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Welcome

Janka Clauder from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) welcomed the participants on behalf of the SPIN project and Herbert Kristoffersen welcomed them on behalf of the CBSS expert group - Baltic 21. He reminded the participants that the SPIN project is in line with the Baltic 21 strategy of the CBSS.



Introduction to the SPIN project

Presentation - Daniel de Graaf, UBA, Lead Partner SPIN Project

SPIN is a € 3m project co-funded by the Interreg IVB Baltic Sea Region Programme (BSR Programme). It aims at fostering sustainable production processes in SMEs by exploiting the innovation potential in this field in the BSR.

While the improvement of the political, macro-economic framework conditions is one pillar of the SPIN project the effective matchmaking between supply and demand involving SMEs from the whole Baltic Sea Region is the other important pillar of SPIN.

However, due to the complexity of today's industry, relevant solutions differ a lot from sector to sector and affect only a small group of companies compared to the entity of SMEs. In order to reflect this diversity and still directly address companies specific needs, SPIN focuses on four thematic fields:

- Sustainable construction
- Decentralized (waste) water management
- Surface treatment
- Biogas



Presentation - Daniel de Graaf

The outputs of the SPIN project are:

- SPIN website (www.spin-project.eu)
- Toolbox
- Innovation database
- Transnational Workshops
- Transnational Agenda
- Barriers and incentives for the introduction of innovations in SMEs
- Policy recommendations (SPIN transnational action plan)

Please see attached presentation or surf the SPIN webpage for more information about the project.

Outputs of SPIN (e.g. transnational synthesis on barriers & incentives; industry workshops)

Joint presentation André Greif (PtJ) and Daniel de Graaf (UBA)

Transnational synthesis on barriers and incentives

The project has produced two reports per partner country: The report on SME needs to introduce sustainable innovations (WP4) and the report on barriers and incentives (WP5). A preliminary version of a summary of these reports was also produced by the project.

The SME sector in the Baltic Sea Region contributes for about 50-70% of the GDP. The service sector and (Low) technologies dominate the SME sector but different branches are relevant in different countries.

Very small SMEs are often less innovative than bigger companies. The SME's impact on the environment is of about 64% of the total of the industry (based on findings from a DTI study).

Regarding framework conditions most of the partner countries have national strategies concerning innovation and environment as well as public support programmes and initiatives for innovation but not necessarily linked with environmental issues. The degree of enforcement of new laws is low. The recent economic crisis has strongly affected the SMEs.

In the presentation you will find detailed information on needs of SMEs in the region and barriers for the application of eco-innovations.



Joint Presentation - André Greif

Experiences with workshops

From the experience of the industry sectors some preliminary conclusions on incentives were taken:

- The strongest incentives are legislation and profits
- The legislation and norms are effective as an incentive if they are properly enforced and harmonised between the countries
- The big variety of available support makes it difficult for SMEs to get to know them and to access to them, particularly at the European Level
- Most part of the instruments focus on innovation instead of sustainable innovation
- Networking of SMEs with innovators and R&D experts can be supported through workshops or funding schemes
- Incentives to raise venture capital from companies and private persons could bridge the financing gap/public-private risk sharing
- Demonstration on industrial scale is important for technology validation, to increase credibility and support market entry
- Green Public Procurement has a large potential to support demonstration cases and bridge the financing gap but potentials are not yet sufficiently exploited

SPIN transnational Action Plan

The SPIN project will develop in the course of the next year a transnational action plan, which will include policy recommendations for the promotion of sustainable production in the BSR:

The Action Plan drafting team has proposed the following activity area for this Action Plan:

- Increasing awareness of SMEs and within their supply chains is crucial for stimulating demand for sustainable innovations
- Access to finance introduction of innovations for sustainable innovations from private and public capital sources (particularly after R&D phase for upscaling, demonstration and market introduction)
- Building-up competence and capacity for linking sustainability and innovation in SMEs and enable easy and direct access to relevant information for them
- Support access and penetration of international markets by SMEs through building up international networks and information services across borders and through harmonization of regulatory framework and standards
- Specific recommendations for the 4 selected industry sectors: biogas decentralised wastewater treatment, surface treatment and sustainable construction.

Please see attached presentation to learn more about the SPIN transnational agenda.

Discussion of the preliminary recommendations of SPIN for transnational agenda**Moderation André Greif, PtJ**

Some comments on the presented results:

- The characteristics of the SME sector are different from country to country in the BSR. These differences should be portrayed and taken into account in the SPIN Action Plan
- The servicing sector is very important. Increasing awareness on sustainable innovation among mechanics and craftsmen in this sector is difficult but a key element for sustainable development.
- Including the topic of "sustainable innovation" in the education system is important. The CBSS is working toward this goal.



- Equally important is training on "sustainable innovation" on the job. The CBSS education section will cooperate with the SPIN project in order to draft recommendations in this area.
- Existing tools, such as EMAS are very difficult to apply for SMEs. The SPIN project should recommend the adaptation and creation of tools for sustainable production aimed at small and micro enterprises.
- A return on investment of two years is not attractive enough for many SMEs. The RoI needs to be shorter.
- Incentive schemes for venture capital funds are important to trigger private investment in sustainable innovation
- The development of Green Public Procurement is important

The CBSS Expert Group Baltic 21 expressed its readiness to forward the recommendations of the SPIN project to the Ministries represented in the expert group.

Participants were reminded that the next Annual Conference for the Baltic Sea Region will take place in October 2011. This would be a prominent stage for presenting SPIN recommendations.

Future Projects

Mia Crawford, CBSS Expert Group Baltic 21

Mia Crawford announced that a project on Green Public Procurement is being developed. SPIN partners were invited to take part in this project. A meeting will take place in January 2011.

René Groen, DTI

DTI is planning to develop a project in the field of "Corporate Social Responsibility". The project is at the moment looking for partners, especially in the following countries: Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia and Russia. For more information please see attached presentation.

Presentation - René Groen

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