PROBIO News

INTEGRATED PROMOTION OF THE BIODIESEL CHAIN

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MOVING TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE MUNICIPALITIES: THE CURRENT MAJOR CHALLENGE FOR LOCAL POLICY

We believe that the major challenge we, local governments, must currently face is making today's progress compatible with the necessary respect for the environment or environmental balance, thereby moving towards sustainable municipalities. Current and consensual evidence of the climate change phenomenon as well as its link to energy and transport models as the principal culprits places us in a phase of transition and uncertainty where we seek balance, changes and also new development opportunities. We want to build more self-sufficient towns and cities which have a lower impact on their environment, are more efficient and participatory, and which are responsible consumers and producers of social and environmental well-being.

The current philosophy of the Department of the Environment and Renewable Energy of the Provincial Government of Huelva is aimed at discovering and protecting our natural heritage, promoting energy efficiency and making the renewable natural resources found in our province profitable. Is short, we aspire to put into effect the desired principle of sustainability in the municipalities of the province of Huelva. For us, discussing sustainability implies the need to make society aware of a global and serious reconsideration of our lifestyle by accepting that there are close ties between conserving nature and human well-being and coming to terms with the fact that we are living at a time when a world that is so very little sustainable as the one we have created must be reasonably questioned.

It is within this context that we are carrying out the PROBIO Project for the purpose of promoting biodiesel production and consumption in cooperation with other European Union countries, a factor which besides significantly enriching the actions that come out of it, provides a global feeling to it, an exchange of experiences and united efforts. It is worth mentioning that the very evolution of the actions taken as part of the project (studying energy crops, awareness and information campaigns, commercial agreements and contracts, legal measures…) are leading to projects of interest for our province, which will most likely endure over time. We believe that reusing waste to promote cleaner or renewable energy must be an attractive investment in the future.

From here in Huelva, I sincerely congratulate all the partners involved in this project for the work they have done and I invite all of you to continue on the path towards common objectives that will lead to a better future.

Ms. Petronila Guerrero Rosado

President of the Provincial Government of Huelva

Project financed by Intelligent Energy Europe

INFORMATION OF INTEREST

SPAIN APPROVES THE MINISTERIAL BIOFUEL OBLIGATION ORDER

The approval by the Spanish Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Commerce of the Biofuel Obligation Order, published on 14 October in the Official State Gazette (Order ITC/2877/2008), is a fundamental step towards allowing the implementation of a mechanism as of 1 January 2009, the compliance with which will make it possible for Spain to almost sextuple the biofuel usage percentage and within two years, replace fossil fuels, which account for more than three million tonnes of oil equivalent (toe). This new legislations specifies the details of biofuel obligations, which, in energy terms, should represent 3.4% in 2009 and 5.83% in 2010.

One of the most important aspects of this new regulation is the maintenance of separate obligations for bioethanol and biodiesel (with identical percentages of 2.5% and 3.9% for 2009 and 2010, respectively), as this will enable the development of both biofuels.

Once these obligatory consumption percentages have been established, it will be necessary to ensure that all hydrocarbon logistical operators progressively adapt their facilities so as to allow for mixes and the appropriate storage of biodiesel and bioethanol.

Objectives established in Spanish Ministerial Order ITC/2877/2008

	BIODIESEL	BIOETHANOL	TOTAL
2008	1.9%	1.9%	**1.9%**
2009	2.5%	2.5%	**3.4%**
2010	3.9%	3.9%	**5.83%**

ACTIONS CARRIED OUT DURING THE FOURTH SEMESTER OF THE PROJECT

LOCAL PROJECT PARTNERS INVIGORATE THE BIOFUEL MARKET IN THE PARTICIPATING REGIONS

Local biofuel markets in the regions and provinces that are participating in the PROBIO Project have received a boost from the various project partners through initiatives aimed at invigorating these markets. Particularly, different specific commercial agreement models have been created in order to promote the provision of biodiesel by principal distributors and to offer favourable conditions to the major consumers in these areas (bus fleets, goods transport companies, public transport companies, civil works companies, taxi associations, agriculture cooperatives, etc.).

Likewise, specific agreements have been established with local governments and service stations to increase the number of biofuel pumps that operate in these regions. The purpose of these commercial initiatives has been to boost the consumption of biodiesel and facilitate its progressive introduction in local fuel supply markets.

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ACTIONS CARRIED OUT DURING THE FOURTH SEMESTER OF THE PROJECT

NEW COURSES FOR FARMERS

In recent months, the towns of Briviesca (Burgos), Muñana (Ávila) and Trigueros (Huelva) have hosted new energy crop courses for farmers, students and professionals in the agricultural and forestry sector. The theoretical sessions aimed at outlining the main agronomic and economic aspects of the principal energy crops used to produce biodiesel were accompanied by technical visits to production plants where those in attendance could find out first hand the real possibilities of these crops for obtaining alternative biofuels.

BIODIESEL: MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO CITIZENS

Local project leaders have published various informational materials in recent months which are being distributed among local agents involved in the biodiesel supply chain (producers, distributors, public administrations, farmers, service stations, consumers, etc.). The informational brochures have been published in two versions, one of which is aimed at the general public with basic information on biodiesel whereas the other contains technical information aimed at a specialized audience. Moreover, this material has been used as an informational aid for other Project activities.

THE PROBIO PROJECT SETS UP A BIODIESEL POINT CARD SYSTEM THAT IS PIONEER IN EUROPE

The various local PROBIO Project partners in Spain have implemented an innovative point card system that enables biodiesel users to register their consumption and accumulate points based on the litres of biodiesel used to refuel. The system is an attempt to promote the consumption of biodiesel among citizens as card users may exchange the points they have accumulated for promotional gifts and other rewards. Citizens will find all the necessary information on how to obtain the biodiesel point card and register with the system at the service stations that have joined the project in the three participating provinces (Burgos, Ávila and Huelva); in other words, at most service stations that supply biodiesel. Furthermore, card users can get information on refuels completed, participating service stations, the number of points accumulated, cashing in these points for the various promotional gifts and obtain other advantages such as a discount on the municipal vehicle tax at the project website (www.probio-project.com/SP).

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CURRENT EVENTS

BURGOS: The future Briviesca biodiesel plant obtains environmental and urban licenses

The City Council of Briviesca (Burgos) has granted environmental and urban development permits to the company Refinería de Nuevos Combustibles S.A. to install the future biodiesel plant which will occupy nearly 18,000 square metres in the La Vega Industrial Park. Once the company has presented the complete project, construction work may begin on the second biodiesel plant in the province.

RNC REFINERIA DE NUEVOS COMBUSTIBLES

HUELVA: The PROBIO Project travelling exhibit has reached more than a hundred thousand people

The travelling exhibit on transport and biodiesel which has been circulating around the province of Huelva, has already been visited by more than 100,000. Since its inauguration on 8 August at the Matalascañas Marine World Museum, it has travelled to the municipalities of Valverde del Camino, Cartaya, Punta Umbría, Almonaster la Real, Rosal de la Frontera and Aljaraque and has been well-received by the locals. Currently, and until 15 January, it is on display at the International Centre for Ecological and Environmental Studies and Conventions (CIECEMA) of Almonte, as was requested by city halls in nearby provinces, as well as others.

ÁVILA: The province now boasts a new bio-petrol station

With the incorporation in 2008 of the La Moraña Service Station, which is located in the municipal district of Hernansancho, the number of service stations that sell biodiesel in the province of Ávila now stands at eight, which, without a doubt, will help introduce this biofuel to the citizens and therefore, facilitate its consumption.

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