

## **European Commission Statement**

The European Commission (EC) welcomes the establishment of the IPHE as an international forum to exchange information, consolidate knowledge and collaborate on the development of hydrogen technologies, with the goal of accelerating the market introduction of hydrogen as an energy vector. The EC views hydrogen and fuel cells as an important elements of future sustainable energy systems, enabling diversification of energy supply, and reducing the environmental impact of energy consumption, particularly as regards global climate change. To this end it seeks to emphasise the important role hydrogen can play in introducing renewable energy sources - especially into the transport chain.

The Implementation and Liaison Committee (ILC) has an important role to play in identifying common international goals and milestones in the pathway to the hydrogen economy. It should aim to identify the scope of collaborative actions that can bring added value from international level cooperation, and the scale and types of action that would be necessary to achieve the IPHE goals.

In this regard the EC considers that deepening international co-operation on research and demonstration in the areas of hydrogen production, distribution, storage, and system integration will yield mutual benefits. The EC also seeks collaboration to improve understanding of hydrogen safety issues and on pre-normative research to underpin the development of global regulations, codes and standards. Collaboration on fundamental functional materials research to achieve breakthrough for fuel cell development and hydrogen storage should also be explored, given their potential to optimise the efficient use of (expensive) hydrogen. Socio-economic research is also important to improve understanding of the impact of hydrogen energy systems on society, and explore the consequences of policy measures. Sharing experiences of demonstrations and performance benchmarking will also help establish the cost-effectiveness of hydrogen energy systems to achieve shared political and environmental goals. In principle, collaboration should build on established bilateral agreements, institutions such as the IEA and international standards making bodies. The IPHE should catalyse and dynamically push existing cooperation channels and complement them when necessary.

Following a High Level Group advise the EC has established a Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technology Platform. The platform will contribute to the development of a European strategy for research and deployment of hydrogen and fuel cells technologies. The key European industrial partners and other stakeholders are represented in the platform. The European Commission hydrogen and fuel cells activity embraces more than 70 on-going EU funded projects representing a total investment of about 300M€ Over the last year the Commission has allocated some 100M€to new shared cost fuel cell and hydrogen research and demonstration projects through its multi-annual research framework programmes. European Member States are equally funding an important number of research and demonstration activities. This collective activity at EU level will be at the basis for the EU's contribution to the IPHE collaborative research & technology development activities.

The rules for participation in European projects funded under the Framework Programme for Research and Development, provide for participation by non-EU undertakings, generally without EU financial support for developed industrial economies. However, where special agreements exist, for example with certain developing nations and CIS countries, there are possibilities for financial support. The Commission has already entered into Science and Technology agreements with most of the IPHE partners. It aims to build on these bilateral agreements to provide additional contributions to the IPHE activities. Countries like Norway and Iceland are associated partners to these RTD activities.

The European Technology Platform will stimulate the development public-private partnership to implement its research agenda and deployment strategy. This will represent new opportunities for research and demonstration of H<sub>2</sub> energy systems. In this context, the Growth Initiative presented by the Commission in November 2003 has identified two possible “Quick Start” initiatives in the field of hydrogen focussing in its clean production and its use in communities representing a total investment of 2.8B€