

Smart strategies for the transition in coal intensive regions

Project No: 836819



Summary Investors Workshop



WP 4 – Task 4.6 / D 4.5

September 2022

Authors: Nicolas de la Vega, EUREC, Belgium
Greg Arrowsmith, EUREC, Belgium

Editors: All project partners

Contact: EUREC
Nicolas de la Vega
delavega@eurec.be
Tel: +32 2 318 40 52
Place du Champ de Mars 2
B-1050, Brussels
www.eurec.be



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 836819. The sole responsibility for the content of this report lies with the authors. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Union. Neither the CINEA nor the European Commission are responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

TRACER website: www.tracer-h2020.eu

Contents

1	<i>Introduction</i>	4
2	<i>Summary of the Investors Workshop</i>	5
3	<i>Conclusions</i>	8
	<i>Annex I – Press release on TRACER’s closing events</i>	9
	<i>Annex II – Agenda of the Investors Workshop</i>	10
	<i>Annex III – Pictures from the event</i>	12

1 Introduction

The Investors Workshop was organised as part of the Final TRACER Events (see [agenda](#)) in the centre of Brussels in Belgium on 20 September 2022 as a physical event. Over 70 participants have registered for the event and more than 50 participants attended. The following day the Final Conference took place, marking the end of the Horizon 2020 [TRACER project](#).

The purpose of the Investors Workshop was to showcase new project ideas - in the form of pitches - to support sustainable and durable growth in each of [TRACER's 9 target coal regions in transition](#). The target audience were potential public and private investors, including registered participants from: European Commission, European Investment Bank, EU executive agencies (e.g. CINEA), national officials (permreps), EU regional representatives, venture capital, project developers, various trade associations related to coal and heavy industry.

After the project pitches, there was a session on “EU funding opportunities for Coal Regions in Transition”, where the Coal Regions in Transition Platform presented a financing toolkit for coal regions, followed by a presentation on the ETS Modernisation Fund and the Social Climate Fund by DG CLIMA of the European Commission. The event closed with the award of prizes to the top pitches and closing remarks by the project coordinator.

The following section of this report sums up the key points of the discussion and format of the workshop. The third and last section has conclusions. Below that there are 3 annexes with: the event's press release, the agenda and pictures.

2 Summary of the Investors Workshop

For context, one of the key objectives of the TRACER project was “to provide guidance to regional actors for the access to available European funds and programmes, and on how to leverage additional national public and private co-financing”. This had an element of informing stakeholders in coal regions about available funding, and also approaching public and private investors. This has resulted in the preparation of a [“Guideline on available European funds and programmes for low carbon energy projects in coal intensive regions”](#). TRACER partners have also organised 9 capacity building events in 8 coal regions that have focused on discussing financing opportunities with decision-makers and regional stakeholders (see report [here](#)). Another element related to this was approaching national Managing Authorities of Cohesion Funds and energy authorities (see report [here](#)). Lastly, over the last year of the project, partners have developed fiches to showcase twelve project ideas that did not yet find funding. Several of these project ideas to drive a sustainable transition in their coal regions were presented as pitches at the Investors Workshop on 20.09.22.

The Investors Workshop opened with an introduction by the project coordinator, who gave an overview of the work that was done in the project throughout 2019-2022. Then EUREC, the partner leading the work on funding, moderated the main event session where 9 coal regions presented their project pitches. To increase interaction and make the session more engaging, the pitches had the format of the TV show the Dragons’ den (aka shark tank), where each of those presenting project ideas sought to convince a jury of experts to fund their respective projects. The projects were appraised by a jury of three finance and clean technology experts: Michal Sobczyk from [EIT InnoEnergy](#), Suzana Carp from [Cleantech for Europe](#) and Professor Jan Bekkering from the [Hanze University of Applied Sciences](#). The jury gave feedback to each of the presenters and at the end rated the project ideas that were presented using two criteria: “1 - Quality of the idea, quality of presentation and expected level of impact”; “2 - Business case in the middle to long term”. When a project idea could be rated under both, it was considered “in competition”, when it was considered that a project focused on public goods that could not be monetised, then only the 1st criterion applied and it contended for the “impact award”.

Session on Project pitches from coal regions in transition and jury appraisal

The Institute for Post-Mining Landscapes (FIB) held a presentation on [“A blooming energy landscape. Smart combination of photovoltaics and agriculture”](#). The TRACER partner pitched a project idea that combined the use of photovoltaic panels and lavender to make products (e.g., essential oils) on degraded land that was previously used for coal mining. The presenter proposed to upscale to commercial production the current pilot tests that were carried out in Lusatia. The project can bring make Lusatian farmers more resilient to climate and price shocks.

