

INTERREG IVC Project „RECOMMEND“

Final Conference

Report

Author
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11th – 12th Sept 2014
Varna, Bulgaria

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1. Purpose of the RECOMMEND Final Conference

- **Overview of the main RECOMMEND achievements** (RIP presentations)
- **Brand new information on new trends in the field of eco-management & eco-innovation** (Workshop on the topic “Circular economy”, information on EU Interregional cooperation)
- **Learn from each other & make contacts & get inspired** (Round table on Covenant of Mayor, Bulgarian Best practice examples)
- **Development of joint ideas for future cooperation and monitoring the implementation of the RIPs** (Creativity workshop)

2. Programme and presentations

2.1. Welcome by the host partner (Bulgaria)

Dobromir Dzhikov, City Councillor in Varna, welcomed the RECOMMEND project team to Varna and emphasized the importance of RECOMMEND.

Polina Antonova, project manager of UBBSLA, welcomed the project team on behalf of the Bulgarian project partners and host of this Final Conference and introduced the Bulgarian region Varna.



2.2. Welcome by the Lead Partner

Ingrid Rozhon, RECOMMEND project manager, welcomed the participants and gave a special welcome to the following external guests: Binal Cadieu (Westminster City Council), Emanuela Vanacore (CleanTech Coach, Next Business Generation), Greenovate Ltd. and Jason Martinez (JTS- Lille). After the introduction round a photo slide gave an impression what have been done so far in the frame the RECOMMEND project duration.

2.3. Introduction by the moderator



Benjamin Kuscher, the moderator for the entire event and the overall RECOMMEND project manager highlighted the purpose and the procedure of the Final Conference. The three main topics were as follows:

I. Presentation of the main project results:

6 project partners will present their RIP theme and the status quo of its feasibility

II. Input for future activities:

- Workshop on Circular economy
- Creativity Workshop
- Presentations on Interreg Europe & Interreg B

III. Best Practice examples:

Round table on Covenant of Mayors - Organised & moderated by Bulgarian host

For more information, please consult the presentation: 01 Introduction by the moderator

2.4. Presentation of main project results: RIP Themes

The following project partners presented their RIP themes to the audience:

Category	Short description	Speaker
Eco-Voucher Schemes to foster eco-management and eco-innovation	Improvement of existing voucher schemes	Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region Rafał Modrzewski
	New Implementation of voucher scheme	Ekoport Jan Jareš
Cluster development to foster eco-management and eco-innovation	Eco-management Cluster	Opportunity Peterborough Rod Gilchrist
	Eco-Innovation Cluster (Bionics)	LEA Spodnje Podravje Uroš Majerič
Stakeholder platform to foster eco-management and eco-innovation	Contest „Eco-friendly company of the year“	Tartu Regional Energy Agency Martin Kikas
	My Eco-Expert	RECOMMEND Lead Partner Benjamin Kuscher

The presentations include the following information:

- Why is the RIP action needed and recommended to regional key players?
- Description of the RIP action
- How or by whom the project partner got inspired to propose this action for the RIP
- Status quo of the RIP implementation
- Next steps in implementing the RIP



Due to the narrow time schedule not all partners could represent their RIP results. Therefore the Lead Partner suggested that “only” 2 representatives / category presented their RIP theme to the audience.

For more information, please consult the presentation: RIP presentations at our project homepage RECOMMEND-RECOMMEND Final Conference Varna or the section “RIP regional”.

2.5. Presentations on Interreg Europe & Interreg B Programmes- Jason Martinez (Project officer-Joint Technical Secretariat) & Benjamin Kuscher (ConPlusUltra Ltd.)

Target of these presentations: providing participants latest information on calls, priorities and future possibilities for interregional cooperations.

For more information, please consult the presentation: Jason Martinez at our project homepage RECOMMEND-RECOMMEND Final Conference Varna .

