

SISCo

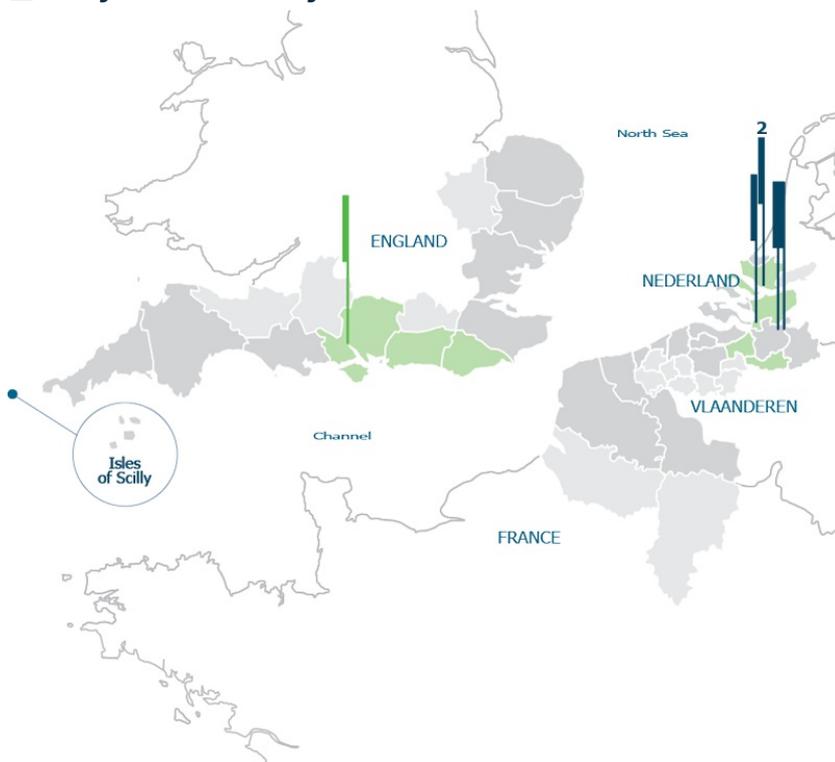
Solutions for Implementing Sustainable Construction: The Sustainable Purchasing and Planning Centre

SISCo

Sustainable Planning Centre

A holistic approach to
Sustainable Construction

■ Project summary



SISCo aims to overcome the barriers to the implementation of sustainable development policy by embedding sustainability (social, economic and environmental) into local authority planning processes. With a focus on the construction sector it has increased knowledge of the application and use of energy efficiency and renewable technologies and improved planning and resource management in the built environment. SISCo has endeavored to bring together all the actors involved in the planning process to exchange knowledge on sustainable construction. This was achieved through the use of an online cross-border Virtual Centre of Excellence (“Sustainable Planning

Centre”), a series of training and information seminars, including a Sustainable Design and Construction training programme for both public and private audiences and cross-border best practise exchanges, through workshops, events, meetings, study visits and seminars. The Sustainable Planning Centre maps the available knowledge and expertise across the cross-border partner region and provides a forum to support local authority planners and private developers, architects and suppliers. They will benefit from knowledge sharing with peers drawing upon cross-border experiences and focusing on practical ways to embed sustainable principles into the planning process.

■ Activities

What was the project trying to achieve?

The project has been successful in achieving its aim and objectives. The Sustainable Planning Centre is now in use online. As a hub of knowledge and expertise in sustainable construction

and planning from the cross-border area, it provides an online platform for the exchange of skills, expertise and experience between cross-border regions. Actors from all sectors involved in the planning process have provided input in to a range of SISCo events, including training seminars, study visits and cross-border workshops. Attendees of training seminars have a greater awareness of sustainable development and implementing sustainability through planning policy. Partners have compared and tested models for supporting the decision-making process in sustainable planning and have assessed their transferability to other regions and purposes; a paper was produced summarising findings. A new model (the PPP-Scan) has also been developed by the project.

What were the activities implemented?

The online Virtual Centre of Excellence (Sustainable Planning Centre) is the hub of information and resources generated by the project. It is freely available to all stakeholders involved in sustainable development and includes the following elements: 2 Online training modules, 2 webinars and 16 webstreams based on training outputs, enabling them to reach a wider audience. A cross-border directory of suppliers of sustainable goods and services, facilitating procurement of these goods and services. A legislation resource bank on current European, national and local legislation and codes of practice for sustainable construction and sustainable development. 2 main training packages were developed: - Training to local authority planners involved in the sustainable development processes - Specialist seminars for developers/architects/suppliers by sector experts explaining processes for integrating sustainable approaches and renewable technologies into developments. Training was filmed so as to provide footage for the webstreams, webinar and online training modules, in order to further disseminate the most important points from each training seminar. They learnt from the experiences of testing different models in order to suggest improvements and used this experience in piloting a new decision making tool, the PPP-Scan. Following the completion of the comparison of models and tools (also assessing their transferability to other regions), partners prepared a report of findings which is available on the VCE. Local information seminars took place in each region, to engage stakeholders (decision-makers in the planning process) in the project and to disseminate findings.

■ Results

What were the key results of the project?

