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Press release – 1st of June 2012

Innovative governance models, long term financing and participative engagements: The threefold solution to a successful low energy strategy

“Through the Covenant of Mayors, provinces, regions and city networks help local governments act as motors of the European economy” says Domènec Cucurull (Province of Barcelona). The head of the environmental department is set to further elaborate on this topic on the occasion of the joint EUSEW network session: “Innovative [and practical] approaches on how to make the Covenant of Mayors a success” to be held in Brussels on the afternoon of the 21st of June 2012.

Multi-level governance is indeed one of the key themes to be discussed together with participative engagement and the creation of genuine “local energy communities” and networking practices at national levels. Ahead of the Rio+20 Summit, the event will seek to showcase the benefits of local low energy and carbon strategies in terms of employment opportunities, improved quality of life and increased energy independence.

Co-organised by FEDARENE, Climate Alliance, ICLEI Europe and Energy Cities, this joint event is to shed light on some interesting European projects and the multi-sided roles of sub-national governments and associations involved in the Covenant of Mayors initiative. The main message is that all local governments can engage in climate and energy policy – and that signing the Covenant of Mayors makes sense: “together we are stronger!”

Innovative governance models are key to picking up the pace, ensuring cooperation and coordination on critical elements. But not only good governance is at stake. This session will also debate current and potential EU funding instruments to drive the transition to a green urban economy and for energy efficiency in particular. The EU Budget 2014-2020 will set the course during the next years and now is the time for local authorities to formulate concrete needs on how the funding instruments need to be shaped. “Securing long term financing is crucial to accelerate the shift towards a green economy. This is the only way to ensure that cities can implement their ambitious Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAPs)”, says Joachim Lorenz, city councilor from Munich.

The active participation of elected members, colleagues, citizens and stakeholders is essential to successfully achieve the above mentioned processes. ENGAGE, a pan-European communications initiative, will show how a city-wide poster campaign allows city inhabitants to make personal energy-saving pledges and contribute to the cities own energy and carbon objectives.

This event will show that collaboration – at all levels and among different actors – can lead to multiple positive results, rewards and benefits.

[Practical information on the event](#)

The following Energy Cities' initiatives will be promoted at this event:

NETworking the Covenant of Mayors: National Covenant of Mayors Clubs (NET-COM) – www.networkingcovenantofmayors.eu

The NET-COM initiative is **empowering local authorities** to implement successfully their current (or future) Covenant engagements. Furthermore it strengthens the bottom-up political representation of the Covenant which is the only feasible way ahead by establishing national Covenant of Mayors Clubs.

In the 12 countries where NET-COM is carried out, political representatives are elected / appointed in the framework of the national Covenant Clubs with the purpose of giving back the ownership of the Covenant to the Mayors.

Concretely, in each country the National Covenant Clubs ensure:

- **better communication and exchanges among local authorities** (Covenant Signatories or not) improving their own capacities and effectiveness to achieve the Covenant goals;
- **better communication, exchanges and synergies between local authorities and key actors** such as public institutions (ministries, national/regional agencies, regions, provinces, associations of local and regional authorities) and any other stakeholders (banks, businesses, NGOs, associations, etc.) willing to support local authorities in their efforts to achieve the Covenant objectives.

ENGAGE campaign – www.citiesengage.eu

ENGAGE is a participative communications initiative implemented by European cities. This campaign commits **all citizens and stakeholders** to play their part in building a sustainable energy future.

Thanks to a **user-friendly online tool**, your local authority can create participant posters with concrete energy and climate engagements. Tailor-made posters foster emulation, encouraging ENGAGE participants to make real energy savings!

More than **3,500 posters** have been produced by 12 European pioneer cities who are signatories of the **Covenant of Mayors**.

The campaign is open to European local authorities who want to:

- **Involve** their local authority as well as citizens and stakeholders in reducing their energy consumption;
- **Contribute** to the European Union "3x20" energy and climate objectives;
- **Take visible action** via displaying attractive posters with personal engagements;
- **Prove** that participative PR campaigns lead to real energy savings.

Joining is free the first year for the first 150 local authorities. Already 40 local authorities from all over Europe have joined the campaign.

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