IANOS

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

for islands' decarbonisation

Summary of Community Engagement Training

Organized by New Energy Coalition

Samsø, Denmark 21st – 23rd March 2023

Written by Thomas G.B. Nielsen and Shubhra Chaudhry

H2020-LC-SC3-2018-2019-2020 / H2020-LC-SC3-2020-EC-ES-SCC

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Innovation and Networks Executive Agency

Grant agreement no. 957810

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Introduction

This document is a summary of the Community Engagement training on Samsø from the 21st to the 23rd of March 2023. To access the material of the sessions, please follow the links below. Most of links below are only accessible if you are part of the IANOS SharePoint from EDP.

Material

Day 1:

- PowerPoint presentations: Slides from day 1.pptx
- Recordings:
    - Introduction and Ameland.mp4 timetable:
        - 03:24 - 36:35: Welcome by Martijn de Vries and Thomas Nielsen of New Energy Coalition
        - 36:35 - 1:19:00: Presentation by Johan Kiewit, AEC, presentation about Ameland
        - 1:38:10 - 3:50:00: Wiebo Lamain, Hanze University, about community engagement activities on Ameland
    - Terceira, Bora Bora, Lampedusa, Nisyros and crowdfunding workshop.mp4 timetable:
        - 00:00 - 44:40: Miguel Quinto (RGA) & Tarcisio Silva (EDA) - Terceira
        - 53:35 - 1:35:20: Maireraurii Leverd (Municipality of Bora Bora), Vincent Sturny (water desalination on Bora Bora) & Salomé Varak (Akuo Energy) - Bora Bora
        - 1:50:45 - 2:20:05: Pietro Spataro (Municipality of Lampedusa) - Lampedusa
        - 2:20:42 - 2:41:20: Vasiliki Gemeni (HAEE) and Andreas Sfakianakis (Municipality of Nisyros) - Nisyros.
        - 2:49:15 - 3:44:40: Shubhra Chaudhry (NEC) workshop on Crowdfunding for energy cooperatives

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Day 2:

- Train the trainers (IANOS) from EnergiAkademiet. To access the material, press "Log in as a guest".
- Recording:
    - EnergiAkademiet intro and Train the trainer session.mp4 timetable:
        - 00:00 - 9:15: Introduction about the EnergiAkademiet, the house and the program by Michael Kristensen
        - 9:15 - 2:40:25: Train-the-trainer session Jan Janssen & Michael Kristensen

Day 3:

- Pioneer guide from EnergiAkademiet.
- Recordings:
    - Introduction to community engagement and workshop part 1.mp4 timetable:
        - 00:00 – 58:00: Overview of innovations on Samsø by Michael Kristensen
        - 1:15:30 – 2:02:30: Introduction to the community engagement by Søren Hermansen
        - 2:05:46 – 2:53:56: Community engagement workshop by Søren Hermansen part 1
    - Stakeholder engagement workshop part 2 and wrap up.mp4 timetable:
        - 1:08:48 – 2:05:30: Stakeholder engagement workshop by Søren Hermansen part 2
        - 2:18:50 – 2:54:00: Final remarks, questions, and wrapping up.

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Participants

For the Community Engagement training on Samsø, representatives from each IANOS project island were present. Thus, representatives from Ameland, Terceira, Nisyros, Lampedusa, and Bora Bora took part. Below, you can find a comprehensive list of the participants.

