



PRESS RELEASE – FRIDAY 13th MARCH 2009

**NEW RESEARCH ON GLOBAL SEA-LEVEL RISE MAKES
URGENT CASE FOR PAN-EUROPEAN CLIMATE CHANGE
ADAPTATION**

Scientists at a climate change summit held in Copenhagen this week presented new research which estimated that sea level could rise more than a metre by 2100^[1]. The implications of this could be severe and the TCPA^[2] is calling on local and regional government across Europe to develop comprehensive climate change adaptation strategies to help protect vulnerable coastal communities.

Through the TCPA-led project **Green and Blue Space Adaptation for Urban Areas and Eco Towns (GRaBS)**^[3] the 14 project partners representing eight member states will raise awareness and increase the expertise of how green and blue infrastructure can help new and existing mixed use urban development adapt to projected climate scenarios such as considerable sea level rise.

GRaBS Project Manager Diane Smith said:

“The implications of sea level rise will have significant implications for a number of the GRaBS partners, including the low-lying Amsterdam City District of Geuzenveld-Slotermeer, and coastal partners Southampton City Council and the

City of Malmö in Sweden. We will be working closely with our partner in Lithuania, the Klaipėda University Coastal Research and Planning Institute, to assess the risk and vulnerabilities of sea level rise across Europe and develop adaptation action plans.”

In April the TCPA is running a study visit the cities of Malmö and Stockholm in Sweden via Copenhagen in Denmark, to provide the opportunity to meet the planners, officers, politicians and residents who are working together to tackle a variety of environmental and social issues; many of those similar to the ones facing communities here in the UK.

Diane Smith added:

“By sharing best practice and advancing the knowledge and expertise of partner staff across Europe we aim to help regional and local municipalities, decision makers, politicians and communities, to make a more informed and strategic response to climate change adaptation.”

“The TCPA study tour will look at why Sweden is leading the way in sustainable development and how we can learn from, and build upon, their experiences to ensure equally successful models of sustainability in the UK.”

The study tour will focus on best practice examples of sustainable development across a range of aspects including housing, transport, green space, renewable energy and waste water usage. For further information visit: <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/events.asp>

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Contacts:

Kate Henderson, TCPA (Lead-Partner)

Tel: 020 7930 8903/ 07915 057769

Email: kate.henderson@tcpa.org.uk

Notes to Editors

1. *The Guardian* [11.03.09] ‘Sea level could rise more than a metre by 2100, say experts’ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/mar/11/sea-level-rises-climate-change-copenhagen>

2. 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.

3. **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 Malmö** (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.

4. **INTERREG IVC Programme** – The project has been co-financed by the European Union European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and made possible by the 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 15th January 2008 submission deadline.