewable Obligation Certificates). ROC's can not be generated through gas production alone. If a gas ROC was to be available it may open up significant opportunities for fuel cell development associated with biogas. Part of the BIONIC programme in Lancashire will be to examine these issues and make recommendations for the future.

MERSEYSIDE

The BIONIC project aims to increase the production and usage of sustainably produced biofuels in the project areas. One way of doing this is to track fleet trials of biofuels to provide case studies. Many fleet managers are wary of biofuels because they lack first hand experience of them and poor experiences tend to be reported more widely than good experiences.

Merseytravel are following the progress of a public sector fleet using a 20% biodiesel blend in 40 vehicles. The trial started in April 2008 and was intended to run for at least 12 months. However some technical problems were encountered towards the end of 2008 which have led to the trial being temporarily suspended whilst investigations take place.

It is hoped that the trial will be able to restart this year but in any case all of the experiences will be recorded as part of the case study work package which ends in May 2010.

BIONIC in the press !

An article describing the "BIONIC" project has been published very recently in the "Tourism Review Magazine". (<http://www.tourism-review.com/magazine.php>). The magazine is distributed online and is produced every month. It currently has 45,000 subscribers. If you want to read the article, please click [here](#)

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News from region Värmland (Sweden)

General news

Green cars 2008 – the sector's appraisal

The sector believes that 100,000 green cars will be sold in 2008, representing an increase of 86 percent compared with 2007, according to a summary prepared by Green Motorists.

Increased Swedish commitment to biogas

Sweden should earmark a further SEK 600 million (EUR 64 million) over the period 2009-2013 to increase investments in biogas production, according to a proposal from the Swedish Board of Agriculture. The support would be primarily aimed at the digestion of farmyard manure.

Biogas from manure provides a double climate benefit as it reduces greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture while increasing the supply of renewable energy, which can replace energy from fossil fuels.

In view of the high level of interest in biogas in Sweden, the Swedish Board of Agriculture estimates that at least 10-15 per cent of the total potential for biogas from farmyard manure can be realised in the next five years. This would mean energy production of around 0.6 TWh annually, which is twice the level shown by previous studies. According to new calculations, biogas production can therefore reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 440,000 tonnes annually.

Sweden to have ecolabelling and certification of bio fuels

Two different initiatives have been presented for the labelling and certification of biofuels in Sweden, general labelling from Nordic Ecolabel and certification of Brazilian sugarcane-based ethanol used in E85 ethanol fuel.

Nordic Ecolabel has announced the requirements that companies would have to meet to be eligible to apply for a Nordic Ecolabel for fuels. Fuel products to which a Nordic Ecolabel can be awarded are ethanol, biodiesel, biogas and/or a mixture of these fuels.

European Traffic Week



The European Traffic Week started in Karlstad with a car free day on the 22 of September. On the market place in the centre of Karlstad the municipality had arranged a small information centre where people could get information on the air quality in the city of Karlstad, the cycling opportunities in Karlstad and the activities of the Swedish Cycle Association.

In the booth of the Energy Agency of Värmland people were welcome to ask questions about environmental friendly cars, other environmental friendly methods of transport and biofuels.

BIONIC News

Sustainable energy issues and environmental activities were important items on the agenda of the FEM-conference. This conference was held on the 26th of November at the University of Karlstad. FEM is the name of a large project on energy, environment and economic development in the cross border regions of Sweden and Norway. Through a large number of short presentations the 120 participants of the conference were informed about the opportunities for the regions to increase economic development through activities in the area of renewable energy systems and rational use of energy. Essential for this development is a close cooperation between the university and the business enterprises in both the participating Swedish and Norwegian regions. The conference for the Energy Agency of Värmland was a good opportunity to present BIONIC project and its regional activities.



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News from Ploiesti (Romania)

General news

Growing of rape production in Prahova County

Romania continues to use biofuels in all Diesel vehicles, with a target of 4% Biodiesel. In this context, Prahova County's farmers have increased the area planted with rape by 36% in 2008 against 2007. The production of rape (raw material for biodiesel) grew significantly in 2008 as did the yield, 7921 tonnes were obtained from 4623 ha (1,7 tones/ha), against 2007 when, for climatic reasons, 6280 tonnes were obtained on 5703 ha (1,1 tones/ha).

It is expected during 2009 for Prahova to contribute to the national production with 12000 tonnes of rape, resulting in a growth of 50% against 2008.

Green Tax for the vehicles being modified

With the unexpected financial conditions and the authorities (including that of the Prime Minister Călin Popescu-Tariceanu) expectation of it getting worse during the electoral campaign there was a need to adopt an anti-crisis plan of measures.

The government's solutions to this included the deferment of green tax for vehicles having engines of maximum 2000cm³, from 15th December 2008 until the end of December 2009. The tax which would have been collected at the same time as the purchase of the car has been terminated for the first time in Romania and in the European Union.

The government also approved the 3X's increment of the green tax for second-hand cars and increased the value of the "Jalopy" program which provides a payment to be used for purchasing a new car when a car of more than 10 years old is scrapped, from 800 Euro to 1000 Euro.

The Executive expects 60,000 cars to be scrapped during 2009, (50% more than in 2008) and have cited support for the native car industries affected by the economic crisis as an added benefit of the scheme alongside air quality benefits.

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News from Cantabria (Spain)

General news

New Spanish regulation promotes Biofuels

On October 14, the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Commerce released a new disposal order (ITC/28779/2008) to promote biofuels and renewable energies in transport. Through this new tool, the Government is expecting to reach a global objective of 7% of biofuels and renewable fuel blends commercialised for transport in 2011.