Johan Kiewit	Ameland Energie Coöperatie
Yehudi Arnold	Ameland Energie Coöperatie
Harry Frantzen	Ameland Energie Coöperatie
Jan van Dijk	Wetterskip Fryslân
Erwin de Boer	Municipality of Ameland
Wiebo Lamain	Hanze University Groningen
Andreas Sfakianakis	Municipality of Nisyros
Valsiliki Gemeni	Hellenic Association for Energy Economics (HAEE)
Pietro Spataro	Municipality of Lampedusa
Mágui Lage	EDP NEW
Miguel Quinto	Regional Government Azores (RGA)
Tarcisio Tiago Melo Silva	Electricidade dos Açores (EDA)
Maireraurii Leverd	Municipality of Bora Bora
Vincent Sturny	Municipality of Bora Bora
Salomé Varak	Akuo Energy - Bora Bora
Martijn de Vries	New Energy Coalition
Shubhra Chaudhry	New Energy Coalition
Deborah Goeree	New Energy Coalition
Thomas Nielsen	New Energy Coalition

Facilitators:

Michael Kristensen	EnergiAkademiet
Jan Janssen	EnergiAkademiet
Søren Hermansen	EnergiAkademiet

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Day 1

The first day consisted of presentations by each IANOS island representative, as well as a presentation from Wiebo Lamain, Hanzehogeschool, on designing a stakeholder engagement strategy and a workshop from Shubhra Chaudhry, New Energy Coalition, on crowdfunding for energy cooperatives.

Program

Welcome by Martijn de Vries and Thomas Nielsen of New Energy Coalition
Presentation by Johan Kiewit, AEC, about innovations on Ameland
Wiebo Lamain, Hanze University, about community engagement activities on Ameland
Miguel Quinto (RGA) & Tarcisio Silva (EDA) presentation about Terceira
Maireraurii Leverd (Municipality of Bora Bora), Vincent Sturny (water desalination on Bora Bora) & Salomé Varak (Akuo Energy) presentation about Bora Bora
Pietro Spataro (Municipality of Lampedusa) presentation about Lampedusa
Vasiliki Gemeni (HAEE) and Andreas Sfakianakis (Municipality of Nisyros) presentation about Nisyros.
Workshop from Shubhra Chaudhry about energy cooperative crowdfunding, IANOS Task 8.4

Ameland presentation by Johan Kiewit

Decarbonisation goals, ambitions and achievements

Johan Kiewit from Ameland Energy Cooperative (AEC) took much inspiration from Samsø when planning their decarbonization project back in 2009. This inspired the process of engaging citizens in the successful implementation of a local solar field providing a net-positive electricity production for Ameland. The AEC has already successfully implemented a 6MWp solar field. They plan to develop an additional 4MWp solar field, along with a battery storage solution, geothermal energy, peer-to-peer energy sharing, car-sharing programs and wind energy.

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Community engagement

If you become a member of the Ameland Energy Cooperative, you have a vote in the decision making. From the members, concerns about the project's visibility and its negative consequences for tourism lead to the construction of a dike in front of the solar field. Taking the concerns of the citizens into consideration created trust in the cooperative.

Citizens can also financially participate in innovations. An example hereof, are loans on solar panels of 5 years with a 4% interest rate. Furthermore, programs allowing sharing solar panels are being established. Here, the program 2Token will promote peer-to-peer energy sharing once Dutch legislation allows it.

Essentials to consider moving forward

In order to get citizens involved, financial participation is essential. People are inclined to join when they can see that they earn money and that they produce their own energy. Therefore, citizens are prioritized when selling the energy. This approach is similar to that of prosumership. An internal stability of the energy cooperative is essential to ensure trust from citizens. Furthermore, trust is ensured when local government are aligned with the plans of the cooperative. Despite the involvement of the government is essential, the plans and visions must stay apolitical.

