26th June 2013

Press Communiqué – for immediate release

Citizens seizing the EU’s energy transition

On June 26th, Cooperatives Europe and Rescoop organised the high level policy conference ‘Big energy: Small Energy? The role of cooperation for the EU’s energy transition’. The event was held at the European Commission as part of the EU Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW).

The Energy 2020 Communication states that the well-being of our people, industry and economy depends on safe, secure, sustainable and affordable energy. To this end, Cooperatives Europe and REScoop highlighted the strength of decentralized energy systems driven by citizens, cooperatives and local/regional initiatives. The workshop provided proof of achieving greater social acceptance of renewable energy and simultaneously increased energy efficiency through citizen-driven schemes.

Claude Turmes, MEP, The Greens-EFA, said: “Energy transition is about citizens, not about technology. Cooperatives and citizens’ participation are performing well. One of their goals must be to bring more flexibility and efficiency into the energy system. Citizens’ support will be required to prevent European legislators from turning back the clock.”

Anna Leidreiter, World Future Council, said: The future of energy is decentralized and local. A proof of this is that some regions and cities all over the world have already 100% renewable energy projects. It is happening and momentum, which builds political will. We want to promote a global campaign to move 100% renewable energy production.

Klaus Niederlander, Cooperatives Europe, concluded: This workshop highlighted the progress made by citizens around Europe as the key driver of the EU’s energy transition. While there is currently a reactionary battle going on in Brussels to preserve the unsustainable status quo, more and more cities and regions join the energy transition. We therefore need to continue engaging ever more citizens to truly own our energy systems.

* **Notes to the editors**
* **Cooperatives Europe** is the European cross-sectoral organization representing cooperative enterprises. On behalf of its 90 member organizations from 34 European countries across all business sectors it promotes the cooperative business model in Europe. Its members represent 123 million individual member cooperators owning 160,000 cooperative enterprises and providing jobs to 5.4 million European citizens.
* **A cooperative enterprise** is a group of people acting together to meet the common needs and aspirations of its members, sharing ownership and making decisions democratically.
* **Rescoop** is the European Federation of renewable energy cooperatives. REScoop is short for Renewable Energy Sources Cooperative. A REScoop is a group of citizens that cooperate in the field of renewable energy, developing new production, selling renewable energy or providing services to new initiatives.
* **Contacts**

Martín Behar

Energy Advocacy Officer

Cooperatives Europe

T: +32 2 743 10 33

[m.behar@coopseurope.coop](mailto:m.behar@coopseurope.coop)

www.coopseurope.coop

Carmen Quintana

Communications Officer

Cooperatives Europe

T.: +32 2 743 10 37

[c.quintana@coopseurope.coop](mailto:c.quintana@coopseurope.coop)

[www.coopseurope.coop](http://www.coopseurope.coop)