

PRESS RELEASE



For immediate release

The EHA salutes the EU Joint Undertaking for Fuel Cells and Hydrogen as an instrument to accelerate the market uptake of clean energy and transport applications.

October 15, 2008 in Brussels

The European Hydrogen Association, EHA, congratulates the European Commission and all industry and research stakeholders with the inauguration of the Joint Technology Initiative (JTI) for Fuel Cells and Hydrogen (FCH). Amidst a demonstration of fuel cell and hydrogen cars and buses and hydrogen refuelling stations, the hydrogen and fuel cell sector in Europe gathered together in Brussels for the take off of the first JTI for energy and transport technologies as a unique opportunity to accelerate the market for the first commercial applications, stimulate the development of local industry clusters and integrate these technologies on a large scale in urban settings to help reduce local emissions.

The current financial and energy and climate challenges will require vision and courage of EU, national and local decision makers to ensure that Europe will keep its role as market leader in many clean energy technologies, including hydrogen and fuel cells. The EHA is therefore urging the EU Commission, Parliament and Council to consider the consequences of new EU legislation on the market development of these technologies. Many dossiers that are currently being discussed in the EU Parliament and the Council of the EU affect the development of a commercial market for hydrogen and fuel cell applications. The Integrated Pollution and Prevention Control Directive for example does not yet include a facilitated authorisation procedure for small hydrogen reformers that are important components of the first hydrogen infrastructures.

The inclusion of big hydrogen production plants in Phase 3 of the EU Emission Trading System could potentially drive up the price of hydrogen during the deployment efforts of the JTI at a crucial time in building a market for hydrogen as an energy vector. The EHA therefore published a position paper (www.h2euro.org) stressing the need to consider the effect of EU's proposed legislation on the development of clean energy technologies that are actually contributing to the EU energy and transport policy goals.

The EU Strategic Energy Technology Plan is pointing out in its Technology Map that "...possible competition for primary energy sources for hydrogen production and other sectors of activities indicates a need for synergies and coordination between policies and industrial sector strategies". This is particularly true for powering an increasing number of electric cars. The use of fuel cells as efficient, clean power systems in electric vehicles can significantly extend the range of these cars in confrontation with conventional batteries. Powering the first commercial fuel cell vehicles will require an efficient hydrogen production and refuelling infrastructure. The EHA has published a short and comprehensive paper "Hydrogen and fuel cells as strong partners for renewable energy systems" that describes how to best use primary sources, as renewable energy, to develop a sustainable hydrogen supply chain. The paper is available on the EHA website at www.h2euro.org.

Bringing together as active members 14 national associations (BE, CH, DE, ES, F, H, IT, LV, N, NL, PT, PL, SE, UK) and the main hydrogen infrastructure development companies (Ajusa, Air Liquide, Air Products, ENI, the Linde Group, StatoilHydro, Shell Hydrogen), the EHA is actively promoting the integration of hydrogen applications in the EU's and national transport and energy policy. The EHA is also hosting the secretariat of the European Regions and Municipalities Partnership for hydrogen and fuel cells, HyRaMP, that is gathering 22 regions, fostering the deployment and uptake of hydrogen and fuel cell technologies in Europe. For further information on EHA and HyRaMP please contact: Marieke Reijalt, Executive Director, reijalt@h2euro.org Tanya Carre, Office Assistant, info@h2euro.org, Celine van Lierde, HyRaMP Office Assistant secretariat@hy-ramp.eu