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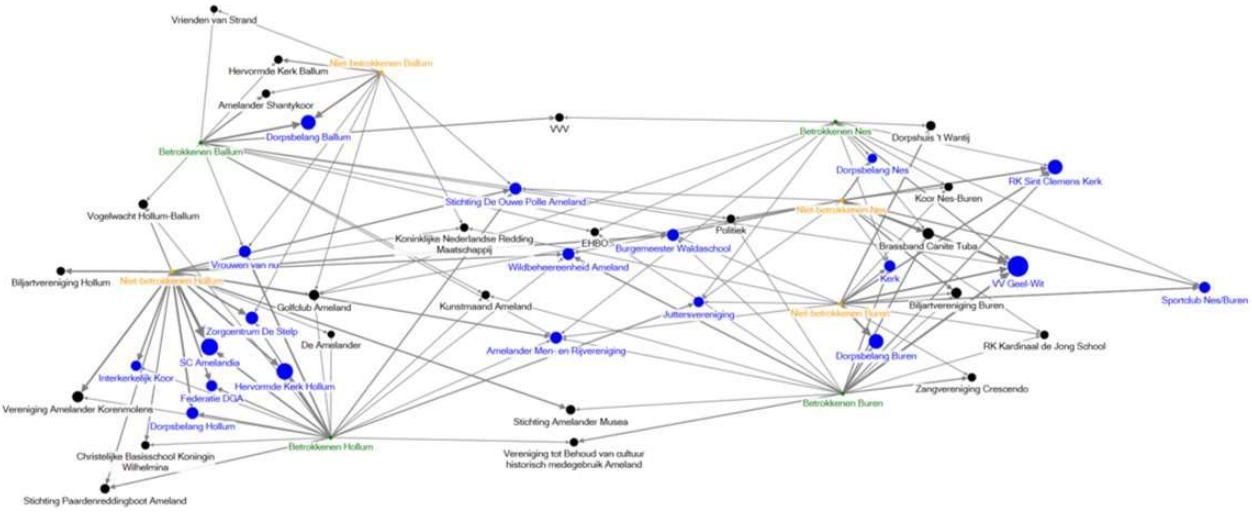
Task 8.1: Community engagement strategy on Ameland

presentation by Wiebo Lamain

The presentation on IANOS Task 8.1 focused on the process of designing a strategy for engaging the community on Ameland. Input was received from questionnaires, interviews, observations at town hall meetings, and a literature review.



The community engagement strategy needs to be tailormade for each individual community, and no one-size-fits-all approach can be used when planning community energy initiatives. On Ameland, a community networks analysis was done on the island, that captured all the social groups and how they were connected, separated in the east and west part of the island (see above). These 2 separate parts of the island differ in their identities and it was essential to engage them individually during the planning of projects.

In order to gain the trust of citizens, a non-political local ambassador led the conversation with the locals. Giving straight and honest answers to any question arising enhanced trust during town hall meetings.

Different rationales are used for engaging citizens. These include financial, environmental, pro-social/-community, and self-sufficiency arguments. Furthermore, enhancing the local identity in all the activities is key. People should not have to be convinced but the project should speak for itself.

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It was found that people from Ameland highly value the easiness of switching to renewables, the importance of self-sufficiency, impact on local nature, and that trust in essential actors is established. These aspects are, therefore, essential to consider when planning future projects on the island.

Terceira presentation by Miguel Quinto & Tarcisio Silva

Decarbonisation goals, ambitions and achievements

On Terceira, the energy transition strategy consist of 3 pillars: Energy efficiency, electrification, and decarbonisation. Geothermal, wind energy, hydro power, and waste-to-energy projects are already supplying 26% of the island's electricity.

Subsidy programs have been developed by the local government that subsidise 100% of costs involved with installing solar panels for citizens and industries. This works on a first come first serve basis. Beyond the solar panels, a program for funding 85% of costs for batteries for storage of self-produced energy has been implemented. Electric vehicle charging stations are also being planned to be implemented. A barrier here is the high installation costs. A tender has been introduced for funding of charging stations where 10 out of 26 stations have already been implemented.

Community engagement

Despite of the above mentioned subsidy programs, people from are very hesitant to install renewable energy in their building, arguing that they do not want to be told what to do with their property and expressing safety concerns. Azores are organising community engagement sessions for citizens, schools, public administrations, and companies.

During community engagement events for a social housing cooperation, the local spokesperson for the cooperation was appointed to speak. Earlier meetings had created a lot of negative and critical responses from participants, but the local spokesperson's presence created support among the participants. This shows the importance of the presence of a person that is trusted in the community.

