Case Study PC 9: Regional Climate Collaboration. Upper Rhine Valley, Germany

In 2003, the Handwerkskammer of Freiburg (Chamber of Trades) and the Ortenau Energy-Agency began a collaboration in order to investigate market potentials in the fields of renewable energy production, energy efficiency and energy saving. The aim of the project was the production of the Ortenau Energy Map under the project supervision of the German Society for Solar Energy. For this purpose, available data on renewable energy production throughout the entire German territory was collected and regional energy potentials and achievements were calculated. The regional energy production is re-calculated after each update providing up-to-the-minute status reports on the state of the green energy production sector (available giving http://www.energymap.info/).

From this collection, the Upper Rheine Energy Map showed a margin of approximately 50% in energy saving potential in residential buildings, where approximately 80% of publicly owned buildings have an intensive energy need.

Due to the wide margin of market development in this sector, in July 2006 a strategic partnership – the Klimaschutz am Oberrhein partnership – was signed. The main goals were the reduction of local energy consumption, climate protection and strengthening of the regional economy. Only a few months later, more than 60 partners have joined the initiative: Retail Association, WVIB (Trade Association of Industrial Enterprises of Baden), Main Agricultural Association of Baden, Carpenter and Timber Association of Baden, German Energy Consultancy Network, Trade Association Extension and Facade - Baden, Building Energy Consultant - Craft, Association of the building industry of Southern Baden, House and Property, architectural associations, saving banks and credit unions, energy suppliers. By
2007, 90 cities and communities had already signed the self commitment agreement. The program was articulated in three main steps:

1) the dissemination of good practices in dwellings’ energy saving through energy efficiency campaign;

2) the improvement of energy savings in public buildings;

3) the implementation of a Strategic Plan for increasing the renewable energy supply in the Southern Upper Rhine Region.

Under the coordination of the Handwerkskammer of Freiburg an impressive taskforce, including over 60 partners belonging to the economic, associations and public administration fields, was organized.

Today, it is recognized that the general public has become more aware of climate change issues. Consumer choices within the building and car sectors demonstrate the general awareness on environmental friendly practices as a help for minimizing costs. It is therefore important that public administrations and decision makers follow and instigate this trend.

Source: http://www.energymap.info/