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Press release on the MountEE project

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE BUILDING IN MOUNTAIN MUNICIPALITIES: FIRST STEPS OF THE MOUNTEE PROJECT

How can municipalities be supported in order to build and renovate public buildings in a sustainable way? In Vorarlberg, a small province in Austria, they can benefit from technical assistance and financial support. In the framework of MountEE project, six European mountain regions want to improve and adapt this model to their regional context in order to support sustainable public construction.

Since the project started in May 2012, partners of MountEE have brought together local stakeholders of the construction chain in their regions, collected and exchanged examples of good practice at an international level and defined regional strategies and new tools. The aim of these first steps is to support municipalities technically and financially in their renovation and building projects.

From local construction stakeholders to minister

During a visit to Dalarna, one of the two project regions in Sweden, the Swedish Minister for Public Administration and Housing has already shown great interest in this support service for municipalities. *"We are working on an adapted 'service package' for the municipalities, inspired by the one from Vorarlberg. We need to combine new services with existing tools and services. For example, there is a lack of expertise in energy efficiency and life-cycle costs in our region,"* explains Åke Persson from the Dalarna county board. In the second Swedish project region of Norrbotten/Västerbotten, and also in Friuli in Italy, Vorarlberg in Austria, and the Rhône-Alpes and Pyrénées Catalanes regions of France, regional committees were set up during autumn 2012. As a first step, the committees analyzed the barriers and knowledge gaps in their regions in order to prepare the most appropriate strategies and tools within MountEE.

International exchange and sharing of project results

These "customized strategies for an expert service package" for municipalities will be developed with the support of experts from Vorarlberg. Pilot buildings are being selected in spring 2013 to test the service package. In Vorarlberg, partners are developing a new tool to optimize the facilities management of buildings. One other first step has been the collection and exchange of good practice. Examples of the construction and renovation of buildings, energy strategies and funding instruments can be found on the MountEE website (www.mountee.eu/good-practice/). In addition, experts from all regions are exchanging their knowledge on the MountEE blog (www.blog.mountee.eu). Over the next two years, project partners will be organizing capacity-building activities based on the experience gained in the MountEE project. These activities will include training sessions, workshops and excursions, and will be organized in Sweden, the Pyrenees and the Alps.

Additional information and pictures in a printable format are available at:

www.mountee.eu/infoservice/press



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MountEE – Sustainable public buildings

In accordance with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive of the European Union (EPBD), all new constructions and existing buildings undergoing major renovation will have to meet 2018 Net Nearly Zero Energy Building standards (NZEB) by 2018. For many municipalities, especially in mountain regions, the transition to NZEB is a major challenge. Green procurement, the improvement of financial support and the organization of regional advisory services: the MountEE project is exploring ways in which municipalities in European mountain areas – Sweden, the Alps and the Pyrenees – can be supported to build and renovate energy-efficient and sustainable buildings. In six regions, 25 public buildings will be built or renovated sustainably and energy-efficiently. MountEE is being supported by the European Union within the “Intelligent Energy – Europe” (IEE) programme for three years.

www.mountee.eu – <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent>