

PRESS RELEASE

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Energy transition in cities and towns: 30 Mayors send a strong signal to Rio+20!

Today, 30 mayors from 30 European countries have sent a strong signal to Rio de Janeiro in the framework of Energy Cities' Annual Rendezvous 2012 in Guimarães (Portugal), European Capital of Culture 2012. With 30 proposals for the energy transition of cities and towns, they will seek to showcase a collection of groundbreaking practices to the Rio +20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in June.

Following this high-level political session with Mayors, a declaration has been adopted by all Energy Cities' members on the occasion of the General Meeting of the Association backing the booklet of proposals exhibited earlier today.

Energy Cities is calling on:

- all local authorities worldwide to make their territories low-energy consuming areas with a strong share of renewable energy and with low emissions and discharges, thus guaranteeing a high quality of life for all!
- representatives of national governments and supranational institutions, including the European Union and the United Nations, to devise legal frameworks enabling local authorities to develop their initiatives and take an active part in the energy transition towards more decentralised energy systems.

As part of the declaration, the 30 mind-boggling proposals provide practical answers and link today's actions to the long-term vision of a low energy city with a high quality of life for all. Perfectly in line with the current 'International Year of Sustainable Energy for All', they tackle the following five key areas:

- Empowering local actions
- Knowing our territories' resources and flows
- Rethinking finance in general
- Inventing a new local governance
- Urban planning as a way of reducing energy use

In his introduction to this political session, Antonio Magalhaes, Mayor of Guimarães stated that the challenge is to reinvent a resource-efficient and low-emission future that is compatible with the development of all countries worldwide. He stressed that this future that does not yet exist is being prepared in our cities. That is why Energy Cities' proposals for the energy transition need to be taken into account at the Rio Conference. Eckart Würzner, Mayor of Heidelberg and President of Energy Cities, a network of pioneering cities, is pleased to be the official ambassador delivering the proposals in June. He underlined the importance of experiences gathered within the Covenant of Mayors through which close to 4,000 local authorities concretely build their energy future with local teams.

Further information:

On the event: www.energy-cities.eu/Guimaraes

The official declaration: http://www.energy-cities.eu/IMG/pdf/statement_en_mep.pdf

Energy Cities' press kit: http://www.energy-cities.eu/IMG/pdf/PRESS_KIT_WEB.pdf

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