

EVENT DESCRIPTION
RES-e Regions
WP2 / Planners platform

Title: Working group on administrative barriers towards small hydro power plants projects

Date & location: 4th July 2006, Lyon

Organiser: Rhônealpénergie-Environnement

Number of Participants: 6 (2 professional representatives of the small hydro sector, 1 syndicates of energy who have hydro projects and 3 local representatives of the state administration in charge of the authorisations for hydro power plants)



Short description:

A planners platform has gathered different project carriers and persons of the local administration in charge of treating the authorisation files for hydro power projects, to discuss their respective returns of experience and define the good practices for establishing the files content.

Background:

The Rhône-Alpes region is particularly rich in hydro power plants, since it gathers 41% of the French hydro power on this territory which represents 8% of the French territory and 9.5% of the French population. Rhône-Alpes is also very rich in small hydro power plants since it represents more than the quarter of the installed power for this category of size of plants.

It would be possible to install at least 76 MW of new capacity, neglecting the small hydro power plants on drinking water supply systems and the pico-hydro under 20 kW.

A report presented to the Ministry of Industry in May assessed that, among the 100 000 french former water mills, 30 000 of them could be equipped with turbines from 10 to 100 kW.

Since the treatment of the authorisation file requires numerous steps and involves many actors with different concerns, the content of this file is essential to the success of a project. The analysis of the administrative barriers carried out in 2005 has showed that progress can still be made to improve the fluency of the process.

Aim & programme:

The objective was to provide to small hydro power project carriers some clear indications, beyond the legal and theoretical frame, on the way the authorisation file will be received by the administration. Thus the aim is to define with practical details the content of the authorisation file so as to ensure the better possible success of the project.

The proposed agenda was as follows:

- presentation to remind the main steps of the administrative procedure to ask for an authorisation
- round table and exchanges of experiences regarding the steps where difficulties are encountered and advice to solve them

- synthesis of recommendations on good practices at the step “establishing the file”
- discussion about the opportunity to integrate the good practices scheduled for the operation phase (for instance, if the project carrier intends to set up a system of environmental management) in the frame of the authorisation file

Results, follow-up:

Various aspects of the small hydro power have been discussed: usefulness of concertation prior to the delivery of the file to the authorities, so as to define the content of the environmental impact study, renovation of old water mills (usefulness, how to do it technically and from an organisational point of view), room to manoeuvre in existing small hydro power plants to optimize and increase the energy production. The environmental impact of small hydro power plants was also carefully considered: the legal obligation to give the possibility to the fishes to swim across the installation was reminded, while the interest to use fish-friendly turbines and bio-lubricants was less appreciated by the administration.

The 3 local representatives of the state administration in charge of the authorisations for hydro power plants have usually very few opportunities to meet them so as to exchange on the way they handle the files. Thus they considered that the initiative for this meeting was a good one.

As one participant mentioned a strong interest from the municipalities for small hydro power plants, an interest for further meetings of a regional workgroup on small hydro has arisen.

The recommendations will be written in the “Guide of small hydro power projects”.

Further information: [www...](#)

List of Participants:

Name	Organisation
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Jean-Paul GOY	RAEE / SIEA
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