The project has achieved a range of very successful results. These are: 1 web portal – the Virtual Centre of Excellence; ‘Sustainable Planning Centre’ (11,261 hits in final year); 2 online training modules, 1 on sustainable planning and 1 on sustainable construction; 16 webstreams of training seminars; 2 webinars, 1 on Cradle2Cradle and 1 on Europe 20:20; 1 cross-border directory of suppliers; 1 legislation and guidance resource bank; 5 local authority training seminars; 6 architect/supplier/planner training seminars; 4 study visits, 1 in Belgium, 1 in Holland, 2 in the UK; 4 study visit and peer review reports; 4 comparison of models/tools workshops; 1 comparison of models report; 1 decision making tool pilot (PPP-Scan) and user guide (all information in English and Dutch); 6 local information seminars (2 per country); 6 bilateral exchanges (each partner participated in 2 exchanges); 1 outcomes and recommendations report; 1 critical friend evaluation and accompanying report; RSS cluster

activity including pilot report on forum findings and guidelines to implement findings; 11 press releases; 4 project newsletters; 17 additional articles in partners' newsletters; 18 feature articles and publications; 1 report on the local authority training programme (UK).

Did all partners and territories benefit from the results?

The beneficiaries of the project in the cross-border area include: Local Authority planners, Local Authority decision-makers (e.g. councillors) and Regional Development Agencies, Developers & architects, SMEs in the construction sector and Suppliers of renewable technologies and services. Project partners themselves have also benefited through the knowledge gained from carrying out the project, particularly from the cross-border model exchange, training and knowledge sharing activities. Benefits for each territory: UK local authority planners have particularly benefited from the tailored training programme that was created by the lead partner, based on a thorough assessment of training needs of Hampshire planners. Decision-makers in all partner regions were addressed during the local information seminars. Developers, construction SMEs, suppliers and architects had the opportunity to attend training seminars, and to feature in the online supplier directory which forms part of the Virtual Centre of Excellence. Planners, architects, developers, SMEs and suppliers were all given opportunities to attend additional knowledge exchange events in partner regions, such as study visits and model exchange workshops. Through the Virtual Centre of Excellence, a very wide audience can benefit from all the knowledge and training which the SISCO project provided. Online users can access webstreams, webinars, online training modules, legislation and guidance directory, cross-border supplier directory, and can discuss their ideas and issues via the online forum and helpdesk.

What were the effects / outcomes for the territories involved?

Outcomes of the project include: - The Virtual Centre of Excellence has allowed for planning stakeholders (public and private sector) to make better informed decisions and meet sustainability requirements more effectively. - Closer cooperation between the different actors involved in the planning process from the public and private sectors so that a more coordinated and cohesive approach to planning is achieved based on the same understanding of sustainable development requirements. - Better informed decision-making processes that take into consideration all aspects of sustainability (environmental, economic and social). - Increase in skills and understanding of what is meant by an holistic approach to planning and how to implement this. - A platform for new business development (especially for SMEs) to exploit the opportunities of climate change mitigation for the benefit of new employment creation in sustainable construction.

■ Distinctiveness

What was the real added-value of doing this cross-border project?

In terms of the partnership, Kamp C were a very useful in imparting knowledge to all other partners, in addition to the target audience. It was also interesting for UK and Dutch partners to learn about the Belgian approach and attitude towards the promotion of Passivhaus principles in construction. The cross-border directory of suppliers, created in the SISCO project, provides a new resource for cross-border sourcing of sustainable goods and services. Also, project

partners and attendees to events (such as study tours) learnt more about different approaches to sustainable development and low carbon building in different regions, something previously not widespread and in many ways unique to the project. The PPP Scan was created and piloted, for use in all partner regions; all partners and event attendees learnt about the model and the sustainable principles which it is based on.

Have any synergies been developed with other projects or networks?

Members of EcoMind (INTERREG IVA 2 Seas) were invited to attend a SISCo study tour in BE, which focussed on SMEs & business development. EcoMind supported sustainable business growth & facilitated development of sustainable products/services. Steve Charter, speaker at 2 SISCo training seminars, is involved in SUSCIN (Sustainable Supply Chains through Innovation), & brought his knowledge from this project to SISCo. SUSCIN is funded by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and the South East ERDF Competitiveness Programme 2007-2013. SISCo was presented at a study visit for the TrIsCo project (Transition Island Communities) in NL, which was looking at the construction of a sustainable village. TrIsCo was an INTERREG IVC POWER programme project, focusing on behaviour change for sustainable, low carbon communities.

What are the key messages , key lessons learned you would like to share?

An added benefit of SISCo was the regular, close contact between the partners. This face-to-face contact was essential for project progress, but also for sharing partners' expertise and experiences in examples of real-life challenges. It is essential to agree definitions of outputs before commencing project activity in order to ensure optimum use of time and resources available. Communication must be planned and strengthened by a good communications plan. Communications will also take longer than expected, particularly when awaiting cooperation from other parties, or following up previous communication actions; it is important that time is allowed for this when the project is being planned. It is also important to understand the complexity of the administration associated with such a project - it was more difficult and time-consuming than anticipated. Allowances must be made by all partners to ensure that project administration is completed correctly and in the designated timescales.



■ Project Information

Title	Solutions for Implementing Sustainable Construction: The Sustainable Purchasing and Planning Centre
Total project budget	€ 1 704 223
ERDF	€ 852 111
Priority & objective	Priority 2 c. Stimulate energy efficiency and development of renewable energies
Timeframe	2008-01-01 - 2011-12-31
Lead partner	the Environment Centre (tEC)
Project Coordinator	Adam Goulden(adam.goulden@environmentcentre.com)

