European Municipalities Compete for the Climate Star 2007 Award

The European Award for Local Climate Protection Initiatives
OUR EXPERTS GENERATE A LOT OF ENERGY IN PUBLIC FINANCE.

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For the third time now the federal province of Lower Austria is once again hosting the final event for the international “Climate Star” competition. We are very pleased to offer European cities and municipalities the opportunity to share their experiences and present their projects.

Lower Austria joined the Climate Alliance in 1993 and actively pursues its stated objectives. By now more than two-thirds of the population of Lower Austria lives in a Climate Alliance municipality; and our goal of getting 300 municipalities to join the Climate Alliance by 2008 is increasingly within reach. Municipalities play an important role in climate protection because they, together with their citizens, can achieve a great deal on a grass-roots level to make a difference. Climate protection means taking collective action; however, every country, every region and every municipality can, and must, pursue initiatives within their scope of activity. Lower Austria’s “Climate Programme 2004-2008” and the extension of the programme to 2012 is the province’s answer to this global challenge. With our Climate Programme, we have set three key goals for ourselves: protecting the environment, strengthening the regions and improving the quality of life for future generations. One further step that reflects the great importance Lower Austria attaches to protecting the climate was the enshrinement of climate protection in Lower Austria’s provincial constitution. One of the most problematic areas of climate protection is most certainly traffic, which is why the “Climate Star 2007” has focused on environmentally-friendly mobility as its key issue this year. The projects submitted demonstrate impressively how important this issue has become and how much impact the commitment and cooperation of municipalities will make into the future. That is why awarding municipalities the “Climate Star” is not only a way to single out their efforts in climate protection, but also to provide incentives for future initiatives.

Sustainable mobility: an important and yet difficult issue for cities and towns. Mobility means being active, taking part in society. Everybody wants to be on the go, but our goal must also be to ease the strain on the environment caused by vehicle traffic due to noise, particulate matter and greenhouse gases. Restrictions and bans are unpopular, but somehow we have to make our cities and towns quieter, healthier and more liveable too. That is why it is a pleasure for me to see the multi-facetted and exemplary initiatives and projects submitted to us for the Climate Star that focused on the issue of environmentally-friendly traffic. Cities and municipalities have shown a great deal of creativity in planning and implementing catchy campaigns and fascinating initiatives, proving that although achieving sustainable mobility is difficult, it can indeed be done. Motorised traffic plays a considerable role in global warming, which is why the Climate Alliance selected mobility as the focus of the Climate Star 2007. There are no simple solutions or magic bullets. Every little bit counts towards promoting environmentally-friendly means of transport by bringing about a paradigm shift in town and country planning away from cities built for cars and boosting instead the image and attractiveness of busses and trains as a step in the right direction. We can continue to be mobile into the future – healthily, quietly, quickly and with a host of innovative ideas. Climate protection and mobility are issues that are the subject of debate everywhere, not least thanks to a number of international reports, studies and films, as well as the decision to award Al Gore and the UN International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) with the Nobel Peace Prize. We – the cities and towns of the Climate Alliance – pledge to further pursue our goal to successfully reduce greenhouse gases.
CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES UNDERGOING (CLIMATE) CHANGE

The political dimension of climate change has become clear, not least thanks to the selection for 2007’s Nobel Peace Prize: Climate protection is important not just for environmental policy, but for promoting peace as well.

CLIMATE ALLIANCE AS A PIONEER.

After the “Stern Report on the Economics of Climate Change”, Al Gore’s film “An Inconvenient Truth”, the reports issued by the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and – to top it off – the awarding of 2007’s Nobel Peace Prize to Al Gore and the IPCC, the issue of climate change is now, 15 years after the founding of the Climate Alliance, taken centre stage in our society. The cities and towns of the Climate Alliance recognised the global challenge posed by climate change early on. Their partnerships with indigenous peoples in the rainforests serve as a role model for global climate protection and sustainable development.

TRAFFIC AS A KEY PROBLEM.

With their self-imposed goal of reducing CO₂ emissions by 10 per cent every five years, Climate Alliance members have made a clear commitment. Much potential remains as yet untapped primarily in the areas of private households and traffic. That is why ways must be found to lower traffic emissions in particular in order to reach our sustainability goals, especially the Kyoto goals of reducing greenhouse gases.

SOME 21% OF ALL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IN THE EU ARE DUE TO TRAFFIC – A RISING TREND.

CURSE OF THE “BLACK GOLD”.

Almost all of the energy needs in Europe’s transport sector are met by oil. Meanwhile resources are becoming ever scarcer, necessitating...
drilling in hard-to-reach areas, like the Amazon. In addition to other destructive factors, such as deforestation, state development programmes or gold mining, oil drilling has a particularly profound impact on the rainforests and the indigenous peoples who inhabit them. Unchecked expansion of oil drilling in nearly every country of the Amazon basin since the mid-1980s has caused a dramatic increase in the ecological, social, cultural and economic problems for the people living there. Diego Iván Escobar Guzmán, President of the Climate Alliance and Area Coordinator for the Environment, Land Rights and Biodiversity for the Coordinating Body for the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA) refers to the “curse of the black gold”: “The oil and its toxic waste products are contaminating our rivers and the soil. The combination of toxins is making the people sick.”