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Essentials to consider moving forward

A barrier to engaging citizens is people's hesitance to share energy with each other. A financial motivator for engagement is, therefore, key on Terceira. The younger generations may be more inclined promote energy sharing. This was showcased for waste separation initiatives in homes, where children promoted this to their parents. A focus should be had on engaging the younger generations.

Bora Bora presentation by Maireraurii Leverd, Vincent Sturny & Salomé Varak

Decarbonisation goals and ambitions

The mayor of Bora Bora has in office for 34 years and has been the driving force of the ongoing sustainable transition on the island. Projects such as the SWEET solar PV greenhouse, OTEC water condensation, hydrogen transport system, and pyrolysis of waste have a focus on preserving the ecology and natural beauty of the island.

Community engagement

Landowners of locations where projects are being planned have preliminarily indicated that they are in support of the innovations. The opinion of the broad public is still unknown, but usually they trust the plans of the local government. Locations for the innovations have been specifically chosen to have minimal visual impact. These will be located far from other economic activities.

Essentials to consider moving forward

One of the most important parts of developing projects on Bora Bora are to consider and preserve the local culture and customs. Most of the resistance for projects have come from political opponents, but the citizens have a high trust in local institutions. The tourist industry highly values the preservation of the Bora Bora's natural beauty and projects must, therefore, take extra care to do minimum ecological harm.

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Lampedusa presentation by Pietro Spataro

Decarbonisation goals and ambitions

The biggest impact on carbon emissions is the transport and built environment around commercial and tourist activities. The local government makes many climate pledges but have yet to implement any specific projects. Until recently, lack financing was a main issue, however, Lampedusa has been selected by the Green Island project and now have €41 million available to be spent before 2026.

Community engagement

Communication and engagement is a next essential step in the island's energy transition. Pietro presented ideas around the first steps that could be made in an engagement strategy. This involves engaging the local newsletter, offering trainings to citizens, bringing together the municipality and citizens to discuss decarbonisation, engaging essential sectors such as tourism sector, etc. Some years back, a meeting about Lampedusa's energy transition was organised for stakeholders from the island. The meeting, however, did was not very well attended and participants criticised it for a lack of concrete plans.

Essentials to consider moving forward

On Lampedusa, the main issue that urgently needs attention is the refugee crisis taking place. The island is well-known for the refugee problem and the local government has until now been designating most of their time and energy to deal with this issue instead of the energy transition.

The local energy company S.E.L.I.S. supplies the island with energy from a polluting diesel generator and has a monopoly on the grid. This creates a large barrier for implementing renewable energy that goes against their business. The majority of the public is highly critical towards this company.

Nisyros presentation by Vasiliki Gemeni & Andreas Sfakianakis

Decarbonisation goals and ambitions

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Nisyros has the highest solar radiation in Europe and has massive unexploited potential for solar PV production. Furthermore, surrounding islets have been considered for wind production, although this meets criticism from biodiversity and tourism stakeholders due to the perceived impact on bird populations and the impact on the view.

The transport sector has a big impact on local emissions and the municipality plans to prioritise electric mobility. Between 12-15 charging points are being planned, although the high costs of installation is a big barrier in this.

Community engagement

Nisyros has a massive geothermal storage underground that is enough to supply the entire island with green energy, as well as exporting surplus energy. In the 1980's, an attempt was made to utilise this storage. But test drillings failed and polluted the air and landscape. Ever since, the topic of geothermal has been a sensitive topic among residents and although the local energy company is majorly interested in utilising the field, no further attempts have been made due to lack of public acceptance.

Essentials to consider moving forward

The basic infrastructure of Nisyros is put under a major pressure every tourist season. The residents have the sewer system, garbage management and water management high on the priority list, before energy production. The priority for basic infrastructure is essential when considering engaging the community.

