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Dear Members and Supporters of the RHC-Platform

The energy sector is going through an exciting time, in Europe and worldwide. Renewables are now clearly driving changes in the energy markets.

Unfortunately, the energy debate continues to focus on electricity, while renewable heating & cooling markets and technologies are still receiving too little attention. Therefore, the work of the RHC-Platform, as well as all other national and European institutions fighting for an enhanced awareness and support of our sector, remains very urgent.

Currently, the RHC-Platform is finalizing the shared Strategic Research Agenda. This is a very important document for the sector, since it will help to strengthen the position of renewable heating and cooling within the 8th research framework programme of the European Union, Horizon 2020.

The most important dates for the RHC-Platform panel members next year will be 22 and 23 April, when the annual conference will take place in Dublin. Where we will discuss the technological perspectives of RHC technologies, based on the outcome of the platform work over recent years. Therefore, I warmly invite every platform member to participate in this very important event for the sector.

With my best wishes for the Christmas season

Gerhard Stryi-Hipp
President, RHC-Platform



4th Annual Conference of the RHC-Platform

Dublin, 22 and 23 April 2013

The RHC-Platform is pleased to announce that it will be holding its fourth Annual Conference on 22 and 23 of April 2013 in Dublin, in conjunction with the informal EU Energy Ministers meeting (also taking place in Dublin) and under the auspices of the Irish Presidency of the European Union.

As Ireland will host the Presidency of the Council of the EU from January 2013, the Board selected Dublin as the ideal location for this year's conference. Ireland's efforts to progressively increase its renewable energy capacity and drive towards a low carbon economy was also an decisive factor in this choice.

Once again, leading experts from around Europe will gather to explore the renewable energy and technology options available to Smart Cities, as well as the benefits these bring to the local economy and, indeed and their impact on the quality of life of citizens.

Sessions and debates will afford participants a unique opportunity to learn about, and discuss, the latest trends

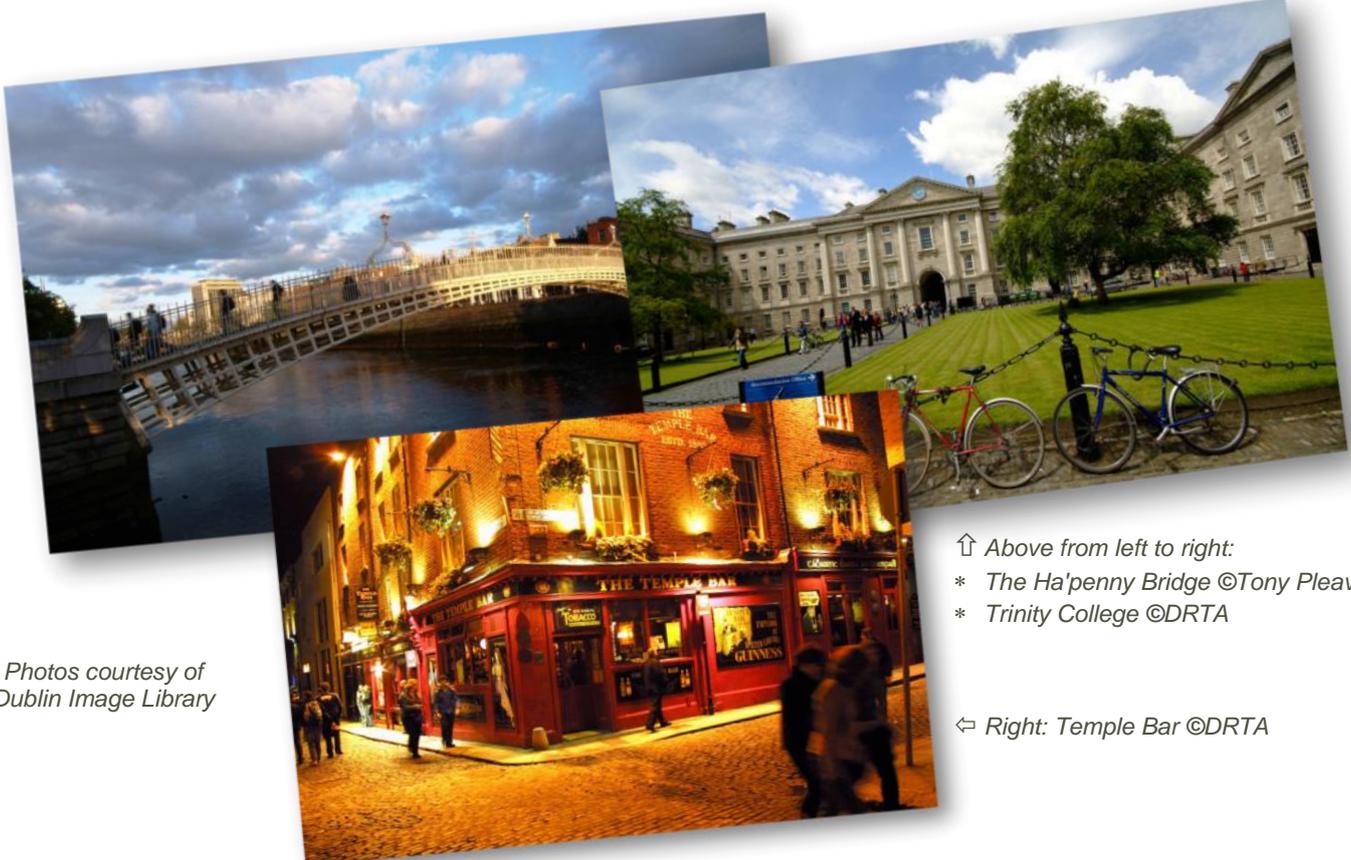
and developments in business models and financing, market structure and technological progress, and legal framework conditions. This debate will also be valuable for highlighting best practices. Given the success of previous conferences, this is a date not to be missed.



