



# The Green Bike Tour News

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## **Solar Bike Tour — Next Stop: Slovenia**

IOWA CITY, Iowa (Oct. 16, 2008) — Riders braved heavy rain in Slovenia on a Green Bike Tour that, while truncated by the weather, showed the promise of sustainable energy and brought a promise of another attempt next year in the European nation.

This was the sixth year since 1999 in which David Osterberg, executive director of the nonpartisan Iowa Policy Project, has led renewable energy enthusiasts on two-wheelers to illustrate the benefits and potential of sustainable energy technology.

As in past tours — which included a widely publicized foray through northern Europe in 2002 and other efforts in the Midwestern United States — bicyclists scheduled visits to renewable energy facilities, this time in a region of Slovenia just beyond the Italian border.

“This is the second Green Bike Tour that visited Europe,” Osterberg said. “Slovenia is not among the leaders in renewable energy in the European Union and bringing attention to the renewable resources available here may help push the government to be more aggressive. My students are excited about making a statement for clean energy that helps contain global warming.”

Joining Osterberg on the tour were students and professors from the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of Nova Gorica in Nova Gorica, Slovenia.

“We are happy to have our students participate in promoting renewable energy in Slovenia,” said Mladen Franko, head of the School of Environmental Sciences. “Students everywhere must realize that global warming is a threat to their future. They must take some action and also involve the general public to contain this world problem.”

Professor Franko was pleased with the event despite the rain and called it the first Slovenian tour, to be followed by another next year.

Osterberg, a clinical associate professor of occupational and environmental health at the University of Iowa, is on a temporary teaching assignment this month at the school. While the tour had planned to cover about 15 miles of that region of Slovenia, including a hydroelectric dam north of Slokan on the Soca River, the tour was shortened to about nine miles. Riders also had planned to meet with representatives of GOLEA-Goriska, a Local Energy Agency, which promotes renewable energy sources and systems, and wind energy.

“I have studied policy making here and in England,” said another professor, Romina Rodela. “When citizens get interested in an issue, politicians and policy makers do as well. The Green Bike Tour might spark interest in sustainable power here in Slovenia because students are involved.”

For more information about past Green Bike Tour events, visit <http://www.greenbike.org/>, or the Iowa Policy Project website <http://www.iowapolicyproject.org/>. The Green Bike Tour 2008 is sponsored by the Iowa Policy Project, the University of Iowa’s Environmental Health Sciences Research Center, and the Fred & Charlotte Hubbell Foundation.

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