BIO-FUELS – OUR SAVIOUR? In addition to the “black curse”, these indigenous peoples are also confronted with a new, “green” threat. Demand for regenerative fuels made from palm oil, maize, sugar cane and soy is climbing dramatically world-wide and has put increased pressure on the rainforests. The EU is trying to cut its dependence on imports and diversify its sources and technologies in order to secure the supply of energy into the future. The increased use of ethanol and/or biodiesel is supposed to help us achieve our climate protection objectives in transport. For the EU and other European countries the short to medium-term solution lies in adding 5-10 per cent biofuel. However, the amount of so-called agro-fuels needed for Europe to reach its climate protection goals cannot be fully met by domestic production. Cheaper imports – primarily from Asia and South America – are necessary.

THREAT TO LAND AND HUMAN RIGHTS. The cultivation, processing and export of bio-fuels place a significant strain on social and ecological systems, e.g. in Brazil: “Large companies are buying up land to plant sugarcane to manufacture ethanol. In so doing they have displaced thousands of small-time farmers who provide their regions with food. These monocultures require the large-scale use of fertilisers and pesticides, giving rise to fear of profound consequences for the ground water, soil and the local population. The cultivable land for sugarcane is expected to jump from some 6.2 million hectares to over 9 million hectares by 2012,” warns...
Brazil expert Johann Kandler from the Climate Alliance Austria. The export of agro-fuels chiefly represents great economic potential for emerging markets and developing countries. Europe’s hunger for renewable fuels is driving demand for energy crops (e.g. palm oil or soy) and pushing up market prices. One result is that food growing farmers are being forced out in as yet unused areas, increasing competition in food production. The pressure on (primary) rainforests is increasing and has resulted in a loss of biological diversity. The social and societal impact of expanding monocultures is significant for the indigenous partners in the Climate Alliance, even if their governments emphasise the positive effects of job creation and economic development.

THE CULTIVATION OF ENERGY CROPS IS DIRECTLY LINKED TO THE DISPLACEMENT OF LOCAL INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND PEOPLES.

AN ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING FUTURE. If we fail to cut our energy consumption, these problems will have a serious impact on the future and lead to intensified conflicts. Instead of “supporting developing countries” (EU strategy for bio-fuels), we may see a worsening of the human rights and environmental situations in potential producing countries. Agro-energy supporter Al Gore also needs to understand the destructive repercussions of agro-energy for the climate, the forests and the peoples who live there. An efficient use of energy and the attendant reduction in consumption are indispensable cornerstones for ensuring a sustainable future.

“Industrialized countries must carry to completion obligatory reductions in their high consumption of fossil fuels, which mainly contribute to global warming. Countries must ensure that the promotion of renewable energies do not lead to a wider spread of poverty among Indigenous Peoples, and a new way of colonization of their territories. States promoting renewable energies must respect the rights of the Indigenous Peoples.”

(Declaration of the Indigenous Peoples at the Renewables Conference in 2004)

THE COMPETITION

SUBMISSIONS:
51 municipalities from 11 European countries submitted projects for the Climate Star award in one of three categories:
- Category 1: up to 10,000 inhabitants
- Category 2: up to 100,000 inhabitants
- Category 3: over 100,000 inhabitants

The projects submitted came from Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden, Great Britain and Serbia.

THE JURY:
- Dr. Gerfried Cebrat, Forschungsgeellschaft Mobilität – Austrian Mobility Research FGM-AMOR, Mobility Telecommunications & Clean Propulsion Systems Department
- Leire Iriarte, Project Manager for Polis, a network of leading European cities and regions which work together to develop innovative technologies and political initiatives for local public transport
- Dr. Angelika Poth-Mögele, Head of Policy at the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) in Brussels
- European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E), Europe’s most important environment organisation for sustainable transport.

The jury’s selection was based on the evaluation of the following criteria: degree of innovation, cost-benefit-ratio, long-term contribution toward reducing CO₂ and transferability. The entirety of the award-winning projects should reflect a variety of contexts throughout Europe and serve as a comprehensive role model for environmentally sound mobility on the local level.

The cultivation of energy crops means problems for indigenous peoples.
_CLIMATE ALLIANCE_

"CLIMATE CHANGE MEANS A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN MINDSET"
Climate researcher Univ. Prof. Dr. Helga Kromp-Kolb spoke to Ms Tessa Brandl and Dr. Angelika Holler from the publication umwelt & wir on the consequences of climate change and the urgent need to take action.

_U&W_: How extreme is the climate currently? Haven’t there been hot and cold periods throughout the Earth’s history?
_KROMP-KOLB_: The key question is whether we, either as humans or as a society, can come to terms with the climate changes that are currently underway and are chiefly man-made. During the most recent ice-ages, people migrated south to flee the advancing ice. But back then there were only a half a million people on the Earth. With today’s global population reaching 6.6 billion, there are few possibilities to migrate if climate conditions make it impossible for us to survive in our countries of origin if there is a scarcity or a surplus of water.
_U&W_: How much is the climate likely to change if we continue this way?
_KROMP-KOLB_: If we continue doing what we’re doing we are looking at a global temperature increase of at least 4°C, or even 6.4°C, by the end of the century compared to the year 2000. In Austria we can expect an increase of 2-4°C by mid-century. Temperatures exceeding current levels are a strong factor in causing ice masses to melt. If the ice in Greenland melted completely, ocean levels would rise by 7 m. This probably won’t happen in this century, although Greenland’s ice is melting much more rapidly than we anticipated several years ago.
_U&W_: How does the Gulf Stream influence our climate? What impact would it have if that system were gone one day?
_KROMP-KOLB_: The Gulf Stream is a part of the global oceanic conveyor belt that is fuelled by differences in temperature and salt content in the world’s oceans. The Gulf Stream brings warm surface water from the southern Atlantic northward, giving us in Europe a climate that would technically be too warm for our geographic latitude. If the Gulf Stream were to shut down, Europe would cool down by several degrees within a relatively short period of time, accompanied by a clear increase in dry and stormy weather.

