



Japan Local Government Centre, London

Monthly Report August 2011 (Germany) – German Institute of Urban Affairs (DifU) publishes second edition of climate policy guide for local authorities

In January 1997, the year the Kyoto Protocol was adopted, the German Institute of Urban Affairs (DifU) published a guide on climate change policy for local authorities for the first time. The publication was commissioned by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety and the Federal Environment Agency in 1994 and was the outcome of two years of work. The resulting guide was very well received by local authorities and became a well-consulted reference for politicians and officers alike in the planning and implementation of measures in the field of climate protection.

Over the past years, the debate on the effects of climate change has increased in intensity, and federal measures such as the adoption of the 'Integrated Energy and Climate Programme' in 2007 and further regulatory approaches have heightened the need for engagement with this topic at the local level. For many local authorities, the implementation of regulations as well as their own programmes and strategies is a big challenge. A guide such as this can offer valuable assistance in this field, and there was demand for an updated version.

Such an updated version has now been published by DifU in July 2011, with co-operation and contributions from the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (ifeu, Heidelberg) and the Climate Alliance, a network of European cities working with cities and communities in southern countries. The work was financially supported by the Federal Environment Agency and represents a comprehensive guide to all aspects of local climate policy, including many case studies and practical examples.

Below follows an overview of the content of the guide, which is divided into five large chapters.

Chapter A1: Climate policy as a cross-cutting task of local government

1. Goals and dimensions of climate policy
2. General framework for local climate policy (scientific, political, legal and financial)
3. Integrating the cross-cutting task of climate protection into the administrative organisation

Chapter A2: Climate policy and town planning

1. Climate policies as integral part of town planning

2. Urban development and the designation of building sites (including development control, land use plans, energy efficiency, cogeneration of heat and power, regenerative energy, restrictions in certain fuels etc.)
3. Increasing the energy efficiency of existing buildings
4. Developing areas and sites for regenerative energy generation (including legal framework, wind energy, biomass, solar energy and geothermal energy)

Chapter A3: Financing local climate protection measures

1. Calculation and evaluation of economic profitability (fundamentals, different calculation methods such as calculating the payback period, calculating the equivalent energy price, present value method, annuity method)
2. How to fund local climate protection (own funding, attracting grants and subsidies, supporting other local initiatives)
3. Financing local climate protection measures by entering into contracting arrangements

Chapter A4: Climate policy as a task requiring co-operation of local actors

1. Challenges in implementing climate protection measures
2. Co-operation between local authorities
3. Co-operation with other local actors in the community (different forms of political processes involving citizens, NPOs, business; co-operation with local energy producing and distributing companies; involving citizens in actions)

Chapter A5: Public relations, advice and consultancy

1. Importance of communications in climate policy
2. Local government public relations regarding climate policy
3. Information, advice and consultancy offered by local authorities on climate policies (esp. regarding energy, transport and general environment)

Appendix: Further resources, including internet sources

In this way, the guide offers a resource for members and officers to dip in and out and get advice on very specific legal questions as well as learn about good practice examples worth emulating.

Any opinions expressed in this report are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of JLGC or CLAIR.