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FEDERAZIONE ITALIANA PRODUTTORI
DI ENERGIA DA FONTI RINNOVABILI



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Open Days: European Week of Regions and Cities

Case History Fiper: Biomass Use Heating Plants: Best practices from Tirano, Sondalo and Santa Caterina Valfurva

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Founded in 2001, Federation of Renewable Energy Producers (FIPER) brings together the majority of Italian producers of electrical energy and heating from renewable sources. Fiper represents 62 energy and heating producers companies from mountain area of the Regions of Piemonte, Val D'Aosta, Lombardia, Trentino Alto Adige, Friuli Venezia Giulia and Emilia Romagna. 180.000 clients of heating, sanitary water and electricity. 250 MW of thermal power generated by Fiper's members' plants, of which 520 MW installed in final users and 5 MW electrical.

According to the position paper of the European Renewable Energy Council- EREC-, "it is high time to address the heating and cooling sector which has been neglected far too long". Harmonization of supports schemes in the renewable energy is indeed necessary in order to develop and to diversify energy supply. Given that Europe has fixed the target of achieving 20% of produced energy from renewable sources, timing is a key factor. The target will only be met if legislation at European and National levels is adopted within the expected deadlines. Due to the limited sources of biomass (life cycle, local supplies), it is important to take into account efficiency criteria for the production of energy from woody biomass sources. For instance, efficiency of heat and/or electricity production from biomass can vary from 25 to 90%. Therefore, minimum efficiency criteria should be introduced and applied to any new biomass plant and heating service. FIPER is not agreeable to give incentives to electrical energy production from woody biomass: it is Fiper's opinion that is possible to achieve higher efficiency with co-generation systems, combining electrical and thermal energy, as specified in the 2004/8/CE Directive. For that reason FIPER proposes, in line with French legislation, the adoption of public incentives only for electrical energy produced by wood biomass in co-generation systems with a minimum level of efficiency of 50%.

FIPER priority is the creation of agro-energetic districts and short production chains, therefore creating positive community and environmental impacts. "Short chains at best efficiency" are plants of short forestry rotation and District-heating networks localized around 60-80 km, in order to reduce transport costs. FIPER's short chain positive impacts include:

- Towns can improve energetic autonomy;
- The use of local renewable resources encourages social cohesion;
- The involvement of local woody producers assures an extra income and creates new employment opportunities.

In Valtellina (Lombardia), for instance, the Society of Heating Valtellina, Valchiavenna and Valcamonica Spa (TCVVV), has realized three heating plants since 2000 in the Council of Tirano, Sondalo and Santa Caterina Valfurva and one biogas plant (600 KW electrical) in construction in Villa of Tirano. Tirano was the first pilot project co-financed by Lombardia Region, concerning energy autonomy in mountain communities.



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The plants production capacity covers local demand of electrical and thermal energy; in particular: Tirano plant production capacity is 20 MW Thermal and 1.1 Electrical (co-generation), plus a new photovoltaic park (68 kW) over rooftop of heating plant; the production capacity of the heating plant of Sondalo is 10 MW thermal, while that of Santa Caterina Valfurva's plant, the last one to start operations is 12 MW thermal. The latter started operations last November, and is the first heating plant in Italy localized on a Natural Park and protected area Park of Stelvio. This is a pilot experience whose aim is to add value to Alto Adige energy policy where this heating plant constitute, on one hand the opportunity to create income from wood management, and, on the other hand, a change to raise awareness among mountain tourists on renewable energy consumption and efficiency.

Woody heating plants choice represents an eco-sustainable model of delocalization of energetic supply, that encourages local entrepreneurship and promotes under member of Italian Federation Of Renewable Energy Producers (FIPER).

Speaker

Walter Righini- Entrepreneur.

Since 2001, founder member of Italian Federation of Renewable Energy Producers (FIPER).

Walter Righini is FIPER's President for the third time since its constitution.

Since Tcvvv star-up (2000) D.A. and President