The topic of climate change and renewable energy is not very well known by the residents of Nisyros. A large focus should be put on educating the public on the importance of this topic.

Workshop on crowdfunding for energy cooperatives by Shubhra Chaudhry

The workshop on crowdfunding for cooperative energy projects was an interactive session organized by Shubhra Chaudhry via Mentimeter. Participants were introduced to

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4 types of crowdfunding models: The lending model, equity model, donation/reward model, and hybrid model.

Of these 4 models, the equity and the hybrid model were perceived as the most beneficial for funding renewable energy projects. The majority of participants also indicated that crowdfunding would be a suitable tool for funding initiatives from energy cooperatives. Furthermore, the majority of participants indicated that crowdfunding for local energy initiatives should be done on a local, rather than a national or global scale, and that the minimum fee for participation should be set between €10-€100. The session sparked many fruitful discussions and received valuable input from existing crowdfunding schemes from Ameland and the AkuoCoop representative.

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Impressions from the first day

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Day 2

On the second day, the IANOS delegates were introduced to the energy transition on Samsø and took part in a train-the-trainer session for planning community-based energy projects. The day ended with a field trip to visit an array of innovations that were implemented on Samsø.

Program

Short presentation of the EnergiAkademiet organization and the house
Train the trainers
Departure from the Academy on a field trip around Samsø
Smart Grid and District Heating
Photo voltaic and electric cars
Visit to a wind turbine

Introduction to EnergiAkademiet

Michael Kristensen and Jan Jantzen from EnergiAkademiet welcomed the group and explained the organisation's establishment and workings. EnergiAkademiet is a Non-Governmental Organization with 10 employees who use the knowledge gained from the energy transition on Samsø to bring citizens together and facilitate projects by using different ownership models showcased on the island. The organization also offers advisory services to national and EU agencies and other organizations globally.

The EnergiAkademiet building, serving as the location of the community engagement training, fully reflects the core of the energy transition as it happened on Samsø. Built 25 years ago, the building not only serves the influx of visitors interested in the inspiring story of the island but also acts as a place to meet and engage with each other. The architecture of the building pays homage to the local Viking history of the island. The building was constructed and insulated using sustainable materials and designed to have minimal energy usage and environmental impact, thereby reflecting the

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philosophy of energy-neutrality and circularity that has become synonymous with Samsø.

Train-the-Trainers

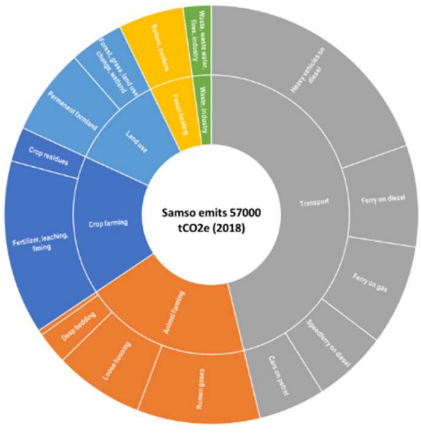
Refreshed with tea and coffee, the group reconvened to understand the underlying principles that guided the planning process that set the foundation for the energy transition of Samsø. Using an open source library of resources, Jan Jantzen explained the technical aspects while Michael Kristensen offered insights into the political discussions and aspects that were considered. The library of resources is openly accessible for all by logging in as a guest at https://energiinstituttet.dk/moodle/course/view.php?id=26

Technical Aspects

Samsø's climate goals are reflected in its Climate (gas) Action Plan (CAP) whereby:

- Samsø will reduce emissions by 70% (of 1990 baseline) before 2030;
- Samsø will be climate resilient before 2030;
- Samsø will be carbon neutral before 2050.

While only making up 0.1% of Denmark's national GHG emissions, Samsø acts as a pilot for social and technical innovations for the rest of the country to follow.



