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**NEW ERA IN EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP TO PLAN FOR  
CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION**

A network of leading organisations involved in integrating climate change adaptation into regional planning and development has been established across Europe in the new **Green and Blue Space Adaptation for Urban Areas and Eco Towns (GRaBS)**<sup>[1]</sup> project.

In a highly competitive bidding process the GRaBS project beat off competition from almost 500 applicants to the European Union European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) INTERREG IVC Programme<sup>[2]</sup> to be one of only 35 successful projects going forward.

Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA)<sup>[3]</sup> Chief Executive and GRaBS project leader Gideon Amos said:

“We are delighted that the GRaBS project has won funding from the EU INTERREG IVC Programme. Atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations are now at their highest for 3 million years and as a result urban areas are vulnerable to increased temperatures and flooding. Regional spatial planning and urban design can provide solutions that make our communities less vulnerable to these risks. Green infrastructure including gardens, parks, productive landscapes, green corridors and green roofs and walls and blue infrastructure such as water bodies, rivers, streams, floodplains and sustainable drainage systems, play a vital role in creating climate resilient development, a role, which is currently not

sufficiently recognised and utilised and lacks integration in main stream planning.”

“By advancing the knowledge and expertise of partner staff through the GRaBS project, decisions makers, politicians and communities, and regional and local municipalities across Europe will be able to make a more informed and strategic response to climate change adaptation. In the long term communities will reduce their vulnerability to the environmental, social and economic damage related to climate change impacts including extreme temperature increases and flooding incidents.“

From Greece to Manchester, Lithuania to Austria, Italy to Sweden and Slovakia to Southampton the 14 partners, drawn from nine member states, represent a broad spectrum of authorities, climate change challenges and with varying degrees of strategic policy and experience.

The project will facilitate the much needed exchange of knowledge and experience and the actual transfer of good practice on climate change adaptation strategies to local and regional authorities .

The project has been co-financed by the European Union European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and made possible by the INTERREG IVC Programme.

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**Contacts:**

Kate Henderson, TCPA (Lead-Partner)

Tel: 020 7930 8903/ 07915 057769

Email: [kate.henderson@tcpa.org.uk](mailto:kate.henderson@tcpa.org.uk)

**Notes to Editors**

1. **History of the GRaBS project proposal** - Working with the two initial partners in the early part of 2007, the TCPA developed an outline GRaBS project proposal, which was presented to UK local and regional government in order to gauge

interest in and relevance of both the project idea and the proposed European wide exchange of experience and knowledge. The TCPA decided to offer to take on the Lead Partner role for the new project and together with the **University of Manchester**, the **City District Geuzenveld Sloterveer** (Amsterdam), the **London Borough of Sutton** and **Southampton City Council** began the process of extended European partner search. The aim was to find partners with a range of interests, cultures, experiences and needs, located in a range of climate zones. Towards the end of 2007 the **Province of Genova, Etnambiente**, the **University of Catania** (Italy), the **City of Malmo** (Sweden), the **Municipality of Kalamaria** (Greece), the **Regional Environment Centre for Eastern Europe** (Slovakia), the **South East England Development Agency** (SEEDA), the **Region of Styria** (Austria) and **CORPI** (Lithuania) joined the project as partners.

2. **INTERREG IVC Programme** – The INTERREG IVC Programme is financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), part of the European Territorial Cooperation Objective of the Structural Fund policies for the period 2007-2013. It aims, by means of interregional cooperation, to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and contribute to economic modernisation and increased competitiveness of Europe. In its first call for proposals the INTERREG IVC Programme received 492 applications by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2008 submission deadline.
  
3. The **Town and Country Planning Association** (TCPA) is an independent campaigning charity calling for more integrated planning based on the principles of accessibility, sustainability, diversity, and community cohesion. The TCPA puts social justice and the environment at the heart of the debate about planning policy, housing and energy supply. We inspire government, industry and campaigners to take a fresh perspective on major issues including climate change and regeneration. [www.tcpa.org.uk](http://www.tcpa.org.uk)