

press release

Bologna, 4 January 2017

Hera is using solely renewable energy as of 2017

The multiutility company comes into line with the best practices of important international groups and, in accordance with EU objectives and the UN agenda, it guarantees that as of this year all activities managed in Emilia Romagna will be 100% fuelled by “clean” electricity.

The Hera Group is placing all its bets on clean electricity. Indeed, as of this year it will be the first multiutility company in Italy able to guarantee that it will use solely energy coming from renewable sources for all activities in Emilia-Romagna.

This is a fundamental step towards the “zero carbon footprint”, the result of a commitment that was made long ago and which places the Hera Group amongst Italy’s success stories in terms of saving energy resources and combating climate change, capable of anticipating and surpassing the guidelines set by the National Energy Strategy, by Brussels with the “Climate-Energy Package” and by the UN with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Plants, vehicles, technologies, processes: the annual energy consumption of all activities managed by Hera in Emilia Romagna in providing waste, energy and water management services amounts to 325 GWh. Thanks to the use of exclusively “clean” energy, it will be possible to avoid the emission into the atmosphere of 144 thousand tonnes of CO2 which would have been produced by fossil fuels: this is a fundamental result for the protection of the climate and air quality, which becomes even more important if we consider the continuous overruns of PM10 limits recorded in the Po Valley plain.

A few comparisons may help to give a better idea of the environmental benefits deriving from the achievement of this goal. For example, a 240 square kilometre forest would take roughly one year to absorb 144 thousand tonnes of CO2. In addition, 325 GWh corresponds to the annual consumption of more than 120,000 households and the energy required to fly from Milan to New York 1,174 times, or to fuel more than 60 thousand diesel automobiles for one year (each driving an average of 21 thousand km).

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Within the scope of the services provided by the Group, the sector most concerned by the achievement of this ambitious objective is that of the water cycle, which accounts for 90% of consumption, and for which maximum sustainability is thus guaranteed. Thus a virtuous path is embarked upon, thanks to investments 50% higher than the Italian average (Euro 127.2 million in 2015 alone), and excellent service levels have already been reached, from tap water quality to the 245 million plastic bottles that did not need to be produced or disposed of, also thanks to best practices enacted by the public.

By giving up all fossil fuels to support its operations, Hera thus adds another piece to the puzzle of the many initiatives it has put into place on the energy efficiency front. For example, this year, it expects to reduce annual consumption by 3% compared to consumption recorded in 2013, with the objective of reducing it by 5% in 2020.

This has been a widespread and continuous action which, by intervening extensively across plants and processes, has already enabled the Group's six companies to obtain the ISO 50001 certification for efficient energy management.

In first place amongst Italian utility companies in terms of the number of energy saving projects (278 since 2007), Hera provides an account of them every year in its "Valore all'energia" ("Valuing energy") report, which also includes other important indicators: from more than 676 thousand tonnes of oil equivalent saved (equal to the consumption of 475 thousand households) to the 1.3 million tonnes of CO2 avoided, in addition to the many municipalities in which Hera efficiently manages public lighting and the many third-party companies which partner with the multiutility company to obtain white certificates.

Indeed, numerous companies worldwide have embraced the cause of renewables: Apple, Coca-Cola, Facebook, Google, Ikea, Microsoft, Nestlé and Nike are just some of the international players participating in the RE100 campaign to promote initiatives for the consumption of energy exclusively from renewable sources.

"We have worked on this for some time now, and for us the achievement of this goal in 2017 represents a highly important accomplishment", affirms Stefano Venier, Hera Group CEO. "We are planning to apply this standard throughout our entire Group as soon as possible. Precisely because the fight against climate change is an increasingly urgent global priority", Venier continues, "as a responsible company we will do our part with the objective of further reducing our internal consumption while also continuing with our constant contribution to the sustainability objectives set by the UN agenda".