Before reducing emissions of an island (or any location), the emissions must be estimated or measured. Since 2020, Samsø uses a CO2 accounting tool which is a simple MS Excel

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model that takes the production activities on the island as an input and emission factors from national databases. The tool estimates the annual GHG emissions (expressed in tCO2 equivalent) and visually expresses the emissions in a simple “pineapple” chart, shown in the picture above. The chart can inform citizens and stakeholders of the major and minor sources of emissions and the technical interventions that can help in reducing emissions. Jan exemplified Samsø (left side) and Bora Bora (right side) to show how the tool can be applied to the different islands.

As the next step, the tool can be used to visually show how each possible technical intervention impacts the GHG emissions. Each decision impacts the GHG emissions differently and may be more favorable to one group of citizens than another and aid public discussions. Historically, Samsø has chosen market-ready technologies on the island since they can be applied and scaled up easily compared to technical innovations that are still undergoing development.

Using the tools can inform stakeholders and citizens of the actions that can be taken and act as a starting point to gather their opinions and start engaging them on whether these plans can be realistically executed.

Political Aspects

While the technical details of the decarbonization strategy are important, the political context on the island is equally, if not more, important. Michael Kristensen, who is on the board of Samsø EnergiAkademiet and a local politician, offered insights into the political aspects to consider for energy planning.

Once Samsø had set the vision to run 100% on renewables, the question that was discussed intensely among the citizens was how the island economy should look like. It was concluded that the goal was to also retain a lively, local and circular economy with deep social ties. Political discussions focused on managing the five limited resources on the island: Residents, jobs, buildings, land, and CO_2. Depopulation is a major concern, so the island wants to be a ‘settlers’ island, attracting young working families who may work on the mainland and wanting to raise their children in the countryside. Instead of being a tourist island which has a seasonal rush of people, having settlers as residents

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sustainably supports the local economy, businesses, schools, etc. Residents also pay taxes that fund several social and technical innovations on the island. In this way, only a small proportion of vacation homes are available on the island, with the focus more on permanent residents.

To have a flourishing economy, elements of circularity were included in the planning. Tenders for installations or services were broken down into smaller parts so more businesses from the island could compete or collaborate. Sourcing of raw materials was done on the island itself, for example, the three district heating systems run on straw procured from local farmers while one district heating system runs on wood chips from a local tree plantation.

Site visits

The second half of the day involved visiting the different energy systems on Samsø. The first visit was to the Smart Energy PV and Battery system that is used to power the marina/harbour. This project was part of the EU H2020 funded project Smart Islands Energy System (SMILE). Here 3 batteries in combination with rooftop and facade PV are used to supply all boats docking at the Ballen harbour with energy. The energy system involves a photovoltaic plant (60 kWp) and a battery energy storage system (237 kWh). These cover demand from the marina including visiting boats during peak tourist season (about 100 000 kWh/year). The system runs on a machine learning algorithm to make decisions about the charging and discharging of the batteries but allows for manual control via a mobile app. Consumers can connect to the system via an app and pay for the energy that they have consumed, thereby generating revenues for the island.

Next, we visited one of four district heating systems on Samsø. The Ballen-Brundby district heating system consists of a boiler that burns straw. The straw is sourced from local farmers and supplies domestic heating water to houses of two villages. The system uses a pipeline network of 7 km. A longer length was not chosen since this would lead to too high energy losses. Recently, two hot water storage tanks have been installed which with a storage worth of two days consumption. This leads to fewer boiler-startups and reduces chimney smoke. The system is unique since it is co-owned by the consumers connected to the system who form a limited liability energy cooperative. Long-term

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contracts for the purchase of straw from local farmers ensure price certainty to consumers

The next stop was one of three onshore wind parks on the island consisting of a total 11 wind turbines. Apart from the onshore wind turbines, Samsø also has 10 offshore wind turbines leading to a total installed capacity of 34 MW. Effectively, two thirds of the energy produced is exported to the mainland, which effectively means that the entire annual generation from the offshore wind park is exported. The onshore wind turbines are erected on farmland with full support and consent from the farmers. Contrary to the NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) phenomenon, in Samsø, citizens support the erection of wind turbines on their lands as long as they owned them and earned revenues from them. The location of the wind turbines was discussed at length by the community and was co-funded in partnership with the Samsø municipality and energy cooperatives. During the visit, the different ownership and funding structures that were used were also discussed.

