

# DeCarb NEWSLETTER

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*“Pairing the clean  
energy transition to  
growth and job  
creation in coal-  
intensive EU regions”*



## ABOUT THE DECARB PROJECT

The EU 2030 climate and energy framework sets three key targets for the year 2030: at least 40% cuts in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990 levels); at least 27% share for renewable energy and at least 27% improvement in energy efficiency. The EU coal sector provides jobs to about 240.000 people. DeCarb sets out to address the challenge of pairing the clean energy transition to growth and job creation in coal-intensive EU regions.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE THIRD SEMESTER

The DeCarb project has now reached the midterm of Phase 1. All partners are actively working, sharing and gaining experience. The focus of the third semester has been to bring closer the work with Stakeholders and finish the Activities A 1.1, A1.2, A1.3, and A1.4. The Reports for these activities have been done and disseminated among the stakeholders and other key actors.

In Semester 3, the DeCarb Consortium carried out the Study visit about land restoration under WP3.2. The visit took place in Cottbus, Brandenburg, Germany in November 2019. An Input Study on Land restoration in mining regions was developed by the host organization – Ministry of Energy and Economy, Brandenburg and distributed by the partners. Germany has extensive experience in land restoration and all partners could benefit from the exchange of experiences and opportunities. The knowledge they gained during this visit was later transferred to the stakeholders’ organizations. As a part of the Study visit, DeCarb partners had also a steering committee meeting on project achievements.

Finally, during Semester 3, the project partner KSENA (from Slovenia) developed and presented the Methodology on organizing and carrying out the Social Dialogue Events. Each partner in Semester 4 shall organize these events.



## PEER REVIEW IN STARA ZAGORA

Policy Learning Experts and Peers gathered on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of February in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria for Peer Review to discuss the topic “Future-proofing the lignite District Stara Zagora” through economic diversification and reduction of the environmental footprint of power production.



Various stakeholders from the Coal Power Plants, mining companies, local and regional authorities, associations, chamber of commerce, business and research organizations were presented. The following policy challenges were addressed during the peer review and the peers formulated

specific suggestions on the field of: Socio-economic diversification, Technological solutions to clean power production, and Financing options.

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## STUDY VISIT TO THE ENERGY HEART OF BULGARIA



A delegation of the Directorate-General for Energy of the EC and the EC Representation in Bulgaria visited this country for two days, for meeting representatives of various energy sector organizations, employers, civil, environmental and trade union organizations, mayors and representatives of local communities.

The aim was to determine how Brussels would support their plans to achieve full climate neutrality by 2050. This target will require additional restrictions on greenhouse gas emissions and the closure of coal plants that currently are producing more than 40% in Bulgaria of

electricity consumed.

The experts met with the Stara Zagora Regional Economic Development Agency to know further about DeCarb’s project and its results. Also, the importance of DeCarb project for the region and the great challenge of decarbonisation were discussed.

Photo Credits: Ivan Donchev, Greenpeace



## ROMANIA ENERGY STRATEGY TO 2030

The vision of the Romanian Energy strategy is to increase the energy sector in terms of sustainability.

The development of the energy sector is part of the development process of Romania, where growth means building new capabilities; upgrading and modernizing energy production, transport and distribution capacities; and encouraging the growth of domestic consumption under energy efficiency conditions. The national energy system will thus be safer and more stable.



## WEBINAR: DIGITALIZATION FOR THE INDUSTRY IN THE SOCIAL DISTANCING ERA

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Energynomics and AHK Romania organized a webinar on how industries are adapting their activities to the digitalization area. Automated and digitalized solutions allow keeping the society functional and synchronized,



without jeopardizing the health and respecting the social distancing measures imposed by the authorities. A demonstration was provided and the speakers answered the questions launched during the LIVE session.



## THIRD STAKEHOLDER MEETING IN COTTBUS



The Ministry for Economic Affairs, Labour and Energy of the State of Brandenburg hosted the 3rd Stakeholder Meeting in Cottbus on 11 February 2020. The initial focus was on the evaluation of the study trip of all partners of the DeCarb project to Brandenburg, which took place at the beginning of November 2019.

The regional stakeholders were actively involved in the topics renaturation and post-mining landscapes. Important impulses for the further European exchange on best practice projects could thus be set.