2.6. Workshop on the topic Circular economy-moderated by Greenovate

The workshop was prepared and moderated by **Greenovate” Europe Ltd.** who prepared the RECOMMEND Best Practice study at the project start; Greenovate! Europe is an independent expert group dedicated to the development of sustainable business.

The **circular economy** is a generic term for an industrial economy that is, by design or intention, restorative and in which material flows are of two types, biological nutrients, designed to reenter the biosphere safely, and technical nutrients, which are designed to circulate at high quality without entering the biosphere. (Wikipedia.com)

The workshop introduced the policy area of the circular economy with a focus on waste policy and targets. Participants contributed information on their regional priorities on circular economy and waste management as well as their current regional waste treatment activities. The workshop aimed to support the development of future cooperation projects in that policy area.

Target of this workshop:

- Gaining new information on the topic “Circular economy”
- Inspiration / basic information for new project ideas & future common activities



Structure of this workshop:

- **Key note “The Circular Economy - new European waste policies and targets”** – Astrid Severin / Katharina Krell
- **Breakout Sessions “Waste as a resource”** gathering information on
 - Regional priorities and barriers in terms of circular economy and waste management
 - Current collection and waste treatment methods
 Session 1 with BG, CZ, AT, SI – moderated by Katharina Krell
 Session 2 with IT, PL, UK, EE – moderated by Astrid Severin
- **Feedback from the breakout sessions** – Astrid Severin / Katharina Krell
- **Plenary discussion “Potential future cooperation projects”** moderated by Astrid Severin / Katharina Krell

2.7. Site Visit organised by the Bulgarian host

sightseeing tour at Kamchia resort_20km from Varna (<http://www.sok-kamchia.com/> – only in Bulgarian and Russian language)



12th Sept 2014

2.8. Round Table on the topic “Covenant of Mayors”

The Covenant of Mayors is the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities, voluntarily committing to increasing energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources on their territories. By their commitment, Covenant signatories aim to meet and exceed the European Union 20% CO₂ reduction objective by 2020. http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/index_en.html or www.eumayors.eu

Presentations were made on the following topics:

- Covenant of Mayors: Facts & figures
- Best Practice SEAP- Sustainable energy action plan
- Best Practice on the Black Sea Coast
- EU strategies

For more information please consult the presentations: Covenant of Mayors facts & figures, SEAP best practice, SEAP Tonev, Round Table at the homepage / event section Final Conference

2.9. Creativity workshop- moderated by Brigitte Hatvan & Benjamin Kuscher (ConPlusUltra Ltd.)

Target of this workshop: Discussing possible future project ideas & future cooperation possibilities

After a common brainstorming the following 3 main topics of possible future activities came up:

- Cross border crowdfunding for energy
- Circular economy
- Cluster activities

Three working groups were formed and discussed potential project ideas on the 3 above mentioned topics. Furthermore the participants discussed issues such as: who might run the project, who should become project partner, what should be the main milestones of project plans.

The 3 group leaders will prepare minutes of each working group and will sent the minutes to the RECOMMEND Lead Partner before 30th September 2014.

At the end of the conference the whole project team expressed its satisfaction with the RECOMMEND project run and would be interested to continue interregional project cooperation with each other. Maybe this first brainstorming at the RECOMMEND final conference might be the kick off of a new common project respectively a continuation of the current cooperation.

The RECOMMEND project Leader, the Regional Government of Lower Austria in close cooperation with the consultant office ConPlusUltra Ltd, wants to thank each RECOMMEND project partner for his loyalty, input and support. Together all project targets set out in the RECOMMEND application form could have been fulfilled. The Lead Partner is convinced that via RECOMMEND each partner could make meaningful and valuable contributions to the numerous EU initiatives such as Lisbon, Gothenburg or Europe 2020 strategies in order to make Europe a healthier, cleaner and more liveable and sustainable environment.

Thank you to all partners and the funding by the European Union & national bodies!

