



ecee Proposal for a European Centre within a Global Best Practice Network on Energy Efficiency in Buildings

Executive Summary

This is a proposal from ecee to the Climate Works Foundation (CWF) and the European Climate Foundation (ECF) for a European Centre within a global, Buildings Best Practice Network (BBPN) on Energy Efficiency. Such a European Centre in a BBPN would act both as a centre of expertise on all aspects of energy efficiency and energy performance in European buildings and as the European home for a global Best Practice Network on energy efficiency in buildings that CWF is currently considering in partnership with ECF.

Global Dimension and Role

Reaching the challenging carbon dioxide (CO₂) reduction targets required to mitigate climate change will require robust and practical policies operating at a global level. Reducing CO₂ emissions from energy use in buildings is a major opportunity which is highly cost effective for building occupants and owners. The International Energy Agency (IEA) believes that by 2030 annual global CO₂ savings in buildings (excluding appliances and lighting) could be greater than 1.7 Gt. Consequently the European BBPN Centre would be part of a global network of regional organisations tackling a major source of CO₂ emissions and which are repositories of best practice in energy efficiency and CO₂ reduction in buildings.

Although buildings are country specific even within a region, there are likely to be individual technologies which are readily transferable between different global regions and countries, e.g. solar water heating, heat pumps, and smart windows. Perhaps more importantly, great benefits can come from sharing the experiences of how political problems were overcome and how the barriers to increasing energy efficiency in buildings were tackled by other organizations and in other regions. Additionally, for some regions of the world, activities to introduce and/or improve energy efficiency policies from buildings are hampered by a shortage of experts and customised action plans appropriate to their local situations; the global BPN is expected to play an important role in helping such countries introduce and implement effective policies.

The service offered by the BPN would cover all aspects of energy efficiency in buildings, from helping structure new policies, practical implementation, monitoring and evaluating programmes, and the important task of helping build capacity in energy efficiency expertise in buildings in countries as appropriate.

European Dimension and Role

To play its part in a global Best Practice Network, the European BBPN Centre needs to be knowledgeable about the European activities and scope for improvement in energy efficiency best practice. Energy use in European buildings is a major contributor by end use (~40%) to European emissions of CO₂ which in 2006 were approaching 4 Gt. Reaching the ambitious long term targets of reducing CO₂ emission levels by at least 60-80% by 2050 will require a major effort on improving building energy efficiency, particularly for existing buildings. This will necessitate a complete rethink of energy use in buildings and currently there is no single impartial organisation driving this agenda at a European level. Such an organisation would also have an important role in counterbalancing the efforts by some Member State Governments and other vested



interests in trying to slow down the modest (compared to what will be required by 2050) proposals in the current recast of the Energy Performance in Buildings Directive.

Within the EU, the process of policy formation and execution is complicated, with much being left to European Member States to implement at the national level. All of this points to an urgent need for a European “Centre of Excellence” to tackle CO2 emissions from energy use in European buildings. This proposal is for a European BBPN Centre which would satisfy the need for such a centre of excellence in buildings.

Such a BBPN Centre would be the first point of contact for anyone interested in energy efficiency in European buildings and the overall energy performance; it would provide rigorous evidence-based information and policy guidance to both policy makers and stakeholders at an EU and Member State level. Crucially, the BBPN Centre will have a capacity to undertake independent monitoring and evaluation. To achieve these goals, the funding arrangements for the BBPN Centre should not make it solely dependent on either the EU Commission or Member States or an energy efficiency trade body or any other vested interest.

Role

To achieve these objectives, it is proposed that the BBPN Centre should not be a lobbying body but should fill the gap for a vigorous, impartial and authoritative body looking widely at energy use in buildings on a time scale commensurate with the real climate change challenges.

Governance and Organisation

Because of the wide range of activities that the European BBPN Centre will carry out and the diverse stakeholders involved, it is believed that the key to success lies in appointing a strong Executive Director with a record for “making things happen” and that s/he is supported by a Board with the appropriate relevant business skills and political and governance experience.

It is envisaged that there will be around seven permanent posts supplemented by a mixture of consultants, specialist ad hoc researchers and secondees from other stakeholders. The location of the European BBPN Centre is not yet decided but it would be advantageous to be based in or close to Brussels. The proposal envisages being co-located with the ECF and possibly other Best Practice Networks on other energy efficiency topics in Brussels or the Hague.

Indicative Budgets

The annual budget for the start-up year commencing with the appointment of the Executive Director is likely to cost in the region of €1-1.3 million depending on location. The budget for the European BBPN Centre when it is fully staffed but from which the one off start-up costs have disappeared is shown is estimated to be around €1.1 -1.5 million per year depending on location.

It is envisaged that CWF and ECF will play an active role in the Board of the new European BBPN Centre.

29 May 2009