The 2013 conference also represents a fantastic opportunity to invite and engage effectively with senior officials from energy ministries of EU Member States and from the European Commission, as well as several Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) who

are likely to be in Dublin at the time of the conference.

The focus of the conference is to realize, at EU and national level, the potential of RHC for all renewable heating and cooling technologies, to provide a forum for stakeholders: manufacturers, utilities, academics, city planners, architects, policy makers and citizens. It also presents a great platform for those interested in creating a sustainable energy future on what promises to be a splendid occasion.



↑ Above from left to right:

- * The Ha'penny Bridge ©Tony Pleavi
- * Trinity College ©DRTA

⇐ Right: Temple Bar ©DRTA

Photos courtesy of
Dublin Image Library

RHC-Platform workshop « Fostering National Technology Platforms on Renewable Heating and Cooling »

On 5 September 2012 delegates from National Technology Platforms (NTPs) met in Brussels with RHC-Platform representatives to discuss how to foster platforms on renewable heating and cooling at national level, as well as promote a better coordination.

One of the RHC-Platform's objectives is to encourage greater research cooperation with, and between, Member States. In some Member States, NTPs have been set up to coordinate stakeholders at national level. NTPs are important vehicles to create synergies between the EU and Member States by providing an interface between policy-makers at the European level with policy-makers at the national and regional levels.

One of the main conclusions was that coordination between European, national and regional research and innovation policies is crucial to avoid the duplication of research efforts and to reduce fragmentation of the European Research and Innovation Area. Collaboration will also enhance networking and the transfer of information.

Finally, during the workshop the crucial role played by National Contact Points (NCPs) in the Framework Programmes was highlighted and it was proposed to begin a collaboration between [C-Energy+](#) and the RHC Platform, starting with a Memorandum of Understanding.

You can find the agenda, the meeting minutes and the presentations from the workshop [online](#).



RHC-Platform and EUROGIA+ sign Memorandum of Understanding

The RHC-Platform and EUROGIA+ have entered into a collaborative agreement to develop synergies for the mutual benefit of their respective industry and research stakeholders.

EUROGIA+ is a cluster of the EUREKA network, a decentralized intergovernmental initiative aimed at enhancing European competitiveness by supporting businesses, research centres and universities taking part in trans-national projects, in all areas of the energy mix - from renewable energy to efficiency - towards the reduction of fossil fuels' carbon footprint.

This collaboration was made official with a Memorandum of Understanding in which representatives of both the RHC-Platform and EUROGIA+ agreed to periodically exchange information on their respective activities and programmes, as well as to provide visibility for each other through their websites and events..

The RHC-Platform and EUROGIA+ will organize a joint information event in 2013, either in France or in Germany, and will also provide access to each other's full contact databases.

eurogia+



News from the Solar Thermal Technology Panel

The Steering Committee (SC) of the European Solar Thermal Technology Panel (ESTTP) of the RHC-Platform held its third meeting in 2012 on 1 October in Brussels.

Besides other important topics, the Steering Committee discussed the challenging situation in European solar thermal markets. There was a particular focus on the need to reduce costs of the installed systems, by developing simpler solutions, improving learning curves and economies of scale. New business models must be developed and enhanced monitoring services provided. To increase the attractiveness of solar thermal, transparency on the cost of solar heat per kWh must be improved as well. The joint work of industry and research sector on these points is seen as essential for the future growth of the industry and the ESTTP plays a crucial role in this process.