In 2008 regional transport fleets used more than 2.000.000 litres of b-10

Under the program regulated by the Order IND 9/2008 which implemented incentives for public bus operators who use biofuels in their fleets, more than 2.000.000 litres of B10 have been supplied for regional buses in 2008.

Approximately 75% of the public transport fleet in Cantabria has been running with biofuels during the present year, which provides a new emphasis on biofuel introduction in Cantabria.

Petrol Station Association removes biofuel pumps

Cantabria Petrol Station Association, which includes most of the independent petrol stations, has decided to remove pumps which supplied biofuels to private drivers. The reduction in biofuel sales has made it unprofitable to keep tanks and pumps, lack of incentives have been pointed out as the reasons for this decision. The measure was executed in late November followed by about 95% of the association members.

Regional government ratifies the "integrated environmental licence" for the bioethanol production

On November 27th the Environment Department has ratified the environmental licence released in April to the company Sniace Biofuels for the building of a new bioethanol plant in Torrelavega, Cantabria. This decision has been confirmed after appeals presented by ecologist and neighbour associations were rejected as the Government considered Sniace Biofuels to comply with all the environmental requirements to obtain the licence. The company is currently waiting for the City Council authorisation to start the construction of the facility, which is expected to create 600 new direct jobs.

BIONIC News

Biobus participates in environmental events.



Under agreements with the Spanish Society of Ornithology (SEO) and the Cantabrian Environmental Research Centre (CIMA), the BIOBUS has attended different events related to conservation and environmental issues.

On October 4th, Spanish 'day of the birds', the biobus was used in a bird-watching season in Reinosa. Later, October 24th-25th, the bus visited the Eco-centre network implemented by the CIMA.

Finally, Biobus was chosen as official transport in the National Ornithology Congress celebrated in Santander December 5th-9th. The bus not only transported participants to the scientific sessions but also to leisure activities such as bird-watching or visits to natural reserves.

For more information, please contact: bionic@cantabriasasi.org

News from Pazardjik (Bulgaria)

General news

Policy development

According to the Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources and Biofuels Act all producers and importers of liquid fuels for the transport sector are obliged to sell to the market petroleum-based fuels mixed with biofuels from 1st of January, 2008. But unfortunately, most of the producers and suppliers of liquid fuels do not respect this obligation and there seems to be several reasons for this:

- They are not yet technically ready to make the mixtures – unfortunately, currently there is not the technical possibility in the country for efficient quality control of pure bio-components as well as of their blending with conventional liquid fuels. Currently, it is almost impossible to determine accurately the content of bio-component in a fuel blending;
- Bio-ethanol blending – because of the specific physical and chemical characteristics of bio-ethanol, when blending it with standard petrol a product is obtained, and that product does not meet the standard for pressure of concentrated vapors as well as the oxygen content level. One of the world's best practices in this area is to blend bio-ethanol with a fuel which is different from the standard petrol fuels. Unfortunately, there is not production yet in Bulgaria of such fuel and no information exists about readiness for such a production to be launched in the near future;
- Lack of tax incentives – one measure to stimulate biofuel use is to initiate more substantial tax incentives, which could make the biofuels more attractive to the end users, at least from a financial point of view.

Entering the area of biofuels relatively late, the Republic of Bulgaria had and still has a unique chance to make use of the positive experience accumulated so far by other countries, and to elaborate a modern legislation which reflects the real

needs of society in relation to biofuel utilisation.

That is why the policy concerning biofuels should reflect the actual correlation between exploitation performance of an individual biofuel and the reduction of CO2 emissions throughout its full lifecycle. Biofuels which are most efficient towards reduction of CO2 emissions throughout their lifecycle should receive highest support (financial incentives, and social awareness). This leads to a need for development and introduction of a certification system for CO2 emissions generated by biofuels, and elaboration and introduction of measures which would stimulate the utilisation of second generation biofuels.

BIONIC News

A national Conference on Biofuels



A national conference on renewable energy and biofuels has been organised by REAP and the Association of Bulgarian Energy Agencies (ABEA). It was held in the town of Karlovo on 11 and 12 December 2008. The conference was a great success as there were more than 60 attendees mainly representatives from local authorities, key energy actors, energy agencies and other NGOs; and some of the main speakers were representatives of: Ministry of Economy and Energy, Energy Efficiency Agency, European Investment Bank, Ministry of Regional Development and Welfare, Energy Efficiency

Fund etc.

In the panel dedicated to biofuels, Mr. Vladimir Valkov, executive director of REAP, presented the BIONIC project – a brief summary of the project has been performed including main objectives and deliverables. Another representative of REAP, Dipl.eng. Doychinov, reported about Pazardjik Biofuel Network progress, how to join the network, and its main tasks.

BIONIC Network development

So far, almost 20 organisations and key players have joined the Pazardjik Biofuels Network and the trend is to constantly increase the number of members. The following local authorities from Pazardjik District have been involved in the Network: Municipality of Belovo; Municipality of Velingrad; Municipality of Septemvri; Municipality of Rakitovo; Municipality of Lesichovo; Municipality of Panagyurishte.

Other important members recently involved are:

- The Regional Centre for Scientific and Applied Servicing of Pazardjik District – it provides scientific services in the area of agriculture;
- The Regional Forestry Administration. They have an idea to use biofuels, mainly biodiesel in there specific forestry equipment when performing the forestry work.
- The Regional Association of Liquid Fuels. Members of this association are actually petrol station owners from Pazardjik district.

Membership of the Pazardjik Biofuel Network is on an informal basis. For more information please email reapazar@mbox.contact.bg

BIONIC Project Leader



BIONIC Project Partners



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