_U&W_: Is deforestation in Brazil or Siberia also an issue in the debate surrounding climate protection?
_KROMP-KOLB_: Of course, forests are important for absorbing and storing carbon and for having a moderating impact on the region climate thanks to their ability to retain water. When more trees are burned down than grow back, a source of carbon dioxide tantamount to the burning of fossil fuels is released into the atmosphere.
_U&W_: What kind of direct impact do climate changes have on our lives and quality of life?
_KROMP-KOLB_: I don’t think that we will be able to fully assess climate change’s impact on our lives. On one hand, we are affected by climate change here at home: the increasing heat waves are hard to cope with; vegetation, animals and diseases that never could have survived here before are coming to Austria, including pests in agriculture and forestry and allergy-triggering grasses, such as ragweed. Insurance premiums for storm, flooding or drought damage will become more expensive. On the other hand, we are also affected by climate change in other parts of the world, in the form of climate refugees. And last but not least we are affected by measures taken to protect the climate. These too will have a wide-ranging impact on our lives. Done in moderation, climate protection can also mean an improvement in the quality of life.

\[\text{Climate protection: better quality of life through communication and creativity.}\]
**U&W**: What specifically has to be done to cushion the effects of climate change?

**KROMP-KOLB**: There are only four ways to slow climate change, and all of these changes must be made: reduce the need for emission-intensive goods and services, increase resource efficiency, lower emissions in non-energy sectors (e.g. with organic farming instead of conventional methods) and use renewable resources for energy. However, it has become clear that today’s market and its current “rules of the game” are not going to allow these changes to take hold quickly. A fundamental shift in the way we think is necessary – in many areas and on all levels, starting with individuals, in policy-making and of course with businesses as well.

**“CREATIVE MINDS WITH VISION AND COURAGE ARE NEEDED”**

**U&W**: How important is the issue of traffic, or mobility in general, to climate protection?

**KROMP-KOLB**: The transport sector is the chief cause of greenhouse gas emissions in Austria, and it is the sector that is growing the fastest. That is why it is of central importance that action be taken. While individuals can make a key difference in cities, political decision-makers must do their part in rural areas where distances are greater and currently public transport options are limited.

**U&W**: In your opinion, what are the topmost priorities?

**KROMP-KOLB**: In the medium-term the most important thing is to pursue town and country planning policies that create shorter distances. Furthermore, traffic systems have to be made more attractive and safer for pedestrians and cyclists, and public transport has to be made palatable and able to compete financially with individual motor car traffic. This will entail a profound shift in the way town and country planners, politicians and those affected by these policies think. One step in the right direction would be, in my opinion, to include older citizens, as well as young, non-motorised mothers of school children in the town and country and transport planning teams. They have a completely different and much more environmentally-friendly view of what is necessary than working, motorised men do.

**U&W**: How can we give municipalities even more support in their efforts to protect the climate?

**KROMP-KOLB**: There are a number of programmes, such as the Climate Alliance or the e5 Programme that provide consultants to analyse municipalities’ situations and help plan which measures to take. Assistance can also be requested in matters involving environmental consultation. Subsidies are available on the provincial and federal levels for research and measure implementation. Prizes and awards help reward successful municipalities, creating positive role models and raising awareness in other municipalities as well. In my experience it only takes one or two people with initiative, often teachers or doctors, members of the business community or town councillors, to turn a municipality towards climate protection.

And if the mayor also jumps on the bandwagon, a great deal can happen in a short period of time. As important as climate protection is, we mustn’t forget that it will be necessary to take action to adjust to those climate changes that cannot be avoided.

**U&W**: Thank you very much for the interview.

Renewable technologies for generating energy are the solution.

Technology and a new mindset are key.
TRAFFIC – A PROBLEM CHILD FOR MUNICIPAL CLIMATE PROTECTION.

The goal is to reduce greenhouse gases by half by 2030. Numerous cities and municipalities, among them here primarily Climate Alliance towns, have set ambitious climate goals for themselves. Traffic is always left by the wayside. Several smaller municipalities have proudly announced, “We have reached our Climate Alliance objective!”, however, without having tackled the traffic problem. The European Commission’s new Green Paper “Towards a New Culture for Urban Mobility” should be seen against this backdrop. Urban traffic is responsible for 40% of CO₂ emissions and 70% of emissions from other road traffic pollutants. The continued increase in traffic, with its concomitant negative effects such as traffic jams, delays and environmental pollution, drains Europe’s economy of nearly € 110 billion annually, equivalent to 1% of the EU’s gross domestic product. One third of fatal traffic accidents now happen in urban areas, hitting the weakest traffic participants – pedestrians and cyclists – the hardest. These problems are localised, but their effects can be felt throughout Europe and the world: climate change, worsening health problems, bottlenecks in the logistics chain, etc.

CLIMATE STAR 2007: ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY MOBILITY.

