

Press Release

LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein: Important Groundwork Laid Again in 2016

Vaduz, 29 September 2017

LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein published its eighth annual report today and is looking forward to a future that is challenging but also rich in opportunities.

The entry into force of the Paris Climate Agreement on 4 November 2016 was probably the most important event in the reporting year. Admittedly it is the result of many compromises. Nevertheless, the agreement represents a paradigm shift. That is because all states must make a contribution in the future to attain the Paris climate targets. "You do not have to be a climate scientist to recognise what a Herculean task lies before us," said Prime Minister and Foundation President Adrian Hasler when presenting the 2016 annual report. There must be a change of thinking in all areas of the global economy. In industry, interest in obtaining renewable energies must increase significantly. However, the financial industry will also be called on a great deal in the future. "We are all called on, and every person must make a contribution in order to reach the two-degree target and the sustainable development goals of the United Nations," continued Hasler. "I am proud to see that some important groundwork has been laid in Liechtenstein in order to be able to ultimately tackle the mentioned tasks. For example, we were able to call ourselves the solar world champions for the second time in 2016, because nowhere else in the world is there such a high per capita level of output of photovoltaic power as there is in Liechtenstein," concluded Hasler.

Energy and Climate Transition – Challenge and Opportunity

The continual and increasing global warming and the related consequences must be taken into account from now on. The government of Liechtenstein had already decided on ambitious climate targets for 2030 in advance of the Paris climate summit in April 2015. For example, around 40 percent of country-wide emissions are to be reduced by 2030 compared to 1990. At least 30 percent of the reduction compared to 1990 is to take place in Liechtenstein. The recently published government programme for 2017 to 2021 takes this into consideration. "In view of the IPCC statements, the challenge is immense. But this is also exactly where Liechtenstein's greatest opportunities lie. As one of the world's wealthiest industrial countries, it is up to us to show that environmental protection and healthy economic development need not be mutually exclusive," Hasler emphasised.

Indeed, the required transition in global energy also opens up promising prospects for the country:

- Liechtenstein now has the highest per capita peak output of any country in terms of the production of photovoltaic power. On sunny days, it may soon be the case that the country produces more electricity than can be taken up by the grid. Couldn't this potential justify the use of new energy storage systems?
- The country has extensive know-how when it comes to foundations. At the same time, worldwide patent registrations for green technologies are on the rise. The risk associated with this is that good ideas will disappear into the vaults of large companies in order to defend market shares. Couldn't the foundation under Liechtenstein law be a guarantor for the use and continued enhancement of green technologies?
- Liechtenstein has comprehensive expertise in asset management going back many years. Against this backdrop, there is also a vast amount of knowledge in the area of philanthropy. Couldn't the state get together with the private sector and use the synergies associated with "public-private partnerships" to accomplish projects together (for instance in the environmental sector) in order to position Liechtenstein as an internationally recognised philanthropic location?

LIFE as Bridge Builder and Incubator

"At LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein, we are concerned with exactly these issues. With the various projects and the successful continuation this year of the partnership with the Swiss Climate Foundation, a valuable contribution was again made in this direction," said Simon Tribelhorn, Managing Director of LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein. Various SMEs in Liechtenstein also made use of support measures in 2016 made possible thanks to the partnership between LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein and the Swiss Climate Foundation. Since the start of the cooperation, funds amounting to almost half a million Swiss francs have been awarded to innovative and energy-efficient SMEs in Liechtenstein. Furthermore, LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein has extended the programme launched in 2015 in collaboration with Liechtenstein Power Plants (LKW) to promote e-mobility to a total of 100 all-electric vehicles. In this way, LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein is making a significant contribution to climate protection and proactively supports the achievement of sustainable development targets. "In the future, we want to align our activity in this area in an even more intensive and focused manner. Going forward, we would like to act to an even greater extent as a bridge builder and supporter when it comes to implementing new ideas for the business and financial centre," added Hasler. "For this purpose, we launched a strategy process in 2015 that has led to a new, even more focussed strategy for LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein, the implementation of which began in 2016," continued Hasler.

Public Outreach as Another Focus

An additional focus will also continue to be public outreach at home and abroad, whether through regular attendance at annual climate conferences, via participation in energy efficiency platforms or through the already established impact forums held every year in Zurich as well as other national and international events. "With its activities, LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein has reached a noteworthy degree of prominence on the sustainability scene beyond its borders and has developed a brand. It makes a valuable contribution to building a positive image benefitting the workplace, financial and academic centre as well as the innovation location of Liechtenstein, and it should continue to do so," Hasler concluded.

LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein was inaugurated at the beginning of 2009 and is a non-profit foundation according to Liechtenstein law. The objectives of LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein are to promote and increase awareness in the entire area of climate protection and sustainability. Last but not least, it should also make a contribution to being able to protect our environment for our children according to the motto "for a better life". The foundation's supporters include the government of the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Liechtenstein Bankers Association, the Liechtenstein Institute of Professional Trustees and Fiduciaries, the Liechtenstein Investment Fund Association, the Liechtenstein Insurance Association and the University of Liechtenstein. Thanks to the participation of industry and commerce, academia and politics, LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein networks important players in the sustainability sector and brings them to the table as a private-public partnership and think tank.

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Image:



The title image shows the PV modules installed on a school in the Peruvian Amazon region. The project was rolled out within the framework of Liechtenstein climate financing, with the support of LIFE Climate Foundation Liechtenstein and others.