

PRESS RELEASE

Renewable Energy for the Northern tips of Europe – EU project stops to reflect

An unusual EU project designed to help bring renewable energy to the most Northerly regions of Europe has reached its mid-term review. The partners in the project are converging this week, suitably enough, on the city of Joensuu – not actually in the furthest North of Finland, but still uncomfortably close to the Arctic circle. The weather has already turned cold, and is expected to get colder during the period of the conference. Where better to talk about the pressing need to convert from unsustainable traditional energy generation to the new range of renewable energies?

The mid-term conference for the SMALLEST project funded by the Northern Periphery Programme will be attended by all nine partners in the project, including teams from the Faroe Islands, Iceland, N Ireland, Scotland and Sweden, as well as Finland. It will be hosted by the Joensuu-based North Karelia University of Applied Sciences, which is laying on a conference not only for SMALLEST, but three other NPP-funded projects concerned with renewable energy, MicrE, PELLETtime and RASLRES.

Helena Puhakka-Tarvainen of the North Karelia University of Applied Sciences is delighted that all four projects are coming to Finland to collaborate in this way, as she explains: “the four projects are highly interlinked so it is vital that we work together to develop renewable energy assistance across the NPP region. This will also help the projects to pin point which areas are lacking and where resources are still required.”

The conference – Sustainable Energy Systems 2010 – focuses on the opportunities and challenges of renewable energy systems across the northern peripheral regions of Europe. The conference will provide SMALLEST partners with an opportunity to learn from work underway in similar projects.

During the conference partners will hear from several experts and they will also have the chance to visit a number of sustainable energy systems currently operating in the region so that they may learn from innovations made in Finland.

The conference marks the mid-term for the SMALLEST project which has been running since June 2009. A press conference will be held on Wednesday 24th November to allow SMALLEST to share its progress in Finland and across Northern Europe.

The Sustainable Energy Systems Conference will be held at the North Karelia University of Applied Sciences in Joensuu, Finland on the 24th and 25th of November. For further information please visit: www.ses2010.info.



For further information on the SMALLEST project, contact Nick Lyth at International Resources and Recycling Institute on 07802 150053 or via e-mail at nick.lyth@irri.org.uk. You can also visit the SMALLEST website: www.smallestnpp.eu.

SMALLEST www.smallestnpp.eu

Notes:

1. The SMALLEST project is being managed by International Resources and Recycling Institute on behalf of the Northern Periphery Programme, and includes Scottish partners, Inverness College and PURE Energy Centre, from Shetland.
2. SMALLEST is a project that started in 2009 that will end in June 2012. It is part-funded by the Northern Periphery Programme, which is itself part of the EU Interreg IVB. The Northern Periphery Programme 2007-2013 helps to build joint projects creating innovative products and services for the benefit of the programme partner countries and Europe as a whole.
3. SMALLEST is a service to help make renewable energy more accessible to the smallest communities in the most remote areas of Northern Europe.
4. Significant, untapped potential exists for the generation of renewable energy in small communities. Developing renewable energy solutions helps to enhance social, economic and environmental sustainability by diversifying small communities' resources. Renewable energy solutions can help isolated regions to become more self-sufficient, increasing their competitiveness and reducing vulnerability to external market influence. Currently a lack of knowledge and experience in the areas of renewable energy solutions is preventing small communities to reach their potential in renewable energy generation.
5. In SMALLEST partners from Scotland, Northern Ireland, Faroe Islands, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Greenland, and Norway work together to enable rural communities throughout the Northern Periphery Programme (NPP) region access renewable energy solutions.

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