The third annual Climate Star award has chosen to highlight the issue of mobility as the biggest challenge to climate protection. Only with proactive measures, such as cutting out unnecessary routes, using environmentally-friendly means of transport and exploiting efficient technologies, can we hope to turn the tide of climate change. So far several municipalities, from big cities to small towns, have managed to stabilise traffic volume and even in some cases reverse the overall trend. This means that municipalities are not powerless in the face of the current flood of traffic. Individual measures often fail to attract much attention and are not usually singled out for awards. What makes a municipality a true pioneer in environmentally-friendly mobility is frequently a coordinated combination of measures, the creativeness used to address individual target groups and the political commitment to develop, pass and implement new strategies. The Climate Star award honours large cities and small towns that are breaking new ground. Their strategies and policies should be viewed as an incentive and motivation for others so that Climate Alliance municipalities can be at the forefront in Europe in this area as well.

“WORKING TOGETHER ON THE EUROPEAN LEVEL”.

This objective is also included in the EU’s Green Paper, because municipalities won’t be able to solve this problem alone. And the Climate Alliance is happy to comply. The Climate Star 2007 winners and nominated municipalities have more than good intentions; they have solid results to show for their efforts. A total of 13 Climate Star awards were handed out in 2007. The jury’s selection was based on the following criteria: degree of innovation, cost-benefit ratio, long-term contribution toward CO₂ reduction and transferability. The entire spectrum of winning projects is intended to reflect a variety of contexts in Europe and serve as a kind of comprehensive model strategy for climate-friendly mobility on the grass-roots level.
ROLE MODELS POINT THE WAY

The winning projects are examples to be emulated in demonstrating how climate protection initiatives can be implemented at the grass-roots.

THINK GLOBALLY – ACT LOCALLY.
The Climate Alliance’s motto is more relevant than ever. According to Mr. Gerfried Cebrat, one of the Climate Star jury members, how each and every one of us gets around has a significant impact on our ecological footprint. That is why initiatives on the local level are a key factor in fighting climate change. The following projects clearly show that a common effort is needed: public institutions, businesses, schools, private households. We all have to pull together and do our share.

☆ CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 1

GREAT FOR THE CLIMATE

Going to school the environmentally-friendly way – that’s what school students in Wieselburg do every day.

In Wieselburg, the school contest “Prim fürs Klima – ohne Gaspedal durch das Erlauftal” (roughly: Great for the Climate – Car-Free Through the Erlauf Valley) was developed primarily with one goal in mind, namely to reduce car traffic in front of schools. Every child who walked, rode his/her bicycle or took the bus to school coloured in a dot on the regional map. The class that managed to colour in all of their dots first won a prize, the top prize being a travel voucher for the Austrian Federal Railways for the whole class. So far a total of 900 school children in elementary, middle and secondary schools have taken part, learning more than how to navigate their way in street traffic. Taking the environmentally-friendly route to school was also healthier and helped promote the children’s social skills. The children’s parents also learned a great deal – a positive side effect that shouldn’t be underestimated. The contest can be adapted to accommodate any region. In fact, two neighbouring municipalities have already followed Wieselburg’s example.

WIESELBURG
(population: 4,000), Austria
Awarded with the
CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 1
COST: ca. 1,– € per contest
CONTACT: City of Wieselburg, Irene Weiss, Johann Wintergasse 9, A-3250 Wieselburg, Tel.: +43-650/8700403, irene.weiss@wibs.at

☆ CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 1

SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

The municipality of Zwischenwasser has had a great deal of success with its decision to make the entire area of the town a 30-kmh zone.

Zwischenwasser is a small country municipality that has made sustainable town policies a priority. Knowing full well that the issue of mobility is
ZWISCHENWASSER
(population: 3,150), Austria
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 1
COST: € 45,000 per year
CONTACT: Municipality of Zwischenwasser,
Mayor Josef Mathis, Hauptstraße 14, A-6832
Zwischenwasser, Tel: +43-05522/4915-15,
bgm@zwischenwasser.at

BADEN
(population: 25,300), Austria
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 2
COST: € 120,000 per year plus special financing
totaling € 1.2 million
CONTACT: Municipality of Baden,
Susanne Kopecky, Umweltreferat, Hauptplatz 1;
A-2500 Baden, Tel.: +43-2252/206811,
susanne.kopecky@baden.gv.at

BADENMOBIL
What can companies do to help solve traffic problems? Actually quite a lot, as the project in the Swiss city Baden shows.

Businesses were the chief focus of the “badenmobil” project initiated by the city of Baden, in the Swiss canton Aargau, and its neighbouring municipalities. Proper mobility management efforts in companies can make a key contribution toward solving traffic problems in cities. The goal was to offer businesses with more than 100 employees various services, such as an assessment of their initial situation and qualified mobility consultants, within the context of an initial consultation free of charge. Financial...
support was offered in the following way: up to 50% of the costs for the consulting process were subsidised and many matters were referred to the competent municipal and cantonal authorities. In addition, “badenmobil” also acts as a communication and exchange platform. The companies that took part in the initial project phase from 2003-2006 had great potential for improvement, potential that was exploited successfully. The percentage of automobile traffic dropped from as high as 85% to under 25% in some cases. Efforts focused on parking management, commuter traffic, exploiting car sharing and promoting public transport by offering bonuses. At Baden’s occupational training centre the issue of mobility was part of the curriculum, helping to raise awareness, not just among workers, but also among apprentices as well. Badenmobil: to be continued …

BADEN
(population: 17,000), Switzerland
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 2
COST: SFR 325,000 only for project contributions
CONTACT: City of Baden, Corinne Schmidlin, Stadtökologie, Badstraße 4, CH-5400 Baden, Tel.:+41-56/2008257, corinne.schmidlin@baden.ag.ch

ECHO ACTION
With its project, the Swedish town Karlstad is focusing on the voluntary and active participation of households and members of the local business community. Its objectives are to reduce energy consumption and promote sustainable lifestyles and consumption behaviours.

