

ENERGY: RENEWABLE SOURCES, SMALL MUNICIPALITIES, AMBITIOUS TARGETS

- *Enel Green Power and Legambiente are introducing an alliance between citizens, local authorities and companies*
- *Photovoltaic, geothermic, wind: successes and contradictions on the territory*

Rome, 27 March 2009 – Small municipalities as experimental workshops of innovation and advanced examples of good governance of the territory: many such municipalities have chosen the future and the environment, sustaining renewable energies and efficiency. A meeting organized today in Rome by Enel Green Power and Legambiente discussed these best practices and the possible alliances to develop green energy among citizens, local authorities and companies. The meeting was held within the framework of *Voler Bene all'Italia*, the festival of small Italian municipalities that will be celebrated this year on 19 April. The meeting was aimed at exploring the recent progress made in photovoltaic, geothermal and wind power in the 72% of Italian municipalities with less than 5,000 residents.

It is in small municipalities that the implementation of renewable energy sources has increased the most in recent years, thus creating a new model of distributed generation. The report "Renewable Municipalities 2009" by Legambiente surveyed 5,991 municipalities with at least one renewable energy source installed in their municipal territory. The latter include 3,851 small municipalities, accounting for 64% of all municipalities surveyed in the report and 65% of Italy's 5,835 small municipalities.

In terms of businesses, Enel Green Power, the Enel company involved in developing renewable energy sources in Italy and abroad, is the global leading sector operator for production capacity, with 17 billion kWh produced from water, sun, and geothermal sources. *"This is a 'zero emission' energy, able to meet the consumption of 6.5 million households and to avoid annual emissions of 13 million tons of CO₂,"* **stated Francesco Starace, Head of Enel Green Power.** *"Available resources, technological costs, incentive policies, simplified authorization procedure, vitality of the related industry and input from consumers who are demanding a more sustainable generation mix represent the guiding principles of clean energy, the ideal answer to reducing the risk of climate change and boosting environmental and supply safety in Italy. The example given today by small municipalities represents the sustainable model to be followed."*

The partnership of Enel Green Power with Legambiente in *Voler Bene all'Italia* — through an information campaign on the intelligent use of resources to enhance small Italian municipalities partly by promoting renewable energy — underscores the company's commitment to environmental and renewable energy sources, an essential tool for the sustainability of production system, security of supplies and the protection of the planet.

"Today, the territories have extraordinary opportunities to lay down sustainable energy policies that can gradually release cities and regions from their dependence on fossil fuels," added **Edoardo Zanchini, Director of Energy of Legambiente**. *"But, in order to do so, they need the regional and national governments to lay the foundation so that these ideas can become reality, in order to choose the best mix of renewable energy generation in the various areas related to the achievement of the EU's objectives to combat climate change. In order to speed up the interventions, we need to visualize a new role of public policies, setting the objectives and the regulatory framework, monitoring the results, and ensuring fundamental incentives in the networks and in research."*

This is why, in renewing their partnership for *Voler Bene all'Italia*, Legambiente and Enel Green Power emphasize the importance of simplifying the authorization procedure for renewable energy sources in our country. The complexity of the procedures is a problem recognized by all the operators in the sector and the difficulties in obtaining plant authorizations concern both large and small-scale projects. In order to avoid having diverse regulations among regions, the *Guidelines for approval of the renewable energy plant projects*, set forth in Decree Law 387/2003, should be approved as soon as possible.

With regards to the distribution of plants across the territory, 2,961 small municipalities have already installed photovoltaic solar panels on their territory (out of 5,025 municipalities surveyed in the Legambiente report). These plants generate 96 MW and with household consumption estimated at 2,500 kWh/year they can meet the electricity needs of 51 thousand families, while also saving the atmospheric emission of 77 thousand tons of CO₂.

The highest number of photovoltaic panels was reported by the municipality of Monrupino, in the province of Trieste, a small municipality of 868 residents, with an installed capacity of 999.2 MW. Overall, 4,400 panels are converting solar energy into electricity, on a total of 19,000 m², thus avoiding 655 thousand kilos per year of carbon dioxide emissions.

There are also 1,680 small municipalities relying on solar power, accounting for 56% of the 2,996 municipalities where solar panels are installed to produce hot water and 28% of total small municipalities. Among the best practices, buyer groups were formed, promoted by the municipality of Loceri (Ogliastra) and the municipality of Florinas (Sassari), which allow citizens to install their own solar panels, at discounted prices.

For wind power, 2008 was a record year, with a 35% increase compared with the previous year. There are 245 municipalities with at least one wind tower, of which 164 are small municipalities (3% of all small municipalities and 67% of municipalities with wind power). Out of the 3878 MW of installed power, 2917 MW are located in small municipalities, thus meeting the electricity needs of 2,330,000 households. Noteworthy, the municipal administration of Sant'Agata di Puglia has decided to use part of the revenues of the more than 97 MW of installed wind power to support families with total annual income under € 45,000, with children born after 1 January 2008. The annual subsidy is € 3,600, payable in three annual instalments.