The day ended with a visit to solar car parking at the offices of the Municipality of Samsø which owns 40 electric vehicles (EVs). These EVs are part of a car sharing scheme used by municipal servants such as nurses and elderly care workers. In order to ensure that personal transport can be electrified on Samsø, the car repair businesses were involved in the process. These businesses were offered training in repairing and servicing EVs, thus supporting the existence of the local businesses on the island. With the size of the fleet growing, Samsø is the municipality with the largest proportion of electric vehicles in Denmark.

Main take-aways:

The central tenet of the planning process involved using market-ready technologies, retaining and creating jobs on the island, attracting residents, and having a flourishing, local and circular economy.

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Impressions from the second day

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Day 3

The last day of the training brought together the knowledge that was exchanged over the previous two days. The program consisted of sessions explaining how the Samsø RE Island project took off the ground and was concluded with a workshop by Søren Hermansen on citizen and stakeholder engagement.

Program

Presentation of the Samsø RE Island project
Workshop by CEO Søren Hermansen on Stakeholder engagement
2nd part of workshop - wrap up and conclusion
Questions and impressions of the training. Summary of workshops and conclusions.
End of visit

The Samsø RE Island project

Michael Kristensen started off the day by telling the delegates about the inspirational and well-known story of the Samsø RE Island project. For a short overview hereof, follow this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTAiYjkfihg

Starting in 1997, the island was running fully on RE within 10 years. A total of 450 local shareholders funded and participated in implementing the renewable energy projects. Co-ownership was an important motive for participation, and so were the informal structures and communities on the island. Community outreach and engagement was done by tapping into communal ties that bind the islanders. Circularity was central to the technical design to support the local economy. The process was not without failures and challenges still exist. However, several new energy projects are still being planned on the island. The ferry to and from the island will be electrified within the next 2 years, leading to a great increase in electricity demand, necessitating a solution for electrical storage.

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The future will see projects on solar thermal, biogas, and the repurposing of existing wind turbines among other projects. Energy saving has been core to the planning process since the beginning. This is evident in the fact that the energy demand on Samsø has reduced while the national Danish demand has grown by around 7%. Any building in the future will receive permits only if they are built with a high energy label. Community engagement remains central to the planning process with many meetings taking place regularly, giving people the chance to pose questions and have influence over decisions.

Workshop by Søren Hermansen on Stakeholder engagement

Søren Hermansen, the CEO of EnergiAkademiet and the face of the Samsø RE island project, took to the podium to give a short presentation. He explained how he and his associates developed the project from the ground up and took ownership of the island's energy needs. The concept of 'Commonities' was core to the process, implying that the commons (common/shared resources) on the island were managed and administered by the communities on the island.

Commonities = Commons + Communities

Role play

In the Pioneer Guide to Local Communities (http://www.pioneerguide.com/), Søren Hermansen demonstrates what the community engagement process for the district heating plant looked like. Søren demonstrated the learnings of the guide in a role play session where IANOS delegates were placed a circle.

Firstly, Søren asked from everyone to share with the others their name and the place they call home. A so called "check in". Thereafter, the group had to think of how a community meeting could be organized and what should be included in the invitations. Catchy phrases ("Free cake!" and "Let's Make Some Money!") were interspersed as well as calls for cooperation ("Let's plan the future together").

