



## Press Release

### World Hydrogen Energy Conference from 16 to 21 May in Essen

#### Minister Thoben: "Fuel cell and hydrogen technology from the EnergyRegion North Rhine-Westphalia is used world-wide"

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#### The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy of NRW announces:

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Düsseldorf/Essen. The 18th World Hydrogen Energy Conference / WHEC 2010 is to take place from 16 to 21 May 2010 on the trade fair site Messe Essen. The state of North Rhine-Westphalia supports the conference. Its objective is to ensure the continuing development of hydrogen as a source of energy on the road to a sustainable, climate-friendly energy economy. About 1500 participants from Germany and abroad are expected to attend this conference of top scientists from across the globe, with its accompanying trade fair and side events. It is also an integral part of the programme for the European Capital of Culture RUHR 2010. EnergyAgency.NRW is organising WHEC 2010.

Today (28 January) in Düsseldorf, Economic Affairs Minister Christa Thoben set out NRW's goals for the conference: "North Rhine-Westphalia already occupies a leading position in hydrogen and fuel cell technology. The state government supports a large number of research, development and demonstration projects being conducted by industry and science. To date approximately 90 projects with a total volume of 165 million euros have received funding to the tune of 100 million euros from the state and the European Union."

With the key project "NRW Hydrogen HyWay", the activities in the state are being intensified further," the Minister stated. The "HyWay" extends from the Aachen region via Cologne along the hydrogen pipeline right into the Rhine-Ruhr region and even further to the Münsterland region. It brings together a large number of projects planned and already in progress in the field of fuel cell and hydrogen energy technology. The state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the EU have made a further 60 million euros available for this purpose.

Minister Thoben: "We see the fuel cell as a potential major export suc-

cess story "made in North Rhine-Westphalia". From individual components through to whole plants, this technology is being developed and produced in the No. 1 Energy Region for use worldwide."

Dr. Frank-Michael Baumann, Director of the EnergyAgency.NRW and Manager of the EnergyEconomy Cluster "EnergyRegion.NRW", added: "The Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Network within the EnergyRegion.NRW has for decades played a special part in the expansion of energy technology competence in the state. The Network now has 360 members from North Rhine-Westphalia, the other German states and other countries. It is therefore the largest network dealing with this subject in Europe. At the same time it is a major factor for the location, which is confirmed by the fact that a number of foreign fuel cell companies have settled in NRW."

The Network's aim is to establish a new industrial segment through the targeted support for technical development and market preparation of hydrogen and fuel cell technology, including the necessary system components. With the accompaniment of purposeful research and development and the sustainable creation of a suitable hydrogen infrastructure, it is also intended to gradually open the mass markets in the mobile and stationary domains.

### **First day will give a clear message**

Hydrogen as a source of energy will be absolutely indispensable, especially with a view to a mobile future. "It fits ideally into the current discussion on electromobility and renewable energies", according to Prof. Dr.-Ing. Detlef Stolten of the Research Institute Jülich, who is chairman at the 18th World Hydrogen Energy Conference WHEC 2010. „The first WHEC conference day on 17 May 2010 will send out a clear message. It is then that we intend to involve political decision-makers and important representatives from the economy and industry in our endeavours as researches and developers so as to create a better understanding of the world of hydrogen." The WHEC 2010 has the major objective of spreading information on what is already being done with respect to hydrogen and on future innovative approaches to this topic.

### **Information for interested members of the general public as well**

With its high-ranking participants and its strategic and technological orientation, the WHEC 2010 is also arousing great interest abroad.

This is quite evident from the numerous registrations received for posters and papers and the presentations announced by countries and industrial exhibitors.

“But WHEC 2010 will also give interested members of the public insight into the future of energy with hydrogen applications”, according to Prof. Stolten. The comprehensive conference, which is being conducted in English, will be accompanied by an international specialist trade fair with the latest developments in the hydrogen sector and excursions to fuel cell locations in North Rhine-Westphalia. Other programme items planned include a Public Day on Sunday, 16 May, a Pupils' and Teachers' Day on 17 May and a Students' Day on 18 May. The visitors will be given the opportunity to test-drive fuel cell cars and to experience the noiseless and emission-free engine technology on a fuel cell boat on Lake Baldeney. In addition, the host city of Essen, as the European Capital of Culture RUHR 2010, will offer an extensive framework programme.

Internet: [www.energieregion.nrw.de](http://www.energieregion.nrw.de) and [www.whec2010.com](http://www.whec2010.com)