The Black Sea Energy Research Centre (BSERC) made a pitch on the [“Transformation of residential buildings into Smart Buildings”](#). The project partner proposed to build on the existing national and EU programmes for multi-family and single-family residential buildings, to add a component that integrates intelligent energy management (i.e., smart technologies based on smart metering and sensors). The proposed measures focused on Stara Zagora District, a coal intensive area, to finance 27,000 smart buildings by 2050. The proposed measures have an estimated cost of around 600€ per dwelling and the creation of 60-70 jobs, as well as large CO2 savings due to increased efficiency.

ENERGOPROJEKT ENTEL presented a provisional concept for [“Developing PV in the Kolubara Region”](#). The coal region has ash and slug dumps that can be used for the installation of utility-sized PV plans, in combination with reforestation steep areas unsuitable for solar panels. This can theoretically start after the programmed closing of coal power plants,

from 2023 onwards. Moreover, the project partner added that there is room for rooftop solar in the surrounding communities. The feasibility of this project depends on the national plan for energy that was under discussion.

The Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRES) pitched an idea for [“Developing a Biomass Logistic and Trade Centre”](#) in the coal region of Western Macedonia. The TRACER partner called for the creation of a regional centre that helps to process, store, sort and sell various types of biomass for bioenergy use. EU projects in other countries have proven that this concept works well and creates employment.

Project partner ISPE opened the 2nd round of project pitches with an idea to create a [“Smart-Energy Campus at the University of Petrosani”](#). The existing campus in the coal basin of the Jiu Valley would integrate several upgrades to its infrastructure to improve its energy performance and create a living lab for students, these modifications include: energy efficiency measures; renewable energy integration; electro-mobility; the creation of a data centre. This project aims to work in partnership with local companies and to strengthen the skills-base in the region.

The Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague presented a plan for the [“Complete revitalization and resocialization of the ČSA mine”](#) in the Usty region of Czechia. The partner proposed a large project of over 140 million € to reclaim 45 km² of land used by the CSA mine with the purpose to create: a nature protection area; a new business area for high-tech and circular industries; a site for PV and energy storage; a residential park with leisure activities.

Menter Mon, a stakeholder from Wales in the UK, gave a pitch on [“Gaining a foothold: Developing tidal energy and hydrogen storage”](#). The Community Led Company has been developing sustainable projects in Wales on tidal, photovoltaic and green hydrogen. Menter Mon is looking for further investment to upscale its tidal and hydrogen projects to provide renewable and affordable energy to Welsh communities.

The Ruda Śląska City Office, a stakeholder from Upper Silesia in Poland, presented [“Ruda Śląska, a revitalization master plan: possibilities and challenges of post-mining areas”](#). A brownfield of 65 ha next to the city centre offers the opportunity to revitalise the whole area by building from scratch commercial, industrial and residential areas. Moreover, it allows to rethink city-planning to improve transport and increase green spaces.

The Thermal Energy Technology Institute (CETI), a partner representing the Region of Donetsk in Ukraine, presented a plan for [“Post-coal development of Myrnohrad town”](#). The pitch calls for an overhaul of the water and energy system of the city of Myrnohrad, that have been under strain due to underinvestment and ongoing conflict in the area. It plans to reconstruct the district heating system using heat from closed mines and solar panels on public buildings. It also proposes to use the mine dumps to produce construction materials.

The jury welcomed the 9 project pitches and gave feedback in 2 rounds. Their comments and recommendations included the following points:

- Make feasibility studies, divide the projects into stages in the middle and long term (at least 2030) and prepare estimates on returns of investment;
- For utility-scale projects in particular, it is important to define how local communities benefit from them and may even actively participate;
- Larger projects should consider bringing in developers and private investors/lenders, as this can significantly increase their width and depth;
- It is important to take a systemic approach to tackle climate, environmental and socioeconomic priorities at the same time;
- Technical aspects, including the choice of technologies and companies, should be defined as much as possible, plans should be updated regularly.