KARLSTAD
(population: 83,000), Sweden
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 2
COST: €160,000
CONTACT: City of Karlstad, Mikael Schultz, Environmental Department, S-65184 Karlstad, Tel.: +46-54/295661, mikael.schultz@karlstad.se

With its project “Echo Action”, the Swedish city Karlstad has set high goals for itself, such as making the municipality more ecologically sustainable by encouraging families to change everyday habits. Objectives include lowering energy consumption for heating, encouraging sustainable mobility and promoting more environmentally-friendly behaviours in general. “Echo Action” is aimed at developing models for the active and voluntary participation of households, as well as of members of the local business community and financial institutions. The local energy agency and the city administration work together to coordinate the project as a part of the municipal energy strategy. Phase one is to involve 100 households whose successes are to be shared with the rest of the town’s inhabitants. This illustrates the project’s two-pronged approach: to communicate directly with families on one hand, thereby addressing the demand side of the equation, and also to involve the trades, businesses and banks on the other, who represent the supply side. Working groups – family members are to be divided up among different groups – are to take a critical look at households’ lifestyles and consumption patterns. Subsequently, the focus is to turn to implementing low-cost measures and supporting those households who are willing to make expensive investments. The results reported by a preliminary study of 11 families were significantly promising: consumption of electricity, heating and petrol all fell by 20% each.

CAR-FREE MOBILITY
With its “Esslinger Transport Network”, the town of Esslingen has created a comprehensive, sustainable and climate-friendly traffic concept.

For the town of Esslingen am Neckar in Baden-Württemberg, with its historic old town, narrow streets and densely populated centre, mobility with as few cars as possible has always been a
priority. For that reason the town has approved a climate-protection strategy that focuses instead on environmentally-friendly means of transport. The result has been the first-ever walkway map to be developed by a Germany municipality; and its network of bike paths is being further developed with the help of involved citizens. Some 8.5 million people regularly take advantage of the town’s public transport system offering high-quality service and tight schedule coordination with the regional and supra-regional public transport network. A programme to accelerate bus traffic, equipping the routes with the necessary technology and introducing a number of bus lanes in several areas, is underway. These efforts make possible an integrated transport schedule with reliable intervals aimed at ensuring that passengers will catch their transport connections. Low-floor busses with ramps and tilting technology make it easier for passengers to get on, and the gradual addition of tactile cues on the pavement and pushbuttons at bus stops aid the visually impaired. A great deal of attention has also been paid to the appearance of the bus stops which reflect the town’s red and green colours, and schools that “adopt” a bus stop receive €700 a year. Emission and low-noise trolley busses service the town centre, as do additional “duobusses” equipped with diesel motors and electro-propulsion which can travel outside of the trolley routes. Night owls can also take advantage of the services offered by a subsidised “night-taxi”.

**ESSLINGEN AM NECKAR**
(population: 91,500), Germany
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 2

**COST:** Additional costs in the local public transport system are offset in the long-term by a higher number of passengers.

**CONTACT:** Esslingen am Neckar, Renate Daurer, Coordination Office for Environmental Protection, Ritterstraße 17, D-73728 Esslingen am Neckar, Tel.: +49-711/3512-2572, renate.daurer@esslingen.de

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**SUNFLOWERS AS A SOURCE OF FUEL**

Coming soon to Stockerau: Municipal vehicles are to run solely on vegetable oil.

The municipality of Stockerau in Lower Austria plans to equip its rolling stock with the latest in vehicle technology; every vehicle is to be powered solely by vegetable oil. By the end of 2008 the municipality is to take the first step to purchase five vehicles that run only on sunflower seed oil. The sunflowers will be grown by farmers in the surrounding areas, and the oil is to be pressed locally as well, allowing the region to retain the value-added and also promote jobs. Class A organic compost is to be used to grow the sunflowers with a high humus content, the best way to enrich the soil with valuable humus. This is also a key factor in terms of the climate as well, as a one percent increase in humus content in the soil can bind approximately 90 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

**STOCKERAU**
(population: 16,645), Austria
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 2

**COST:** €900,000

**CONTACT:** Municipality of Stockerau, Gerd Walter, Rathausplatz 1, A-2000 Stockerau, Tel.: +43-02266/695-26, g.walter@stockerau.gv.at

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**RING YOUR BIKE BELL FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT**

In Ghent some 110,000 routes are travelled by bicycle, thanks to the city’s ongoing efforts to promote environmentally-friendly mobility.
areas of 35 hectares. The city is famous throughout the country for its innovative campaigns aimed at sparking increasing interest in this new kind of culture of mobility. And since last autumn Ghent has been breaking new ground: its initiative ‘Ring Your Bike Bell for a Better Environment’ has raised awareness among the city’s inhabitants, district for district, for sustainable mobility and the plusses it brings for both the climate and the pocketbook. A detailed brochure provides information on bicycle and walkway connections, as well as public transport fares, schedules and connections to all of the important destinations in day-to-day life, not to mention 30-km/h zones, car-sharing offers, etc. for each city district. Inquiries can be made via e-mail or telephone – or even at home – for personal advice on mobility. Ghent’s inhabitants can share their experiences with others in “mobility teams” organized by the city. The campaign is currently underway in the Brugse Poort district; four more districts are to be added every year.

