



The Pact of Islands on Sustainable Energy

Many European Islands nowadays are suffering from structural handicaps which are leading to population reduction. The adding pressure from tourism on the islands ecosystems, transport and energy systems and water requirements is putting the European Islands in the forefront of the fight against global warming. Malta is becoming more conscious of the need to reverse the pollution trends causing climate change and of the benefits of a cleaner environment. Therefore, island authorities have decided to demonstrate their political commitment to EU sustainable energy objectives by promoting and signing a binding declaration: the Pact of Islands.

Currently there are 12 participating European Islands working together with the European Commission, energy experts and financial institutions to develop Local Sustainable Energy Action Plans (LSEAP's) and a pipeline of bankable projects. The aim of these LSEAP's will be meeting or exceeding the EU sustainability target of reducing CO₂ emissions by at least 20% by the year 2020. Paragon Europe is representing Malta in the Isle-Pact project. The following councils are participating in the project: Għargħur, Dingli, Kalkara, Tarxien and Santa Lucija.

Between the 27th of February and the 3rd of March a meeting was held in Gran Canaria, which Paragon Europe was attending. Here, the project partners met to discuss the Sustainable Energy Action Plans. During the meeting, a course on CBA & Social Economic impact Assessment was also held.

Resulting from these projects, positive advantages for the inhabitants of Malta will arise. Expected benefits include a steady improvement of local economic conditions through enhanced economic development and investment conditions. A new 'Renewable Energy' industry in Malta offers potential for job-creation: it will increase employment in innovative and highly technical sectors. Furthermore, Isle Pact will help to protect Malta's ecosystems and will increase the energy and water supply dependence.

In order to achieve all the goal of Isle Pact, increasing public awareness about CO₂ emission reduction is of high importance. Island communities can make a contribution in the fight against climate change, and thus contribute towards the main objective of CO₂ reduction. Expected results will benefit all.