After the jury's feedback, TRACER partners EUREC and WIP added up the scores given by the 3 members of the jury to all 9 pitches. These were the winners of both competition categories were:

- 1st prize overall with 52/60 points to: Andy Billcliff of Menter Mon, for a project to develop tidal energy and hydrogen in Wales, UK
- 2nd prize overall with 48/60 points to Charalampos Malamatenios from the Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRESS) for a project on developing a Biomass Logistic and Trade Centre in Western Macedonia, Greece
- 1st Prize for positive impact on the community with 2 winners drawing at 45/60 points:
 - Igor Volchyn from the Thermal Energy Technology Institute (CETI) for Post-coal development project in the municipality of Myrnograd
 - Marketa Hendrychova from the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS) for the revitalization of a mining area in Northwest Bohemia, Czechia

Session EU funding opportunities for Coal Regions in Transition

Towards the end of the event there was a session that focused on new developments in the EU funding landscape that may be accessed to support the transition out of coal. This policy session was moderated by EUREC. The session started with 2 short presentations, followed by a panel discussion.

The Wuppertal institute, as part of the secretariat of the [Initiative for Coal Regions in Transition](#), presented (see slides [here](#)) its latest publication, a [Toolkit for Transition Financing](#). The toolkit gave an overview of the instruments available, with a closer look on the Just Transition Fund. It also gave recommendations to coal regions to identify the right programmes depending on their needs and to interlink financing with holistic transition strategies.

Then the Directorate-General for Climate Action in the European Commission held a presentation (slides [here](#)) on ETS funds relevant for the transition out of coal. The Modernisation Fund will include Greece and Portugal to the list of eligible countries, possibly also Slovenia. In the ongoing revision, the Commission proposes to remove all fossil fuel funding from the fund. The Social Climate Fund is currently being discussed and is expected to support sectors and people at an economic disadvantage. The Commission is firm on its position that the 72.2 billion fund for the 2025-2032 period comes in tandem with the extension of ETS carbon tax to the transport and buildings sectors.

After the presentations, there was a brief panel discussion that was joined by the 2 speakers and TRACER partner Gloria Popescu from ISPE Design and Consulting. It was mentioned that providing funding to coal region in transition is not enough, in addition it is necessary to build absorption capacity of these funds among regional and local authorities. Similarly, stakeholders need to be supported to respond to calls and work together. The extension of the Modernisation Fund to 2 or possibly 3 countries by 2024 was welcomed by participants.

The project coordinator thanked the speakers and closed the Investors Workshop by inviting all those present to join both the networking drink and the Final Conference for TRACER the following day.

3 Conclusions

The event was well attended by stakeholders from coal regions and finance experts from the private and public sectors. The workshop was engaging, with constant exchanges between presenters, the jury and the audience. Printed copies of project ideas were made available and taken by many of the participants.

A wide array of projects ideas were presented, putting in evidence that strategies have to be tailored to the attributes and needs of each region. At the same time, common challenges appeared such as: the difficulty to find skilled workers in regions facing a brain drain; the challenge for local and regional authorities to absorb more funding; split land ownership may act as a break for regeneration projects in degraded coal and industrial areas.

The policy session showed that stakeholders from coal regions wish to engage with decision-makers and follow new developments in funding opportunities. As the TRACER project closes, stakeholders from the 9 target coal regions will continue to work towards a clean transition.

Annex I – Press release on TRACER's closing events



23 September 2022

Coal regions from across Europe present policy solutions and project ideas to drive a clean and just transition

The TRACER project closed with an Investors Workshop and a Final Policy Conference on 20 & 21 September 2022, where nine coal regions shared their ideas to get out of coal.



BRUSSELS, 21 September 2022. The Horizon 2020 project [TRACER](#) gathered 15 partners who have worked together for 3 and a half years to support 9 European coal regions to design Research and Innovation (R&I) strategies for a climate-friendly and economic or socially just transition away from coal. The project closed with two events in Brussels with over 50 participants attending each, including partners and stakeholders from all 9 coal regions, local and regional SMEs, researchers, civil society, European Commission officials and many others.

An **Investors Workshop** on the 20th of September showcased prospective ideas for regeneration in each of the 9 TRACER coal regions. The projects were appraised by a jury of three finance and clean technology experts: Sobczyk from [EIT InnoEnergy](#), Suzana Carp from [Cleantech for Europe](#) and Professor Jan Bekkering from [Hanze University of Applied Sciences](#). The jury awarded:

- 1st prize overall to: Andy Billcliff of Menter Mon, for project to develop tidal energy and hydrogen in Wales, UK
- 2nd prize overall to: Charalampos Malamatenios from the Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRES) for a project on developing a Biomass Logistic and Trade Centre in Western Macedonia, Greece
- Prize for positive impact on the community to:
 - Igor Volchyn from the Thermal Energy Technology Institute (CETI) for Post-coal development project in the municipality of Myrnograd
 - Marketa Hendrychova from the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS) for the revitalization of a mining area in Northwest Bohemia, Czechia



The Investors workshop closed with a panel discussion on EU funding instruments with the Secretariat of the Coal Regions in Transition (CRIT) and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Climate. The attendants of the workshop were interested to learn on the extension of eligibility for Modernisation Fund's financing to Portugal and Greece, and Slovenia if the thresholds for determining eligibility proposed by the

Council are accepted by the European Parliament. The presentations performed during the Investors Workshop can be accessed [online](#).