GHENT
(population: 224,000), Belgium
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 3
COST: € 44,000
CONTACT: The City of Ghent, Yves De Baets, Dienst Mobiliteit, Woodrow Wilsonplein 1, B-9000 Gent, Tel.: +32-9/2667761, mobilitet@gent.be

★★ CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 3

RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR “CLIMATE HEROES”
The City of Essen is promoting the use of bus and rail in local public transport with a creative image campaign.

You’ve always wanted to be a hero? The City of Essen, located in North Rhine-Westphalia, makes it easy for you to be a “climate hero” simply by taking the train or the bus. This is just one of the catchphrases in the city’s image campaign “Climate Heroes”, initiated by the Essener Verkehrs-AG aimed at broadening the notion of what a hero is and giving everyone the chance to be one. One small change in behaviour, like taking public transport more often, has a large impact on the climate. The idea of a “climate hero” raises awareness in a humorous and novel way without being preachy, while also going hand in hand with the website www.klimahelden.de which offers background and additional information on the climate, the environment and the public transport system. Within the context of this campaign 100 buses and trams have been outfitted with slogans, such as “Carpool for the Climate”, or “Right-of-Way for Climate Heroes”, and advertise throughout the city. Billboards, leaflets and postcards have been printed up, ad space purchased and a number of events organised. Seven Sundays have been designated to encourage those who take the bus or train seldom or not at all to try it out by offering them a coupon for a free ride. And public transport regulars are rewarded for the “heroic” behaviour they demonstrate on a daily basis.

ESSEN
(population: 582,100), Germany
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 3
COST: € 80,000
CONTACT: Essener Verkehrs-AG, Nils Hoffmann, Zweigerstraße 34, D-45130 Essen, Tel.: +49-201/826-1410, n.hoffmann@evag.de

Everyone can be a “climate hero”.

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WINNING PROJECTS

★ CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 3

ALCALÁ BIKE SERVICE

By offering a bike borrowing scheme and a range of other services, the Spanish city Alcalá de Henares managed to cut down on automobile traffic.

In the city of Alcalá de Henares, located near Madrid, private cars are still the standard mode of transport for getting around town, with the usual result being daily traffic jams and congested streets. The solution: the bicycle. The city came up with the idea of “Alcalá Bike Service”, a bike borrowing service with a total of 200 bicycles. The bikes are available free of charge, but users have to register with the city administration which equips them with a helmet, lock, reflective clothing and a route map, as well as a comprehensive info packet. This packet published by the city contains street maps, bicycle path routes, parking places, bike borrowing stations and instructions for safe cycling. Visitors can also get their info packet at the tourist information office. The Alcalá Bike Service initiative has also been buttressed by infrastructure improvements, including a network of 19 bicycle parking spots. So far the bikes have been a great success, helping to reduce the number of motorists. As a result the bike service has made an important contribution to protecting the climate and reducing the negative effects of automobile traffic.

ALCALÁ DE HENARES
(population: 204,000), Spain
Awarde d the CLIMATE STAR,
CATEGORY 3
COST: € 93,000
CONTACT: Ciudad de Alcalá de Henares,
David Larrazábal Moya,
Concejaliá de Medio Ambiente, c/o Navarro y Ledesma 1 y 3,
ES-28807 Alcalá de Henares,
Tel.: +34-91/877-1230,
dlarrazabal@ayto-alcaladehenares.es

HOW MUCH CO2 DOES CITY TRAFFIC REALLY CAUSE?

The English city Sheffield is conducting exact measurements to be able to take appropriate measures for planned development.

The City of Sheffield in England wants to know exactly what’s what: How high are the CO2 emissions caused by city traffic? Ballpark figures were not enough; it had to be possible to take precise measurements of the city’s CO2 footprint based on individual journeys. The new measurement instrument for the city centre is already in action; other districts are to follow suit soon. Now potential CO2 emissions caused by planned, new urban development can be measured in advance. As a project developer, the city administration can use these figures as a basis for incorporating plans to reduce CO2 emissions and examine emission-reducing measures proposed...
by developers as well. In addition, the calculations also form the basis for CO₂ compensation in emissions trading. In the future the measurement instrument is to be used for other purposes as well, such as to optimise the fleet of buses that service Sheffield. Every single traffic route generated by urban development can be included in the catalogue of measures to lower CO₂ emissions and in the city’s traffic strategy. The objective is to examine how much potential the measures in Sheffield’s traffic strategy have to reduce CO₂. Furthermore, the city’s toll fee model can also be adjusted to take the reduction of CO₂ emissions into account.

SHEFFIELD  
(population: 520,700), Great Britain  
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY 3  
COST: Project not yet completed  
CONTACT: City of Sheffield, Bernd Hoermann, Environmental Strategy Team, 2-10 Carbrook Hall Road, GB-Sheffield S9 2OB, Tel.: +44-114/273-4655, bernd.hoermann@sheffield.gov.uk

CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY EXTRA

GENTLY MOBILE WHILE ON HOLIDAY

Alpine Pearls, an association of 21 tourist towns in the Alpine region, has combined an ecological approach to holiday-making with economic success.