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Thereafter, the group was asked to play the roles of project initiators when the district heating plant was first in the planning stage. The roles were played so that the group learned the general opinions from stakeholders of the project. This created an idea of the sort of priorities that are at play during stakeholder engagement meetings. The engineer, played by Martijn de Vries, started out by explaining the technologies that were planned on the islands and gave an estimation of its revenue. The blacksmith, played by Wiebo Lamain, was not convinced because his business involved servicing all the oil boilers on the island. A district heating project and installation of heat pumps would reduce his income. To convince him of the benefits, Søren mentioned that Weibo could service the new installations, thereby increasing his revenues and act as an informant of his existing clients about the benefits of switching to a sustainable heat supply. The increased enthusiasm of the blacksmith convinced several other stakeholders. A homeowner, played by Salomé Varak, was convinced by the savings in energy costs of district heating, so she agreed to join the district heating project too. However, since 80% of houses in the area needed to join and fund the installation for it to succeed, there was a need to get others to join. This was established through informal networks where people used word of mouth to convince others of the benefits. In the end, almost all houses signed on and by setting up an energy cooperative with a member contribution of €15, the consuming household also became owners of the district heating network. Lastly, to ensure fuel for the district heating network, Søren and a fellow project initiators, played by Miguel Quinto, talked to the local farmer, played by Pietro Spataro, to buy the locally farmed excess straw from his farm. The straw would otherwise decay and emit methane into the atmosphere. Pietro drove a hard bargain and demanded a high price from Søren and Miguel but since they also played in the same football club, he did not want to lose the camaraderie, so he agreed to supply his straw to the district heating plant at a fixed price for the next 6 years. In this way, the district heating project was implemented by engaging the community to accept it, own it and support its operations.

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Impressions from the third day

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Best Practices

In this last part, the lessons learned from the workshops and presentations from the CE trainings have been summarized. The first part summarizes the best practices of engaging communities in the planning of projects, and the second part summarizes best practices of organizing public meetings.

Best Practices for Community Engagement

- TRUST is everything! Establish trust or tap into existing trusted institutions and figures within the community. This can be done by convincing and involving formal and informal leaders in the community early on in the process.
- Meet people where they are before asking them to come to you. Attend and be present at clubs and community meetings, so when you have a meeting, people reciprocate.
- Use a common narrative to set the vision and the goals of the project. A common ground can bring people together despite differing opinions and ideologies.
- Make use of existing communities/communal structures (like managing committees and steering committees) and allow these to take ownership of the initiatives. Already established communities are the natural first step towards formal/legal organizations (e.g. an energy cooperative).
- Don't lead with numbers, lead with commonly shared goals and visions. Numbers are useful to communicate the advantages of the project.
- Build on existing strengths and skills residing in the community instead of overhauling the local structures. (E.g. train the mechanic to service electric vehicles or the blacksmith to service the heat pumps instead of reducing their business).
- Co-ownership can be an all-important driver for community support. Establish accessible ownership models for people of all socio-economic statuses.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N° 957810

Best practices for organizing citizen and stakeholder engagement meetings

- Use an engaging invitation. Don't be afraid to use a carrot (or free cake!) to get people to join the meeting.
- If needed, talk to critical stakeholders or informal leaders before the meeting via phone or in-person to establish personal contact and understand their perspective.
- Organize the meeting in a place where people have a sense of belonging or ownership (such as clubhouses and community centers).
- Start the meeting by checking in with people. Start with informal questions so they feel seen and heard.
- During the meeting, look people in the eye and talk directly to the people in the meeting. A circular seating arrangement can be used so that everyone can see each other.
- Involve the informal leaders of the community in the meetings as early on in the process as possible and ask them to openly state their support of the project. When people see trusted individuals believing the cause, they tend to follow ("Since I trust you, I will trust the project").
- When explaining a project, start with the 'Why' questions before diving into the 'How' questions.
- Don't get lost in the numbers. Lead with the story and the vision but have the techno-economic figures ready to explain the benefits ("What's in it for you?").
- Listen closely to all stakeholders and consider their input ("What do you think about this process?").
- Be apolitical and don't take sides if there are conflicts in the meeting.

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