Brig-Glis – Future in small scale power plants
Observer of the project recharge.green
Alpine town of the year 2008
Host of the conference
“Swiss Energy Town” since 2000

1. Energy policy of the town

Brig-Glis aims for:
- a secure energy supply for all households, industry and business
- at low energy prices
by taking into account
- ecological aspects
- reduction of energy consumption and technical progress in energy production.

Main task: Reducing fossil energy needs and increasing local renewable energy production with small scale power plants. Brig-Glis invests in hydropower, solar power, and "use of low temperature energy sources (e.g. heat pump technologies)."

The label "Swiss Energy Town" is a certificate for quality in local environmental and energy politics. Measures to increase energy efficiency are a local area.
Audit takes place every 5 years ensure the quality level of local planning.

2. Current project: Drinking water-hydropowerplant

Together with the townships of Ried-Bris and Termer, Brig-Glis founded the "Drinking water compound and small scale power plant Simpion North" in 2012. The energy group EnBAGAG is part of the compound.
The drinking water-hydropower plant is realised by this partnership.
The complete realisation of the project is planned for 2016.
Concept:
Six drinking water springs are used for energy production.
The plant will provide energy for 1700 households (8.317 MWh) at Simpion mountain area (see figure 1). The area is located in a sensitive mountain environment, south of Brig-Glis at the Simpion mountain area (see figure 1).

3. Prevention of conflicts and involvement of citizens

- Detailed information brochure for citizens (see figure 3)
- Involvement of environmental organisations already at the beginning of the planning
- Possibility of raising appeals during the plan-approval procedure
- Vote for the admission of the project in all three townships: all citizens with voting power were allowed to give their vote. For the realisation, a majority of favourable votes in each township was necessary

Main motivation for the drinking water hydropower plant:
- Increase of secure energy supply (water shortages are a regular problem in late winter)
- Optimisation of drinking water supply
- Production of renewable energy
- Prevent drinking water shortages due to climate-change induced changes in the springs’ runoff

Reduction of harms to nature and historical heritage:
- Simpion North is a sensitive environment
- Contains dry grasslands and riparian areas of cantonal importance
- Historical Stockalperweg, an ancient trade route of the 17th century
- Importance of maintaining the ecological value and historical heritage
- Most water pipes are subterranean in order to reduce impacts on nature