The special feature about this association: These 21 towns have turned the spotlight on “gently mobile” holidays, joining forces to cooperate on marketing. These towns start by giving their guests directions on how to arrive at their holiday destination car-free. Once there, the guests can get around using practical, innovative and environmentally-friendly means of transport, including an electro-shuttle bus and even a horse-drawn carriage. But as fun and clever as these kinds of transport may be, nothing beats the first-rate hiking and bike trails these towns offer. Bundling and expanding on individual initiatives have helped promote sustainable mobility in tourism more intensively – for the benefit of the holiday-makers, who can be sure that clearly defined minimum standards are met, and for the benefit of these tourist towns, who are increasingly combining an ecological approach to holiday travel with economic success.

TWENTY-ONE MUNICIPALITIES, with a total of 50,000 inhabitants (the association’s headquarters is located in Werfenweng, Austria), from Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland and Austria: Arosa, Bad Reichenhall, Berchtesgaden, Chamois, Deutschofen, Feltre, Forni di Sopra, Hinterstoder, Interlaken, Les Gets, Morzine-Avoriaz, Neukirchen, Pieve di Cadore, Ratschings, Sauis, Steinegg, Tiers, Villard de Lans, Villnöß, Welschnofen and Werfenweng.  
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY “EXTRA”  
COST: € 300,000 per year  
CONTACT: Alpine Pearls, Natalie Sanabria, Wenig 138, A-5453 Werfenweng, Tel.: +43-666/20020, office@alpine-pearls.com

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“school-walker passport” was developed for 1,700 school children, a campaign that by itself was responsible for saving 3,900 car trips to school each time it was carried out. ‘Plan b’ municipalities also provide local companies with information and support for mobility management and have worked together with public transport to develop and implement a number of company mobility solutions. Public administration has lived up to its reputation as a role model in the region by actively pursuing mobility management policies for their employees and citizens as well. ‘Plan b’ has also motivated event organisers to back the use of environmentally-friendly forms of transport, for example transport services to and from the event, or providing enough parking for bicycles during events. The music group Bürgermusik Wolfurt and the bike club Radcult have joined forces to make a staffed bicycle storage area available for event participants. ‘Plan b’ projects have already begun to gain ground throughout Vorarlberg, as well as beyond its borders.

VORARLBERG MUNICIPALITIES: Hard, Kennelbach, Lauterach, Schwarzach and Wolfurt, as well as the City of Bregenz (total population: 60,000)
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY “EXTRA”
CONTACT: plan b – “mprove” Team für Kommunikation, Nadine Kerber, Kalchern 567, A-6866 Andelsbuch, Tel.: +43-5512/2398, nk@mprove.at

CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY SPECIAL MENTION

ACTIVELY PROTECTING THE CLIMATE
The Municipality of Echsenbach took first prize in Lower Austria’s Municipalities’ Contest “Climate Fruit Festival”.

The expert jury singled out the 12 most active towns of the 90 Climate Alliance municipalities in Lower Austria for awards. Next year these municipalities will take turns hosting a “Climate Fruit Festival” each month. The Municipality of Echsenbach took the top prize thanks to its efforts over the years to implement a number of projects and measures in a wide variety of areas and to pursue ongoing PR activities to motivate its citizens to participate. The local district heating-biomass heating plant (wood chips) in Echsenbach provides climate-friendly heating to all public buildings and 80% of households. Its biogas plant with its electricity generating capabilities has made the municipality self-reliant in terms of energy. The location for the biogas plant was chosen to make sure that any excess heat generated could also be fed into the district heating system. Furthermore, the town keeps “energy accounts” and has drawn up an energy strategy; all equipment used by the municipal administration is never switched to standby mode, energy saving bulbs are used in street lighting, and land parcels in new residential housing areas are partitioned so that they face south, etc. The municipality also actively promotes walking and cycling. New walkways as shortcuts to the town centre and everyday bike paths in town as connectors to neighbouring municipalities have been created. Echsenbach also took part in the campaign “Freiradl”. The town emphasizes bundling its energies with its numerous working groups that are active throughout the town. This is the only way that we can truly make active climate protection part of our everyday lives.

ECHSENBACH (population: 1,250), Austria
Awarded the CLIMATE STAR, CATEGORY “SPECIAL MENTION”
CONTACT: Umweltgemeinderat Josef Baireder, Bachzeile 4, A-3903 Echsenbach, Tel.: +43-2849/8218, +43-664/3819305, gemeinde@echsenbach.at

Bike paths through the town and to neighbouring towns are popular.
ROLE MODELS POINT THE WAY

Because successful transport policies consist of many smaller components that can vary widely, 13 other projects were nominated in addition to the 13 which were awarded the Climate Star. These approaches and individual initiatives should be seen as building blocks worth emulating.

LONDON TOLL AS ROLE MODEL. The most prominent candidate for the Climate Star was certainly the City of London with its inner city toll introduced at the beginning of 2003. Toll revenues have made an ambitious expansion of the city’s public transport system possible. Individual motorised traffic has fallen by five per cent since 2000 – truly a unique result. Stockholm has adopted a similar model, and New York City is soon to follow suit as well. The jury decided against awarding London the Climate Star for one reason, namely because this initiative, which has set new standards in climate protection, is already so widely known. However, the jury did decide to single London out for honorary mention.

EUROPEAN ROLE MODEL IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT. The French city of Nantes was also among the cities nominated as a positive example of a flourishing city pursuing proactive policies in urban development, transport and the environment. Nantes’ modern and excellently intercoordinated network of regional rail, trams and busses has made the city a role model throughout Europe in public transport. Currently additional steps are being developed based on the city’s climate strategy passed in March 2007 aimed at halving CO2 emissions by 2025.

