

PRESS RELEASE



For immediate release

Brussels, January 10, 2007 - The European Hydrogen Association welcomes the publication of the Commission's Energy Package and its reference to the need for a "new industrial revolution" to reach the EU energy objectives of security of supply, sustainability and growth. Hydrogen is regarded as the energy vector that, together with fuel cell applications, could bridge the change from a fossil based to a sustainable energy and transport future and accelerate the use of renewable energy.

The development of a transparent internal energy market is mandatory for the commercialisation of new innovative technologies like hydrogen and fuel cell applications to ensure facilitated access to the existing net. Research and development of the contribution of hydrogen as a storage medium to balance the electricity grid and make electricity distribution more efficient should be encouraged.

The EHA supports the idea of a joint EU response to today's energy challenges as this is of particular importance to facilitate broad market access and to lower regulatory barriers for innovative technologies like hydrogen and fuel cells. The EHA with its national member associations reaches out to all corners of Europe to ensure that information on hydrogen developments reaches key decision makers to facilitate coordinated hydrogen infrastructure build up.

The EHA supports the Commission's efforts in increasing energy efficiency especially in transport. In Well to Wheel analysis hydrogen and fuel cells have demonstrated their high efficiency and impressive contribution to local emission reduction. The EHA encourages the Commission, the EU Parliament and EU Member States to facilitate big demonstration projects for hydrogen and fuel cells in the next few years to engage a broad range of private and public entities and rapidly bring these benefits to the citizens of urban areas that are suffering the most from effects of our current transport system.

The role of hydrogen as a storage medium for intermittent renewable energy, that could indeed accelerate the use of renewable energy and establish important alternatives to electricity grid upgrades, should be further pursued and included in the proposed Renewable Energy Roadmap.

Hydrogen and Fuel Cells are mentioned in the Package as one of the priorities of the Strategic Energy Technology Plan to "exploit their benefits in decentralised generation and transport". The EHA is committed to contribute to this important initiative and urges the Commission to ensure that the Technology Plan will be used as a comprehensive tool to assist national and local decision makers to make the most sustainable choices. The World Energy Technology Outlook that was also published by DG Research in the same week as the Energy Package includes a hydrogen scenario that would require less use of nuclear and fossil fuels than in the "carbon constraint alternative".

The EHA is looking forward to work with the Commission, the Member States, EU Parliament and other sustainable energy and transport organisations to embark on this new industrial revolution. Not to take us back to the "Coal, Steel and Euratom Treaties" but to move them forward with innovative European technologies to ensure "abundant clean energy at a cheaper price and at the disposal of all the world's economies".

The EHA is representing nine national associations (Association Française de l'Hydrogène, Associazione Italiana Idrogeno e Celle a Combustibile, Dutch Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Association, German Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Association, Hungarian Hydrogen Association, Norwegian Hydrogen Forum, Polish Hydrogen Association, Swedish H2 Forum and Spanish

Hydrogen Association) as well as the main hydrogen supply and distribution companies in Europe (Air Liquide, Air Products, Linde and BOC (that recently became part of the Linde Group), Norsk Hydro ASA, Acciona Biocombustibles S.A., Hydrogenics and Shell Hydrogen).

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