Among other topics, the attendees discussed the progress of structural change in Lusatia, the funding opportunities for the region, the updating and implementation of the Regional Energy Concept, new project ideas and concepts on renewable energies and innovative storage technologies.

Finally, the stakeholders once again emphasised the advantages of exchange.



## AALBORG UTILITY HAS A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF FUEL FREE PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

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The Aalborg Municipality's utility company, Aalborg Utility, has an enormous number of ongoing projects in the transition to a low carbon economy. One of the projects that has a lot of focus and will continue to do so in the future - at least for the next eight years - is the phasing out of coal at the Nordjyllandsværket combined heat and power station. Today, coal covers 50 percent of the heat supply, but it should be phased out by 2028. So both the phasing out of the coal and the demolition of the existing blocks on Nordjyllandsværket is well underway.



When the large mountains of coal and the coal processing power station blocks are gone, the area will be used for the construction of Aalborg Utility's visions for the future energy mix. Geothermal facilities and heat pumps, among others - but a national test center for energy will also be established.

A part of the future energy supply plan also contains heat pit storage and geothermal energy. If all goes well, two heat pits of 500,000 cubic meters of water each will be

established.

Besides heat pit storage, Aalborg Utility's plans for geothermal energy are also well under way. The construction of a geothermal facility of approx. 10 units of 10 MW with a total capacity of approx. 100 MW was submitted for tender in late summer of 2019.



## THE ŠOŠTANJ THERMAL POWER PLANT IS PREPARING TO CO-INCINERATE RECOVERED WASTE

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The Šoštanj Thermal Power Plant, which produces about one-third of all electricity in Slovenia, is preparing for a project of recovered waste co-incineration. The project is named SO-EN: Co-incineration for Energy, a step forward in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which is in line with the EU's strategy towards a carbon-free society and is a strategic direction for the management of the thermal power plant, which foresees gradually phasing out of fossil fuels.



The co-incineration of waste will be based on solid recovered fuels known as the SRF. SRF is a solid alternative fuel prepared from pre-sorted and recovered waste materials used to generate energy in incineration or co-incineration plants. SRF fuel is produced from exclusively non-hazardous waste materials, which would otherwise decompose over many years, thus its use pursues self-sufficiency on the way to a circular economy without waste.

At the Šoštanj Thermal Power Plant co-incineration of up to 160,000 tonnes of SRF per year is possible, which equals 215,000 tonnes of fossil fuel while reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 156,000 tonnes. Slovenia has not yet strategically resolved the issue of thermal treatment of recovered waste and the Šoštanj Thermal Power Plant is best suited for the energy use of alternative fuel SRF.

## YOUNG STUDENTS ATTEND AN ENERGY TRANSITION SESSION IN BADAJOZ

The students of the Albarregas Institute of Mérida travelled to Badajoz on March the 10th to learn about how different public facilities are producing renewable energy for self-consumption.



The talk, given by AGENEX, focused on the management and monitoring of the installations and the energy savings they produce for the Public Administrations. Besides, the thematic studies of DeCarb were presented as an exchange of experiences between different regions for the development of innovative policies that favour the sustainable energy transition.

Other Interreg EU projects where AGENEX is participating (RESINDUSTRY –Integration of renewables in the industry sector- and ENERSELVES – Policy instruments for energy self-consumption in buildings) were presented too.

Photo Credits: AGENEX

## MEETING THE STAKEHOLDERS FOR A FAIR TRANSITION IN MÉRIDA

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of February a stakeholder meeting of DeCarb took place in Extremadura, Spain.

The event was held in Mérida, the capital of the region, and counted with the attendance of 20 people (different actors from the quadruple helix: private sector, public sector, academia and civil society organizations).

After two keynote speeches about financial instruments for boosting the integration of renewables in different productive sectors, the participants held a debate about the improvement of the different policy instruments of the energy transition for future calls.



Photo Credits: AGENEX

## THE PARTNERSHIP



Stara Zagora Regional Economic Development Agency (BG)



Lodzkie Region (PL)



Eszak-Alfold Regional Energy Agency Nonprofit Ltd. (HU)



South-West Oltenia Regional Development Agency (RO)



Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, State of Brandenburg (DE)



House of Energy (DK)



Regional Association of Local Governments of Western Macedonia (GR)



Energy Agency of Savinjska, Saleska and Koroska Region (SI)



Extremadura Energy Agency (ES)

## ABOUT US

DeCarb is co-funded by INTERREG Europe / European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)



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