

SCANDINAVIAN PARTNERSHIP PLANS FOR HYDROGEN AS VEHICLE FUEL

Copenhagen, 12 June 2006 - *Hydrogen fuelled vehicles, with nothing but water coming out of the exhaust pipe, will be on Scandinavian roads by 2012. This is the ambition of a newly formed partnership, aiming to establish a network of hydrogen refuelling stations throughout the south-west of Scandinavia.*

The formation of the *Scandinavian Hydrogen Highway Partnership* (SHHP) was today announced as the three hydrogen networking bodies of HyNor (Norway), Hydrogen Link (Denmark) and HyFuture (Sweden) rendezvoused in Copenhagen for its inaugural meeting. The three organisations are each representing a network of actors from industry, local government, universities and other organisations in each respective country.

The SHHP vision is to make the Scandinavian region one of the first regions in Europe where hydrogen is commercially available and used in a network of refuelling stations. The formation of the partnership is a move to strengthen the ability for Scandinavian entrepreneurs and enterprises to take advantage of this emerging technology as well as a contribution to the progress towards a more sustainable society.

The newly formed partnership also took the opportunity to declare its intention to qualify as one of the European Commission's Hydrogen Lighthouse Projects. These super-sized demonstration projects are planned to be cornerstones in the EC-strategy for preparing the market for hydrogen as an energy carrier, in particular as a vehicle fuel. Scandinavia is in a strong position to add value and play an active part in implementing this strategy.

"In light of the European Commission's significant commitment to hydrogen, the time has come for Scandinavia to step up to the challenge of gradually introducing the zero-emission transport systems of tomorrow," said Mr Ulf Hafsel, Project Manager of HyNor and Business Development Manager, Norsk Hydro.

The initial focus will be on South/South East of Norway, the Swedish west coast and Denmark, however it is expected that additional regions in Scandinavia will be included as the partnership evolves. Strategic alliances will be established with other international regions, countries and initiatives.

The strength of hydrogen is fully realised when used in a fuel cell stack – a device able of effectively transforming hydrogen into electricity - without any noise and with only water and heat as by-products. Further, hydrogen is renowned for its flexibility as to how it is produced. Practically any form of energy can be turned into hydrogen, obviously at differing costs. The technical challenges today lies in improving the durability of the fuel cell stacks, reducing the size of the hydrogen storage and to make the complete system cost-efficient enough to compete with traditional technology.

"When looking at ways to reduce our dependence on oil in the transport sector, hydrogen's ability to be generated from any renewable energy source becomes instantly attractive. As an example, it is easily envisaged that surplus production of energy from our Danish wind power plants could be transformed into hydrogen to fuel a wide range of vehicles, beginning with smaller non-road vehicles and ending with cars and busses," said Mr Mikael Sloth, Project Manager of Hydrogen Link and Business Development Manager, H2Logic.

Applying a collaborative and open approach, the SHHP looks not only to leverage synergies between the different hydrogen related activities in the region, but also with other technologies.

"The fast take up of green cars fuelled by biogas, natural gas or ethanol in Sweden, has shown that the consumer is ready to move away from petrol. As this evolution continues, it is of great importance that we ensure that the successful roll-out of today's alternative fuels is done in a way that prepares well for the future introduction of hydrogen as vehicle fuel," said Mr Sven Wolf, Project Manager of HyFuture and Manager of the Hydrogen Group, ETC Battery and FuelCells Sweden.

Additional information on the Scandinavian Hydrogen Highway Partnership can be found at www.scandinavianhydrogen.org

About HyNor (Norway)

HyNor is a unique Norwegian joint public/private partnership initiative to demonstrate real life implementation of hydrogen energy infrastructure along a route of 580 km from Oslo to Stavanger during the years 2005 to 2009. The project comprises all steps required to develop a hydrogen infrastructure and includes various hydrogen production technologies and uses of hydrogen, in all cases with an adaptation to local conditions. The overall objectives of the HyNor project are to demonstrate the commercial viability of hydrogen energy production, hydrogen's use in the transportation sector, and the development of a hydrogen infrastructure.

Additional information on HyNor can be found at www.hynor.no

About Hydrogen Link (Denmark)

Hydrogen Link is Denmark's network platform for research, development and demonstration of hydrogen technologies for transportation. The Hydrogen Link network is to initiate and coordinate the development of a Danish infrastructure of hydrogen filling stations and a widespread use of fuel cell vehicles, beginning with vehicles for internal transportation and in the long term vehicles for road transport.

Additional information on Hydrogen Link can be found at www.hydrogenlink.net

About HyFuture (Sweden)

With the mission of facilitating the introduction of hydrogen as an energy carrier in Sweden, HyFuture is coordinating a collaborating network of more than 100 organisations representing industry, SMEs, academia, NGOs as well as local, regional and national authorities. As a non-profit organisation, HyFuture is adding value to the Swedish hydrogen innovation system through market and technology surveys, information activities, networking events, think tanks and the participation in pre-studies and demonstration projects. The HyFuture initiative (in Swedish known as SamVäte i Väst) was started in 2003 by the Region of Västra Götaland.

Additional information on HyFuture can be found at www.hyfuture.eu

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