The **TRACER Final Conference** on the 21st of September introduced the main results of the project in nine coal regions and opened the discussion with policy makers on barriers, challenges and opportunities. The panel discussion post-mining landscapes highlighted the importance of changing mindset about post mining lands and looking for opportunities in the topics of biodiversity, ecosystem services and tourism.



the
on
new



The panel discussion on social challenges and reskilling provided an overview on the [Net Zero Wales - Skills for the New Decarbonisation Plan](#) (and highlighted reskilling needs and opportunities in coal regions in order to make the transition just. Finally, the importance of the cultural and industrial footprint of former coal intensive regions in the transition process was emphasized. Preserving cultural heritage can bring important benefits in terms of jobs creation and income at the community level. The presentations performed during the TRACER Final

Conference can be accessed [online](#).

As the project is moving towards its successful closure, all the reports on different topics elaborated under the frame of the various work packages of the project can be found in the “[Publications](#)” section of [TRACER](#) website.

TRACER coordinator

Rita Mergner, Dr. Rainer Janssen

WIP Renewable Energies

E-mail: Rita.Mergner@wip-munich.de

Mobilisation of EU funds and programmes

Nicolas de la Vega, Greg Arrowsmith

The Association of European Renewable Energy Research Centres (EUREC)

E-mail: Delavega@eurec.be

TRACER project partners



CHARLES UNIVERSITY
Environment Centre



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 836819.

Annex II – Agenda of the Investors Workshop

The agenda of both TRACER events can be access via the link below:


https://tracer-h2020.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/220914-Tracer-Final-Event_A4.pdf

FINAL TRACER EVENTS

INVESTORS WORKSHOP
20 SEP. 2022, 14:00 - 18:00


NOVOTEL Brussels City Centre
Rue de la Vierge Noire 32, 1000

The Investors Workshop will showcase new project ideas from stakeholders from coal regions in transition to support sustainable and durable growth. Experts from the finance sector and from the European Commission will give feedback on pitches for project ideas in coal regions. Public officials will also present new financial instruments available to support a just energy transition. The event will have the format of the TV show the Dragons' den (also known as shark tank), where a jury of potential investors consider new business ideas from applicants.



PROGRAMME INVESTORS WORKSHOP, 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

<p>13:30 Registration and welcome</p> <p>OPENING Moderation: Nicolas de la Vega, EUREC</p> <p>14:00 Welcome and opening remarks Rainer Janssen, WIP Renewable Energies</p> <p>14:15 Introducing speakers and format of project pitches Nicolas de la Vega, EUREC</p> <p>14:25 Presenting the Jury:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michal Sobczyk, EIT InnoEnergy Jules Besnainou, Executive Director, Cleantech Europe Professor Jan Bekkering, Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen <p>PROJECT PITCHES FROM COAL REGIONS IN TRANSITION AND APPRAISAL (1ST GROUP) Moderation: Nicolas de la Vega, EUREC</p> <p>14:40 Lusatia, Germany - A blooming energy landscape. Smart combination of photovoltaics and agriculture Anne Rademacher, Institute for Post-Mining Landscapes (FIB)</p> <p>14:50 Southeast Region, Bulgaria - Transformation of the residential buildings into Smart Buildings Angel Nikolaev, Black Sea Energy Research Centre (BSERC)</p> <p>15:00 Kolubara Region, Serbia – Developing PV in the Kolubara Region Jasmina Lukic, ENERGOPROJEKT ENTEL</p> <p>15:10 Western Macedonia, Greece - Developing a Biomass Logistic and Trade Centre Charalampos Malamatenios, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRES)</p> <p>15:20 Appraisal of 4 project ideas and discussion</p> <p>15:40 Coffee break</p>	<p>PROJECT PITCHES FROM COAL REGIONS IN TRANSITION AND APPRAISAL (2ND GROUP) Moderation: Nicolas de la Vega, EUREC</p> <p>16:00 Jiu Valley, Romania – Petrosani University Smart-Energy Campus Sorin Radu, Rector of the University of Petrosani and Chairman of ADTIVJ</p> <p>16:10 Northwest Bohemia, Czechia Marketa Hendrychova, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS)</p> <p>16:20 Wales, UK – Gaining a foothold: Developing ocean energy Andy Billcliff, Menter Mon</p> <p>16:30 Upper Silesia, Poland - Ruda Śląska revitalization master plan: possibilities and challenges of post-mining areas. Agnieszka Kubica, Ruda Śląska City Office</p> <p>16:40 Donetsk, Ukraine - Post-coal development of Myrnohrad town Igor Volchyn, Thermal Energy Technology Institute (CETI)</p> <p>16:50 Appraisal of 5 project ideas and discussion</p>	<p>EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COAL REGIONS IN TRANSITION Moderation: Greg Arrowsmith, EUREC</p> <p>17:10 Seven-minute presentations on opportunities for coal regions in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toolkit for financing the energy transition Jannis Beutel, Wuppertal Institute and CRIT secretariat • EU ETS funds Marion Perelle, DG CLIMA, European Commission <p>17:25 Panel discussion</p> <p>17:50 Conclusions Rainer Janssen, WIP Renewable Energies</p> <p>18:00 - 19:00 Networking drink</p>
---	---	--