The representative from the RHC-Platform Cross-Cutting Technology Panel, Wolfram Sparber, leader of the 'Hybrid systems' focus group, presented the research priorities identified by their panel. A lot of benefits are expected from the development of hybrid systems including solar thermal, which could have a significant impact on the market in terms of costs, size and performance. For the solar thermal sector this is a market segment with potential, i.e. for stand-alone hybrid solutions that are easy to install and operate, with improved performance and lower energy production costs.

The ESTTP is now finalizing the Strategic Research Priorities for the solar thermal sector and contributing to the shared Strategic Research Agenda of the RHC-Platform. In 2013, the Implementation Roadmap will be elaborated with the support of subcontracted experts and the members of the European Solar Thermal Technology Panel. The input from the solar thermal industry is particularly crucial in the roadmap development.

The next meeting of the ESTTP Steering Committee is scheduled for 4 December, in Brussels.

For more information please contact: Pedro Dias, pedro.dias@estif.org



News from the Geothermal Technology Panel

The last meeting of the Geothermal Technology panel took place in Brussels on 4 September 2012. This meeting provided an excellent opportunity to learn more about the FP7 call published in July 2012.

DG Research presented the key points of the call. Later, EERA-JP (European Energy Research Alliance-Joint Programme) on geothermal and the geothermal panel of the RHC-Platform presented their views on the topic "*Exploration in deep geothermal.*" Some issues were addressed during the discussion, e.g. association with demonstration projects, composition and number of consortia etc.

In anticipation of the geothermal Implementation Roadmap, the participants also reviewed the results of various ongoing/recently concluded European geothermal R&D projects, for both shallow and deep geothermal. The Geothermal Technology Panel considers that it is important to disseminate the results of these projects, as well as to build future projects on the basis of these results.

You can find the meeting minutes and all the presentations in the Members area of the RHC-Platform website.

Creation of Working Group for the Implementation roadmap

It was decided, as a next step, to create two working groups (one for shallow geothermal and one for deep geothermal) in order to draft the Implementation Roadmap of the Geothermal Strategic Research Priorities (SRP).

The Implementation Roadmap aims at describing how the Panel plans to achieve its targets (activities and projects), its Vision for the development of the sector and the Strategic Research Priorities (SRP).

Members of the Geothermal Technology Panel interested in joining these working groups, please contact com@egec.org.

A workshop on the Geothermal Implementation Roadmap will be organised early 2013.



News from the Biomass Technology Panel

The Biomass Technology Panel of the RHC-Platform held its 4th Annual meeting on 10 October 2012 in Berlin, in collaboration with the 12th Pellets Industry Forum.

This event updated the Biomass Panel members on ongoing and upcoming activities, such as the implementation of the strategic research priorities. The second session was dedicated to funding opportunities for research in biomass to heat. Dr. Kai Sipila from VTT briefly presented biomass-related topics in ongoing FP7 calls.

These topics were illustrated by a presentation on the role of bioenergy in Smart Cities and Communities by Mr. Carsten Rothballer from ICLEI Europe, and on efficient supply chains for wood mobilization by Mr. Antti Asikainen from Metla.

The third session of the workshop was dedicated to industrial visions. In this session, the sector's leading industries presented their research strategies and projects requiring international cooperation. Mr. Alexander Weissinger from KWB, Mr. Bertil Wahlund from Elforsk, Mr. Jan J.M. Brouwers from Torr Coal and Mr. Matti Rautanen from Metso Power contributed to this session.



News from the Cross-cutting Technology Panel

As mentioned in the July newsletter, the Implementation Roadmap was an important feature of the last meeting of the Cross-cutting Panel Steering Committee (CCP SC), held on 1 October 2012.

The SC members decided that the Implementation Roadmap will describe in a realistic, specific and relevant manner, how to achieve targets consistent with Vision and the CCP Strategic Research Priorities published in April 2012. In order to demonstrate the industry's commitment, the CCP Implementation Roadmap will draw support from a broad range of public and private funding sources. The Roadmaps will cover an eight year period to 2020, being revised every two years.

The CCP Implementation Roadmap will use a combination of a top-down approach (quantifying costs of research areas and identifying all projects implemented in past years) and a bottom-up approach (extrapolating from R&D project budgets in each area since 2007 and using the market turnover of the single technologies as an indicator of investments).

In order to ensure consistency with regard to the activities performed, it was agreed to limit the time frame of projects with an official starting date from 1 January 2007 to date.

