AMICA Newsletter June/July 2006

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The Project AMICA
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1) AMICA Seminar in Upper Austria

During the Environmental Congress of Upper Austria (4 - 6 September 2006) an AMICA seminar on integration of mitigation measures will be held on 5 September.

Further information:
http://www2.land-oberoesterreich.gv.at/internetveranstaltungen/InternetVeranstaltungenVeranstaltungenBearbeiten.jsp?id=1219
(only in German)

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2) Results from the Experts´ Workshop in Vienna

The AMICA experts´ workshop at 4 May 2006 dealt with the question of how measures for adaptation to climate change could be combined with mitigation measures. For some of the speakers the critical points and disadvantages involved in combining the two types of measure predominate. However, others emphasized the advantages and positive effects.

There was controversial discussion of the extent to which adaptation and mitigation influence economic development and the degree to which vulnerability to climatic changes is thereby increased or decreased, particularly in poorer countries. A further question is whether mitigation and adaptation measures compete with each other - because target groups, geographic scales, motives for action and timescales of measures diverge - or whether, precisely because there is currently still little overlap between the two, it would make sense to combine them in order to avoid competition for scarce resources.

There was agreement with the statement that there are multiple and

complex interactions between adaptation and mitigation. There was also agreement on the fact that purposeful and synergistic measures can be implemented at local level and that in future both mitigation and adaptation measures will need to be taken into account in all local project decisions. In addition the results of the AMICA working groups, including examples of best practice relating to flooding in river and coastal regions, drought, flooding in rural areas and overheating of cities, were presented and analysed.

The presentations can be found under:
http://www.klimabuendnis.org/english/update/frameset.htm

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3) Evaluated Practices from the Working Group on Adaptation to Flooding in Apeldoorn, Netherlands

An AMICA working group meeting on adaptation to flooding took place in Apeldoorn at 6 - 7 May 2006. Examples of evaluated practices have been analysed:

3a) Floating Houses in the Netherlands - Municipality of Deventer

In several cities including Deventer floating living areas are created. Because of the risk of flooding no constructions of houses are allowed outside the dike. Within the river bed floating houses are allowed, especially in conjunction with river bed enlargements, so the area will get a double functionality.

Water houses can float up and down, depending on the water level. Flexible cables and tubes and floating paths connect them to the shore. If more space is needed for surface water retention also floating agricultural areas can be created.

At the same time floating houses contribute to mitigation because they have a better average temperature and need less energy for heating and cooling. Finally, ground and lake water can be used as a renewable energy source while optimising water management.

3b) Storage of Excess Water in Deep Layers - Municipality of Rijssen-Holten

The increase of heavy showers and a lack of surface space for (temporary) storage has necessitated new approaches in the municipality of Rijssen. The solution has been found in deep ground water layers.

In Rijssen a deep infiltration system has been constructed for the storage of rainwater in the city centre, that due to intensive showers, has been flooded several times since 2000. The system consists of three shallow infiltration basins and one infiltration pit of 60 metres depth. The three shallow basins

will be used for the first catchments of the more contaminated rainwater. During more intensive rainfalls the deep pit situated at the lowest part infiltrates easily the excess water by the gravity (60 metres of water column).

In comparison to other potentially solutions, like the enlargement of the sewage systems or of the surface retention, less surface area is needed. Finally, less pumping capacity is utilised for the transportation of the excess water. With small adaptations the water could be pumped in dry periods.

Information
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4) Venice - Moses Project Halted

Three years ago the Italian government set the Moses project into action after almost thirty years of debate. The Moses project was drawn up to protect Venice from "acqua alta" (high water) with 78 massive gates fixed on the lagoon floor. There are hundreds of different views on the project. However, environmentalists fear that it would cause the lagoon to fill with stagnant water.

Until the construction was halted (according to the firm responsible for the construction of Moses) about a quarter of the of the work had been done. Out of a total cost of 4.1 billions Euro already 1 billion Euro had been spent before the project was stopped in June 2006 by the local government. Now the decision how to proceed with Moses comes to a grand government committee involving among other the Ministries of Transport and Infrastructure. Moses was originally planned to be completed by the end of the year 2011.

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