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 836815. The sole responsibility for the content of this report lies with the authors. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Union. Neither the CREA nor the European Commission are responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

<https://tracer-h2020.eu>

Annex III – Pictures from the event



Picture 1: Rainer Jansen, WIP Renewables, Germany



Picture 2: Jury for the project pitches with Suzana Carp of Cleantech Europe (left), Jan Bekkering of Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen (centre) and Michal Sobczyk of EIT InnoEnergy (right)



Picture 3: Jury for the project pitches



Picture 4: audience



Picture 5: audience



Figure 6: Andy Billcliff, Menter Mon Ltd, Wales UK



Figure 7: Angel Nikolaev, Black Sea Energy Research Centre (BSERC), Bulgaria

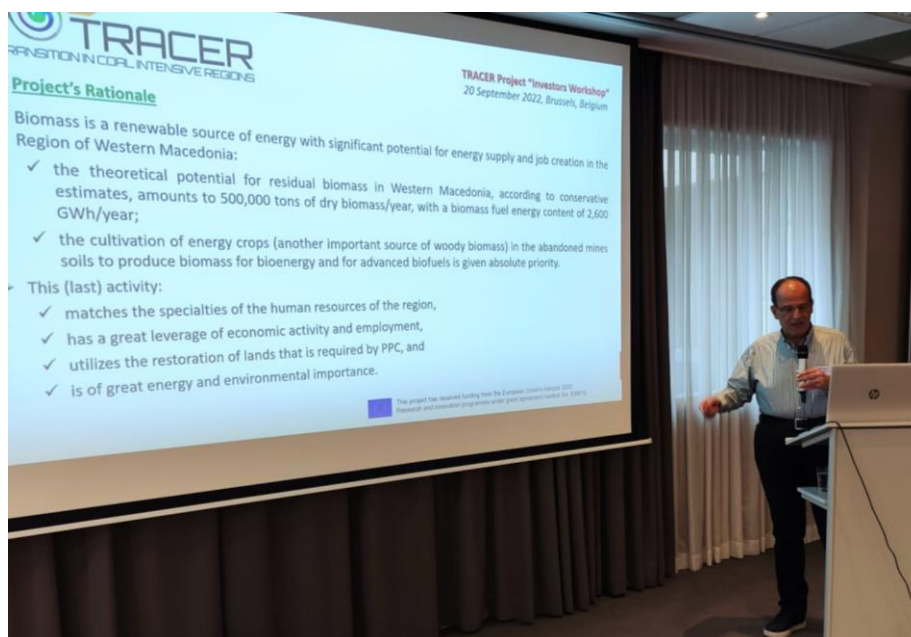


Figure 8: Charalampos Malamatenios, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRES), Greece



Figure 9: Anne Rademacher, Institute for Post-Mining Landscapes (FIB), Germany



Figure 10: Igor Volchyn, Thermal Energy Technology Institute (CETI), Ukraine



Figure 11: Jasmina Lukic, ENERGOPROJEKT ENTEL, Serbia



Figure 12: Marketa Hendrychova, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS), Czechia



Figure 13: Gloria Popescu, ISPE Design and Consulting, Romania



Figure 14: 1st price for project pitch competition to Andy Billcliff, Menter Mon Ltd, Wales UK