



European Solar Thermal Technology Platform

European Solar Thermal Technology Platform Commences Work

Solar thermal energy is to play a vital role in the future energy supply

Berlin / Brussels, 21st November 06

49 percent of the European energy demand is used for heating and cooling purposes, a large part of which can be produced using solar thermal systems. The group of experts at the European Solar Thermal Technology Platform (ESTTP) are convinced of this. The platform was founded on May 30th in Brussels and begins work with a kick-off meeting on December 6th. Approximately 70 representatives from research institutions, companies and politics from all across Europe are expected in Brussels. The platform's goal is to define a vision for the comprehensive use of solar thermal energy in Europe in 2030 and to develop a corresponding research strategy for the upcoming years.

In a preliminary draft for the solar thermal vision 2030, the ESTTP set the goal of firmly establishing solar thermal energy as the standard technology for heating buildings. According to the scientists and companies, the standards in 2030 will see the majority of new buildings being heated exclusively using solar thermal energy and existing buildings being modernised with solar elements, thus allowing more than 50% of the heating requirements to be covered using solar energy. The costs for heating buildings using solar energy will continue to fall in the coming years and the proportion of solar thermal energy will considerably increase. Great potential is also seen in solar cooling, which employs refrigerating systems powered by solar thermal energy, and the industrial use of solar thermal energy.

"The ESTTP is making a significant contribution in accelerating the development of solar thermal energy usage and in systematically tapping into the enormous potential of solar thermal energy", says Gerhard Stryi-Hipp, Chairman of the Board of the ESTTP Steering Committee and Executive Board Member of the European Solar Thermal Industry Federation ESTIF. Networking and achieving a common orientation of research and developmental measures in politics, research institutions and the industry should unleash a new dynamic in solar thermal energy all across Europe. "The ESTTP will clarify the enormous potential of solar thermal energy", assures Gerhard Stryi-Hipp.

Up until now, solar thermal energy has only played a subordinate role in European and national research programmes. The Solar Thermal Technology Platform, which is supported by the European Commission, aims to considerably increase the quantity of research programmes. The goal is the international technology leadership of European companies. The assumption is that the results of the ESTTP will significantly influence the future research programmes in the solar thermal energy sector.

During the kick-off meeting on December 6th in Brussels, a current overview on the worldwide solar thermal energy market and the current research activities will be provided. In addition, the goal, structure and the work plan for the platform will be introduced. During the afternoon, the 3 focus groups on solar heat for residential buildings, solar thermal energy for commercial applications and for questions on market development and perspectives will commence their work. All interested parties from the industry, research and politics are invited and participation is free. Information and registration can be found at: www.esttp.org.

Contact: Uwe Brechlin, European Solar Thermal Technology Platform (ESTTP) c/o ESTIF, Renewable Energy House, Rue d'Arlon 63-65, 1040 Brussels / Belgium, Tel: +32-2-546 19 38, Fax: +32-2 546 19 39, uwe.brechlin@estif.org, www.esttp.org