

Nightlight Project

Improving regional policies to reduce light pollution and protect and valorise dark night skies





Night Light

Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

NightLight First Newsletter

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1. Nightlight Project

A satellite image of night-time Europe shows a continent that is covered in light. Over 85% of the EU territory is subject to some degree of artificial illumination.

This increasing loss of natural darkness has a negative impact on biodiversity and ecosystems and on the quality of nature and the environment.

Regions across Europe must intensify their policy efforts to reduce light pollution and protect areas with naturally dark night skies to help preserve their nature and vulnerable landscapes and prevent biodiversity loss.

At the same time there are opportunities for sustainable economic development linked to the protection of dark skies.

Several EU regions already demonstrate this by creating areas where the dark sky has a protected status and successfully positioning this as an asset to develop new eco-tourism services.



2. Presentation of the Partners



Province of Fryslân (leadpartner)

www.fryslan.frl



Hajdú-Bihar County Government

www.hbmo.hu/



Avila County Council

www.apca.com.es/proyectos/en-marcha/night-light.html



Nature Park Our

www.naturpark-our.lu/



Samsø Energy Academy

<https://energiakademiet.dk/en/>





BSC, Business support centre Ltd., Kranj

<http://www.bsc-kranj.si/>



REGIONE BASILICATA

BASILICATA REGION

<http://www.regione.basilicata.it/>



Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation

<http://www.matera-basilicata2019.it/en/who-we-are/foundation.html>



Island Government of La Palma

<http://www.visitlapalma.es/>



3. Pre Kick-off Amsterdam



Our pre kick off meeting was organized in Amsterdam on the 17th of January 2017.

Exactly on that date there was a huge power break down which covered a big part of Amsterdam in darkness that morning.

For a project which aims on protecting dark sky areas, the start couldn't be better!



The goal of the ‘pre kick off meeting’ was to learn to know each other. To achieve this, all partners had to prepare a five minute presentation about them selves, their region and about how they thought they were going to contribute to the project.



The main reason to organize a pre kick off meeting was to present to the partners what they had to do to prepare the project and to get started.

We explained the rules and theoretical business so that at the kick off meeting in Luxembourg in March we would have more time to spend on good practices and we could go into further detail.

It was a good and intense meeting and we ‘ve made a flying start!



4. Kick-off in Luxembourg

Project kickoff meeting in the Luxembourg Nature Park Our

The Nature Park Our eagerly hosted the INTERREG Europe NIGHT LIGHT kickoff meeting from 6-8 March 2017.

About 20 representatives of the 9 project partner regions gathered in the picturesque town of Clervaux, taking the first common steps within NIGHT LIGHT, following a well-stocked agenda.

The meeting schedules comprehended a steering group meeting, a peer review workshop and a policy learning seminar, enriched by the inspiring contributions of the 2 guest speakers



Nynke-Rixt Jukema, representative of Fryslân and founder of the project Feel the Night and Antonia Varela, member of the Sky Quality Group of the Institute of Astrophysics of the Canary Islands and collaborator of the Starlight Foundation.



The meeting's highlight consisted in the official INTERREG Europe NIGHT LIGHT presentation in presence of M. Camille Gira, Secretary of State for sustainable development and infrastructure in Luxembourg, assembling a large number of interested local, regional and national guests in the Castle of Clervaux.

The evening event included a special presentation of a new survey on light pollution in Luxembourg by Dr. Lukas Schuler from Dark Sky Switzerland with a specific look at the territory of the Nature Park Our.



5. Dark Sky villages

Villages bring the dark night to Fryslân and Europe

The project Night Light is on a roll in Fryslân. Forty-three different organisations signed a declaration of understanding October last year. They are aware of the value of the dark sky and they want to protect it. The Province of Fryslân is working together with architect Nynke-Rixt Jukema. She is the founder of the Night Light project. We are trying to get people who are living in the villages just as enthusiastic about darkness at night as we are. It is a challenge to talk about switching off the lights in their neighbourhoods. Some people have doubts about this measure because it is such a new and innovative subject. People hesitate when we explain that you see more when the light is less bright or when it is switched off.



We have ideas to develop Night gardens and Starbarns. Night gardens are gardens with nocturnal animals and plants. Starbarns are barns where people can experience the night. But some villages have doubts about switching of the light, and about having these services in their villages. Maybe it attracts too many people in their quiet neighbourhood.



The village Hiaure in Fryslan, 90 inhabitants, is enthusiastic about more darkness at night. They came to us when they heard about our project, we didn't ask them to become a Dark Sky village! We will listen to them to hear about their ideas about a Dark Sky, their feelings and the steps they want to take. We would like to exchange the experiences of Hiaure with other Dark Sky villages in our Night Light project. Please contact Nynke Rixt Jukema info@nrjarchitectuur.nl so we can add these experiences to our Night Light Project.



6. Night Light meetings on Samsø

In the beginning of June, 20 representatives from 7 European Regions met up at the Copenhagen Airport. Together they departed in a bus heading for the island of Samsø to attend a policy meeting in the Night Light project.



On their way to the ferry the group made a stopover at the Brorfelde Observatory. The biggest observatory in Denmark has just re-opened after being closed since the late nineties. The group was taken on a guided tour around to the different observatories in the impressive and beautiful landscape. It showed up that the observatory is very interested in promoting new dark sky areas throughout Denmark. Therefore the observatory will be invited to take

part in the Regional Stakeholder Group, that shall assist the project in forming a Regional light pollution policy.



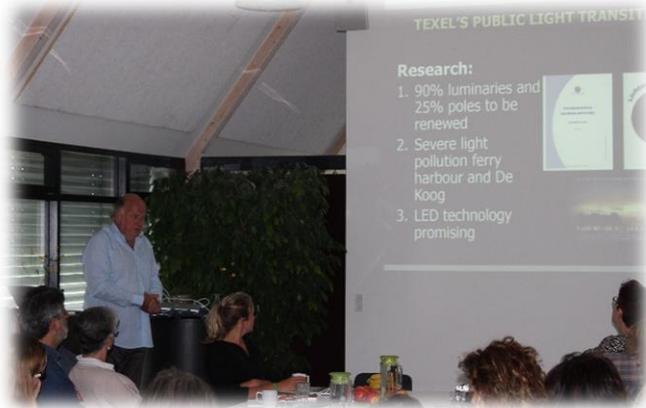
At the ferry the group was exposed to some of the many stories connected to the Renewable Energy Island and the on going activities on the Samso.



The group met up with different international representatives from other projects that also were attending the on going sustainability festival at the island - with a lot of different public and closed activities and events.



The Night Light meetings themselves took place at the Energy Academy building and at the legendary Brundby Rock Hotel.



Two external contributors were invited to attend the policy meeting. Professor Han Brezet from Texel in the Netherlands told the story about the challenges the island are facing, when it comes to convincing the residents to adopt an energy plan as well as a dark sky strategy.

Afterwards Tom Axelsen from the Danish Island of Moen explained the audience how the island became the first Nordic Dark Sky Community as well as Dark Sky Area and what touristic impact the titles will have on the island.



The host Samsø Energy Academy used the Night Light meeting as an opportunity to invite different up-coming local members of the Regional Stakeholder Group –to meet up with the international guests.

Furthermore one of the members, the director of the School, guided the group on a Night Light safari.



Here the group under dramatic climate conditions was exposed to the highly protected area of Stavns Fjord, the area that has been selected to become the upcoming Dark Sky Area on Samsø.



7. How to find more about us..

Website :
<https://www.interregeurope.eu/nightlight/>

Facebook : NightLight EU

Twitter : nightlighteu9





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