



A CLEAN SWEEP FOR TECH GROWTH IN DENMARK

Researchers, businesses and public bodies in Denmark develop a world-leading clean technology cluster of businesses for smart, sustainable innovation.

Can you have a thriving economy that is also green? In Denmark's Capital and Zealand Regions it is already happening – with smart, green technologies (cleantech) at its core.

“Cleantech” describes products or services that improve business performance or efficiency while reducing pollution, costs, inputs and waste. With the help of EUR 9738500 from the European Regional Development Fund, the Copenhagen Cleantech Cluster project created networks of companies and research institutes to spark ideas for new cleantech products and services and develop them into viable businesses.

Entrepreneurs also received direct support from the project in the form of business

mentoring, opportunities to test and demonstrate products, and advice on international branding and marketing. And with the cluster providing a visible focus for the sector, businesses could more easily attract investment and top researchers.

Green ambition

The project's overall vision was to develop a world-leading cluster of cleantech researchers and businesses in Copenhagen and the country's Zealand region. Over 600 companies were included, active in many different service and manufacturing industries.

The project's 12 partners included leading Danish universities, a science park, business investors and organisations, and the Copenhagen

“ *Cleantech is a vital area for our growth and development. The project succeeded in creating a strong, sustainable, highly successful cleantech cluster.* ”

Henrik Madsen, Chief consultant, Capital Region of Denmark

Project: Copenhagen Cleantech Cluster

Regions: Hovedstaden, Sjælland (Denmark)

Programme: Innovation and Knowledge

Duration: 01/09/2009-01/09/2014

Total budget: EUR 19 477 000 (including EUR 9 738 500 European funding, ERDF)

Website: www.cleancluster.dk

foreign investment agency. Both regions also engaged in the project, which gave their smart specialisation strategies more impact and cut red tape for cross-border ventures.

As a result, many local cleantech companies grew their business, despite the financial crisis. Over 40% took on more employees, and over half increased turnover. Just under a third expanded exports. At the same time, new companies started up and international cleantech companies were attracted to set up business in the regions.

Spotlight on success

Companies' close cooperation with each other and research institutes was particularly fruitful for innovation, shown by the high number of patents granted across the cluster. And the rest of the world took note. Recognised as one of the world's leading cleantech clusters by organisations such as the [OECD](#) and

[UNCTAD](#), the project hosted many international delegations and events.

In its five years, the cluster showed that sustainability is not just good for the environment; it is also good for business. It created over 1 000 new jobs, supported 126 start-ups, 64 research and company cooperations and 38 new cooperations between companies, and formalised cooperation with 15 leading clusters in the International Cleantech Network.

The project has now ended but its successful story continues. Copenhagen Cleantech Cluster has merged with another Danish cluster – the Lean Energy Cluster – to create CLEAN, an organisation with over 170 members and even stronger business involvement.