



Biomethane Regions

UK Newsletter 1

Developers and Technicians



Biomethane Regions—a follow on project to Biogas Regions?

Biomethane Regions is a new project under the Intelligent Energy Europe programme and does owe a lot to the 2007-2010 Biogas Regions project. Many of the lessons learnt and work undertaken under that project will be used productively, but there are also a number of important differences. Some of our partners are no longer with us, some informal partners have been incorporated formally and some partners are completely new. The full partners to Biomethane Regions are:-

- Severn Wye Energy Agency and the University of Glamorgan - **UK**
- Styrian Energy Agency and Technical University of Vienna - **Austria**
- Rhone-Alps Energy and Environment Agency and the Association of Local Initiatives in Energy and the Environment in Brittany and Pays de la Loire - **France**
- The Economic Development Corporation for Schwäbisch Hall district - **Germany**
- Walloon Agricultural Research Centre - **Belgium**
- Knowledge Centre for Agriculture - **Denmark**
- Energy Agency for SE Sweden - **Sweden**
- Agricultural Institute - **Hungary**
- Agricultural Institute - **Slovenia**
- Energy Institute for **Croatia**
- Abruzzo Regional Energy Agency - **Italy**
- **European** Federation of Agencies and Regions for Energy and Environment



Staff from the partners at the project kick-off meeting

The Project Kick-Off Meeting

Severn Wye Energy Agency is the co-ordinating body for Biomethane Regions and is thus responsible for project administration and delivery. It has also meant that Andy Bull has put in a very considerable amount of work in submitting the application and negotiating its final approval. It is important that the first meeting of the project partners is productive, as it sets up the three years of the project work programme to be delivered on-time and in accordance with the performance indicators.

The meeting was held in Cardiff with the rather intense sessions filling two days, relieved by a short evening tour of the city and bay with dinner at the Wales Millennium Centre.

Training at the University of Glamorgan



The two day kick-off meeting was followed by a day and a half of training just up the valley road (the A470) in Pontypridd. The Biomethane Regions project partners were joined by other interested parties, including project developers from France and Germany, developers from the UK, a UK utility company, government policy officers, and university students and researchers. The training was delivered by Karl Puchas (LEA, Styria), Michael Harasek (Technical University of Vienna) and several members of staff at the University of Glamorgan.

Developers Thematic Group

The project includes the possibility of developers swapping experiences across the partner regions and for the Biomethane Regions project to track some of the more ambitious proposals over the next three years. We took a break from training to undertake a meeting and tour at a site owned by the Hardstaff Group near Merthyr Tydfil. This former peak-shaving gas storage facility is proposed as a centre of excellence for biomethane and gas use in vehicles, and there is no shortage of ambition. Keep watching this space!



The Advisory Group

A project advisory group is established, with key participants that represent various sectors in the AD scene in Wales and western England. The first meeting will be towards the end of July in Pontypridd. If you feel that you would like to join the group and have something to offer then please make contact with Andy Bull.

Study Tour for Potential Developers

We will be organising a study tour for potential developers from our "region" to visit plants in one of the other regions. At the moment, the Schwäbisch Hall area north of Stuttgart in Germany is a distinct possibility, but if there is a particular technology type or other issue that you would like to explore then please make contact and we will see what we can offer. The tour might be in the Spring of 2012 but this is only provisional. Registering your interest early would help us to plan.

Best Practice on Quality Management

The Biomethane Regions project is all about seeing more methane produced via AD plants. The major way that we will seek to achieve this is via the encouragement of new AD developments but one package of work is focussed on getting more out of existing plants—increasing yields via good plant management and systematic monitoring. The University partners along with the Styrian Energy Agency will lead this work, and they will initially be looking for best practice examples of quality management and monitoring. If you know of plants that fit the bill then please make contact. A second phase of work will be to identify a few existing plants that are in need of improvement, and take them through the process of the monitoring of key parameters and taking appropriate actions in response to results.

Development Assistance Available

Severn Wye Energy Agency (under this project) is able to offer a range of assistance to potential developers, whether that be pre-feasibility, more detailed work, assistance with communications to planners or the public, or overcoming planning problems. We can't always guarantee to help, but will certainly listen to your request and assist you if we possibly can. Andy Bull spent 30 years in local government and is a qualified town planner. Alastair Stevens is rather more likely to be able to research the answer to your technical questions than Andy, although both of them have seen quite a few AD plants in the last few years. If we get stuck we can call upon other project partners - including the University of Glamorgan, AD Centre of Excellence.

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