



FEDRE DECLARATION¹

(European Foundation for the Sustainable Development of the Regions)

**on the occasion of the Forum of January 2008
TOWARDS A 2000 WATT SOCIETY**

**“A REALISTIC PLAN AND A SYMBOL
THANKS TO CITIES AND REGIONS”**

Today, we should dare to act in order to limit the magnitude of the global warming and its negative consequences. It is necessary to do it without waiting. This was precisely the message of the Forums of FEDRE of 2006 and 2007 addressed to states, to local authorities, to firms and persons, so that everyone takes one's responsibilities.

Since then, things have started to move: the minds are gradually becoming aware of a necessary change. Public entities, industrial and agrarian companies, services, universities and schools, as well as citizens, have innovated. Some people have been involved in reforms, researches of efficiency or implementation of new technologies. Things are moving, but too little, too slowly. Very few individuals, firms or public authorities are mobilized today. **Declarations of intention come from all horizons, but acts are labouring to follow.** Without being inexistent, they are rarer.

To mobilize our societies, a common objective is first needed, and this objective should be considered desirable and attainable by the biggest number and that everyone should be aware that one's acts can contribute to reach it, or, on the contrary, to postpone its realization. Our Forum proposes as a **common objective: the 2000 watt society**. Several Swiss Municipalities and Cantons have already adopted it. Some Municipalities and Regions in Europe go also in this direction.

The idea of a 2000 watt society was launched in Switzerland by the Polytechnic Graduate Institutes, 10 years ago already! Why a 2000 watt society? The worldwide average of energy consumption by individuals is today 17.500 kilowatt-hours, which corresponds to an uninterrupted power per inhabitant of 2000 watts. This average conceals big inequalities: 12.000 watts in the United States, 6.000 watts in Western Europe, and 50 watts in the poorest countries. Let us recall that the 2000 watt society rests on three pillars: 1) increased yields thanks to a better energy efficiency; 2) progressive replacement of fossil fuels by renewable ones; 3) technological innovation and economic dynamism.

¹ FEDRE is Observer to the Congress of the Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, and has also a participative Status with the Council of Europe. It has a Consultative Status with the United Nations.

The 2000 watts society is:

- **Essential** to reduce the dependence on fossil fuels, sources of potential conflicts and already factors of economic instability because of the rises and fluctuations in price resulting from real or alleged shortages.
- **Responsible** towards future generations which will still need some oil, but as industrial raw material, and to which it is necessary to leave a planet that Carbon Dioxide will not have definitely damaged.
- **Equitable** in the sense that the readjustment of energy consumptions will allow the poorest countries to continue their development and the richest countries to live better but differently.
- **Profitable** if the European economies develop with no delay the technologies and the behaviours required by such a society. They will thus be able to promote their know-how in the entire world when the necessity of energy savings will spread everywhere in a much more constraining manner than today.
- **Possible** provided that researchers, engineers and architects seek first and foremost the energy savings in appliances and buildings and provided that political authorities, companies and citizens are getting accustomed to save energy and reduce their emissions of Carbon Dioxide.

These changes of attitudes and preferences will take time. But it is not necessary to wait for future international agreements or laws to make decisive steps in the right direction. FEDRE knows that local authorities (villages, cities, districts, counties and regions), have the competences to adopt measures which will lead to a 2000 watt society, and that they are more and more numerous to act in such a way. At local level, companies and citizens are more aware of the impact of their acts and more ready to take their responsibilities. Together with them, local authorities can act and initiate concrete, pedagogic and rewarding actions.

This is the reason why **FEDRE calls upon European cities and regions** to immediately adopt measures of economy of energy and of reduction of emissions of Carbon Dioxide. What can we do?

- Two thirds of the energies spent in the world are used for the heating or for air-conditioning despite the fact that we know how to construct buildings which, over one year, produce more energy than they use. Public institutions should:
 - Set the example by immediately making a **diagnosis of energetic performances of all their buildings, by showing** on every building the result of this diagnosis (see the “Display” campaign throughout Europe), by establishing a **10-year programme of insulation of ancient buildings** and by imposing to construct **new buildings** respecting **high standards of energy savings**;
 - impose that before 2010 **individuals and firms** make a **diagnosis of energetic performances of their buildings** and houses and show it on the façade;
 - give **fiscal incentives for the insulation of ancient buildings**;
 - impose **more ambitious norms of energy efficiency for any new buildings**;
 - give **fiscal and statutory incentives** to allow more **solar panels on roofing**.

- Traditional bulbs are five times less effective than low consumption bulbs. Public institutions should, before the end of 2009, replace traditional bulbs low consumption ones. Firms and citizens are encouraged to do so even before regulations compel them! As for **traditional bulbs**, they can be **withdrawn from the market with deadlines not exceeding 2010**.
- “Stand-by” on household appliances represents ca. 10% of the electricity spent at home or in public buildings. Everyone should get used to **switching them off** after use. That can be imposed in public services and in firms.
- Household or office appliances **beyond grade C** are very “energy consuming”. They should be replaced by A or B appliances **by 2010** in public buildings. Let us encourage individuals and firms to follow this example thanks to an appropriate labelling of new devices! This labelling could show in how much time the additional cost of a device of grade A or B, compared with an equivalent of grade C or more, is reimbursed by the energy savings.
- Cars with internal combustion engines are all the more polluting as they consume more gas. **Cars consuming more than 10 litres of gasoline or 7 litres of gas per hundred kilometres or particularly polluting should be banned from towns by the end of 2009**. Public institutions should also gradually replace their fleet by **natural gas or electrical vehicles** and impose the same measures to the **taxi** companies, but on the condition to give them financial support.
- Similar measures favouring electric motorbikes and eliminating the most polluting ones are also to be adopted.
- In numerous cities, measures of restriction and reorganization of the traffic have reached their objectives, but they have stimulated the utilisation of motorbikes which are often very polluting, block sidewalks and create dangers. Local authorities have to make them respect the traffic regulations and to concert the population to prevent mobility programmes to have undesired effects. **Too many cities still have no policies regarding motorbikes**.
- Local authorities should encourage electricity companies to **favour local productions** and to use all **renewable energy** sources (solar, wind, geothermy, wood, waste).
- Actions of **energy savings in new or renovated buildings**, which represent the **biggest potential**, are essential and local authorities are often in the best position to promote this policy.

To make out of savings a virtue, and out of waste a fault

Measures mentioned above are examples of what local authorities can do to reach the 2000 watt society. If they are implemented, they will induce substantial energy savings, a decrease of Carbon Dioxide emissions, and above all, they will contribute to **change the trends and**

behaviours by making out of savings a virtue, and out of waste a fault. FEDRE is aware that, if we want to reach a 2000 watt society, decisions made by States are essential, but the States often prove to be hesitating, slow and technologically conservatives.

FEDRE points out that the recent “Grenelle de l’Environnement” in France is a courageous, responsible and unique initiative, leading to decisions. The achievement of its objectives will represent an example and an incentive for the other States. In the meantime, Cities and Regions will be able to start the change for a better protection of their environment and the revitalisation their economy. The still hesitating States will follow!

Finally, it is necessary to insist on the necessity to develop – with engineers, with architects and constructions companies – **new systems of education, consistent with the needs of a sustainable economy.** We are living in another century. Jobs, as technologies, have to evolve. There again, Cities and Regions can often act without waiting, and show the way.

Geneva, January 2008
www.fedre.org