

# Transatlantic Sister City and Media Dialogue: Local Initiatives in Climate Protection and Renewable Energies in Germany and the US

**Date:** 29 November – 02 December 2011

**Participants:** 40 / representatives, journalists and stakeholders from Los Angeles & Berlin; Chicago & Hamburg; Columbus & Dresden; Chattanooga & Hamm

**Location:** Chattanooga, United States

**Sponsor:** Federal Foreign Office

Media Dialogue

## Energy and Climate Policy in Germany and the U.S. - Best Practice Examples on a Local Level

Four German-American pairs of sister cities met in Chattanooga, TN (USA), in order to compare local efforts on climate protection and explore best practices in renewable energies. The aim of the Transatlantic Sister City and Media Dialogue was to spur a lasting German-American dialogue at the grassroots level, which compares and develops local answers to global questions and help with building networks and ties between the participating sister cities.

**“German participants were particularly fascinated by the 'just-do-it' approach of their American counterparts”**

During the three-day dialogue, participants engaged in active discussions related to energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, green jobs, and climate partnerships. Working with networks, they also identified local initiatives implemented in their cities. During the discussions, a number of differences between the US and Germany were noticed. The German participants, who are used to long planning processes in their home towns, were particularly fascinated by the 'just-do-it' approach of their American counterparts and by the level of engagement seen among citizens, NGOs and philanthropic foundations.

Ecologic Institute organised the Media Dialogue in cooperation with the German Embassy in Washington DC.



## Ecologic Institute services:

Planning, organisation, and implementation of a dialogue for journalists and city authorities from 4 cities in the US and their German sister cities in Chattanooga, TN:

- Development of a concept including workshops, presentations, discussions and site visits
- Logistical organisation: accommodation and travel for participants, catering service, technical equipment for meetings
- Preparation of background information
- Organisation of various meetings, presentations and field trips in and around Chattanooga, including:
  - a welcoming speech by Ron Littlefield (Mayor of Chattanooga) who provided an overview of the transformation that Chattanooga has undergone in the last four decades
  - presentations and discussions with speakers from the Chattanooga Sustainability Office, the Greater Chattanooga Hospitality Association's Green Committee, the University of Tennessee, Volkswagen Group of North America and Wacker Chemie AG
  - an inaugural pilot test ride of the Chattanooga bike sharing system Bike Chattanooga
  - field trip to the Volkswagen assembly plant and the offices of Green Spaces



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## Event Story

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## Contact Persons

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