



The Energy Cooperative Vogelsberg - generating of income in the region for the region

Workshop Development of community renewable energy projects –
International experiences and perspectives for Greece
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The Vogelsberg

- Is an area of low mountains in the middle of Germany
- 108.000 inhabitants
- 76 inhabitants per square meter = thinnest settlement in Hessen (average 290)
- The income is below average
- There is hardly any industry

The Cooperative

- Energy Change takes place in rural areas – there are the resources
- A cooperative guarantees that the return on investment stays in the region, it is divided between
 - the inhabitants
 - the owners of the land
 - the investors in the project and
 - the local authorities

A Cooperative

- Has a democratic structure
- Minimum investment starts at 100,00 €
- Each member has one vote, independent of the investment
- Is a low risk investment, in case of bankruptcy you only lose your individual share

The Energy Cooperative Vogelsberg

- Was founded in August 2011, initiated by a project that dealt with Bioenergy Resources in the Vogelsberg and by a cooperative bank
- 58 Founding Members - they signed 331 shares, each 100,00 €
- Today there are more than 600 members
- Capital over 2 Mio. €

Projects

- The cooperative started as most other Energy Cooperatives in Germany with erecting small Solar Panels on public buildings
- 2013 Takeover of a solar plant on a former waste disposal site
 - 3.020 KwP
 - 18,76 Cent guaranteed reimbursement per kWh
 - Total Investment 5,0 Mio. €, financed through loans by members of the cooperative and bank loans
 - Interest on loans between 3 und 4 % p.a., depending on yield

Solar plant Obermoos



Windprojects

- Wind Energy is much more complicated to realize than Photovoltaic
 - Long and complicated procedures to get the allowance
 - Very often opposition in the region
 - You need experienced partners
 - First Wind Park realized
 - More parks in planning

Windpark Kirtorf

- In planning since the end of 2014
- Building process started in April 2016
- Was connected in December 2016
- Partner Hessen Wind, subsidiary of OVAG, the regional energy supplier
- They founded a subsidiary to share the risk of the investment

Windpark Kirtorf

- 3 windmills of each 2,5 MW
- Total investment 14.000.000 €
 - There of 10.000.000 € bank loans
 - Each partner provided another 2.000.000 €
 - The share of the cooperative came from 120 members of the cooperative in form of loans
 - Interest is paid dependent on the energy production

Windpark Kirtorf



Recipe for success - Windpark

- Early information of the citizens
- Headquarter of the subsidiary in Kirtorf, to ensure that they get the local taxes
- Investment first offered to the citizens of Kirtorf, thereafter to other members of the cooperative
- Investment limited to 10.000 € each

Secret of success

- Good anchoring in local structures
- Small projects help collecting experiences
- Good economic performance convince more people to join the cooperative
- Investment in big solar plant allows employment of a full time official
- Early search for a partner with experience in wind power

Secret of success

- Low interest rates in Germany make investment in renewable energies attractive, even if return on investment is between 2 and 4,5 %
- Communication and networking within the region and with local opinion leaders are most important
- Someone has to take the lead