The first draft of the CCP Implementation Roadmap is expected in January 2013 and the final version could be launched at the annual conference of the RHC-Platform on 22-23 April 2013.

The last meeting of the CCP SC also saw the appointment of two new members with Simon Spoelstra of ECN succeeding his colleague Marco Bakker and, likewise, Velux Group representative Kurt Emil Eriksen being succeeded by Frank Hansen. Both appointments were approved unanimously.

Finally, all minutes and presentations from the last CCP SC meeting are available in the Members-Only area of www.rhc-platform.org. The SC will next convene for a web meeting on 21 November.



The event presentations are available in the members-only section of the RHC-Platform website.

News from the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform

The Second meeting of the Energy Supply and Networks Working Group (WG) took place on 22 October.

The meeting was intended to focus on collecting and selecting promising solutions, highlight key issues and questions and to identify existing initiatives and gaps in knowledge.

The WG also sought to contribute expert knowledge to four pre-selected Solution Proposals (SPs) and create a basis for developing these into Key innovations (KIs).

The pre-selected SPs covered four different concepts :

- A Virtual Power Plant/Energy Hub;
- Smart-Grids systems;
- An integrated approach to optimizing energy supply; and, finally,
- A Low-Carbon district heating and cooling (DHC). This focused on developing smart thermal grids with off-grid systems, low temperature DHC and renovating DHC systems to integrate RES Heating and Cooling. Its objectives is to de-carbonizing DHC systems, offering fair competition within the heating and cooling sector. In addition, the proposal presented ideas to be developed for combining smart electricity and thermal grids, using primarily underground storage.

The Solutions Proposals were presented and discussed, with consideration given to technology, business models, and governance and planning. Expertise was sought in formulating the KI documents, and the input of WG members is now being processed to identify the essential elements on which the KIs will focus.

Based on this input, volunteers for contributions to the KIs will begin elaborating them before 21 February 2013, date of the next WG meeting.



Smart Cities
and Communities

The Energy Efficiency and Buildings WG held their second meeting on 6 November. In the lead up to the meeting, the WG set about approaching experts across Europe to submit SPs. The SPs were presented on the website with a view to connecting SPs with potentially interested locations.

The objective of the second meeting was to consolidate a limited number of pre-selected SPs into KIs that will populate the emerging Smart City roadmap. WG members were given the opportunity to exchange knowledge and expertise in order to formulate innovative new Smart Cities strategies and solutions.

The meeting took the form of interactive workshops, allowing members to share expertise for developing the KIs templates. The workshops operated in a rotating break-out format enabling a variety of perspectives and expertise to contribute to the KIs.

These four proposals have been detailed and communicated to the Working group on Finance for the elaboration of a financing plan.

The Working Group on Finance is scheduled to meet on 14 December and shortly afterwards, in January 2013, a draft 'funding strategy' for Smart Cities will be published. The Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform Annual Conference will take place on 5 and 6 June 2013 in Budapest.

More information at
<http://www.eu-smartcities.eu>

Debate on “Energy Technology Perspectives 2012: Heating and Cooling – the Missing Link”

Upon invitation from **Euroheat & Power**, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), Commission officials and RHC-Platform stakeholders gathered in the European Parliament on 6 November 2012 for a debate hosted by MEP Peter Liese.



Starting point for a lively debate were presentations by IEA representatives Markus Wrake and Araceli Fernandes Pales on the role of heat in the future energy system, followed by a presentation from Prof. Sven Werner, Halmstad University, on solutions for the future energy system as identified by the first pre-study “Heat Roadmap Europe 2050”.

According to the scenarios presented by the IEA in its new publication “ETP 2012”, world decision makers are failing to tap technologies’ potential to create a clean energy future. Against this backdrop, it is worrying to see how little attention the heating and cooling sectors receives from policy makers.

Renewable energy technologies and energy efficient infrastructure such as district heating and cooling can turn affordable clean energy from aspiration into reality. “*The longer we wait to transform our energy system, the more expensive it will get*”, said Dr. Wrake.

For further information, please contact:

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or

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Presentations can be found [here](#)

Forthcoming events

- **4 December 2012**
Meeting of the Solar Thermal Technology Panel
Brussels (BE)
- **17 January 2013**
Board meeting of the RHC-Platform
Brussels (BE)
- **14 March 2013**
Steering Committee meeting of the Solar Thermal Technology Panel
Brussels (BE)
- **22 & 23 April 2013**
Annual Conference of the RHC-Platform
Dublin (IE)

Publisher



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