PROJECT WITH A FUTURE. Several of the nominated projects contain measures that are still in the developmental stage or are just on the cusp of implementation, but were viewed as particularly promising and worthy of imitation. The aim of nominating them is to encourage these cities and municipalities to submit their initiatives again at a later date for consideration. One of these projects is the “Universade per Bi-cycle” in Belgrade. The project, initiated by the “Yugo Cycling Campaign”, was deemed exemplary for its environmentally-friendly management of large-scale events, flanked by permanent measures for environmentally-friendly mobility in the city. The project centres on the building of a bike path network that interconnects the most important destinations of the student Olympiad. A number of public relations and lobbying activities have accompanied the project’s implementation.

“SHARED-SPACE”. The recent concept of “shared space” is aimed at designing pub-
lic space so that travelling, lingering and other spatial activities enjoy a balanced co-existence. The Municipality of Hollabrunn has taken this concept to heart with the aim of becoming Austria’s model “shared space” municipality. A project partnership, including research trips to Haren in the Netherlands, has served as Hollabrunn’s inspiration.

NOISE REDUCTION STRATEGY. The German city of Norderstedt, part of the conurbation surrounding the city of Hamburg, has come up with Europe’s first noise reduction strategy in line with the EU Environmental Noise Directive that was elaborated in close cooperation with the public. The Noise Reduction Strategy is aimed at changing the “modal split” in Norderstedt in the long-term by 2013: motorised individual traffic is to be reduced from 58% to 51%, bicycle traffic and pedestrian traffic are to increase by 14% and 16%, respectively. The overarching goal is, of course, to lower CO₂ emissions: 11% of traffic emissions and 3% of Norderstedt’s total emissions.

“CUT DOWN ON TRAFFIC”. The Climate Star 2007 winners and nominated cities and towns have come up with a number of answers to the question posed by the EU Green Paper. What measures can be taken to promote walking and cycling as real alternatives to the automobile? One exemplary initiative is the “Cut Down on Traffic” (“Verkehrsräumen”) project in the Austrian province of Lower Austria. The objective is to motivate inhabitants to reduce the number of trips they take by car by raising awareness, launching creative campaigns and carrying out simple public works measures. The Municipality of Bad Vöslau, for example, has submitted its pedestrian guide system as its current “Verkehrsräumen” project. This initiative was developed in close cooperation with the town’s inhabitants to encourage both residents and tourists to do more walking within the municipality.

REMOVING OBSTACLES FOR CYCLISTS. With its bicycle traffic strategy the City of Luxembourg has demonstrated that it is possible to promote cycling even in topographically adverse conditions. The strategy is modelled on the concept of “bicycle traffic as a systematic approach”. To enable cyclists to overcome the 70m-difference in altitude in the settlement area several lifts and bridges were built and are open to pedestrians and cyclists only. One other feature is that selected bus lanes have been opened to bicycle traffic.

“VIRGER MOBIL” 2. Even smaller municipalities came up with a number of effective ideas for countering the daily surfeit of traffic. The Municipality of Virgen in Austria has created its own environmentally-friendly mobility service entitled “Virger Mobil”. A passenger car with volunteer drivers is available throughout the day from Monday to Friday. In the mornings the car travels two set circular routes, and the car serves as an “on-call” bus in the afternoon. Trips within the municipality to the doctor or the grocery store are to be taken “no longer alone, but together” in the future.

REDESIGNING AN ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY TOWN CENTRE. Yet another example of a small municipality that has distinguished itself thanks to its integrated approach is Spillern in Lower Austria. When redesigning its town centre, Spillern seized the opportunity to concentrate a number of functions in one general vicinity and make it possible to access them by bicycle and primarily on foot.

ON FOOT IS FINE. The motto of the Municipality of Ulrichskirchen-Schleinbach in Lower Austria is “On Foot is Fine” (“Gehen geht”). Experienced movement experts teach school children how important daily physical activity is, and police officers instruct them on traffic regulations. Every Friday morning the elementary school children meet at certain (pedestrian) stops where participating parents then escort them on to school. Along the way, more and more children join the group. Currently more than 35% of all elementary school children are currently participating in this initiative.

YEAR OF MOBILITY. Feldkirch, Vorarlberg, has dedicated all of 2007 to the issue of mobility. A comprehensive package of mobility management measures covers about 60 smaller and larger-scale individual measures aimed at raising awareness, providing information, services and advice, improving the existing framework and creating incentives for the eco-mobility network known as the “Umweltverbund”. The initiative has focused on a creative corporate design and bettering infrastructure for the “Umweltverbund”, such as offering bicycle service points and expanding bus and car sharing services.

ATTRACTIVE LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT. Mobility in the Pinkatal/Stremtal region has been made truly attractive thanks to the construction of a municipal alliance for local public transport. Modern low-floor buses and transport schedules that run on fixed intervals, not to mention a “party bus” (runs until 3 a.m.) are the cornerstones of this impressive project. New busses are to be purchased in the course of 2008 which are to run on bio-SNG (and made in Güssing, a model region for energy self-reliance on the basis of regional resources).

MUNICH AS A ROLE MODEL. The basis for the jury’s evaluation was, in addition to the project itself, information on the climate protection programme and the most important individual measures provided in the form of a checklist. The City of Munich was nominated because it had by far the highest point score. Munich is a role model, not just in developing climate protection strategies, but also thanks to its district heating network – the largest in Europe – its high percentage of combined heat and power generation, several projects for solar-powered buildings and cooperation efforts with companies, architects and craftsmen.