

## Press Release

### **Hydrogen & fuel cells - energy supplier of the future: Interview with WHEC organizer and f-cell event organizer, Peter Sauber**

**The World Hydrogen Energy Conference (WHEC) in Essen has just ended; the fuel cell specialist forum f-cell ([www.f-cell.de](http://www.f-cell.de)) starts in Stuttgart in September. In an interview, Peter Sauber, CEO of the Peter Sauber Agentur Messen und Kongresse GmbH, who was a co-organizer of the WHEC and will be hosting the f-cell together with the Wirtschaftsförderung Region Stuttgart GmbH (economic promotion - WRS), says: "There is agreement worldwide that hydrogen has to be used as an energy carrier more intensively in future." From the middle of the decade onwards, the first hydrogen-driven fuel cell vehicles and heaters are to be available. An important task now is to provide information to consumers.**

Mr. Sauber, you have just come from the World Hydrogen Energy Conference, WHEC, in Essen, which you organized on behalf of the EnergieAgentur.NRW (energy agency). What did you get from the WHEC?

**Peter Sauber:** What I found particularly important was the strong attendance by high-ranking politicians and representatives of the business world. The Federal Minister of Transport, Peter Ramsauer, and the Premier of Northrhine-Westphalia, Jürgen Rüttgers, spoke out in favor of a future hydrogen economy, as did the Chairman of the Board of Directors at Daimler, Dieter Zetsche, and Wolfgang Reitzle, Chief Executive of Linde AG. This provides clear signals that are also perceived by the public. It was also interesting to note the strong commitment on the part of the state of Northrhine-Westphalia to hydrogen and fuel cells. The prevailing conditions there are also particularly good: In his speech, Jürgen Rüttgers stressed that The World Hydrogen Energy Conference (WHEC) in Essen had just ended when the fuel cell specialist forum f-cell ([www.f-cell.de](http://www.f-cell.de)) started with the hydrogen that is created in the industrial companies of his state alone.

Very few people are aware of the fact that Northrhine-Westphalia already has a 240-kilometer-long hydrogen pipeline leading from Leverkusen to the east of the Ruhr region. Within the framework of the project "NRW Hydrogen HyWay" - for which the state, the federal government, and the EU are jointly providing 200 million euro - the infrastructure, fleet of vehicles, and stationary systems are now to be expanded with a specific aim in mind.

Isn't the supply with hydrogen as an energy carrier mainly a project that is being driven by only a small number of large companies and countries?

**Peter Sauber:** No, not at all. The WHEC in Essen made clear once again that there is agreement worldwide regarding the enormous potential hydrogen has as an energy storage medium – and we have to leverage this potential. For example, the Chinese Minister for Science, Gang Wan, reported on activities in his country. However, the WHEC also demonstrated impressively that an incredible number of smaller countries and companies are active in order to exploit their opportunities in this market. Hydrogen is ideal for the intermediate storage and transport of energy everywhere energy is produced from wind power, solar radiation, or other regenerative sources that deliver an uneven yield. Fuel cells then convert the chemical energy in the hydrogen back into power or heat. The focus is on fuel cells at the annual international fuel cell specialist forum f-cell in Stuttgart in September. At the WHEC, we were able to promote the f-cell and establish useful contacts. This will help us to further enhance the international profile of the f-cell.

What will be the highlights among the lectures for visitors to the f-cell in 2010?

**Peter Sauber:** A total of more than 70 lectures will provide outstanding insights into fuel cell activities worldwide. They will cover projects from neighboring European countries such as Denmark and Italy, Asian activities in China, Japan, and Korea, and examples from the USA and Canada. There will be lectures by representatives from companies that already have products on the market or are carrying out practical tests and are about to launch products onto the market, but also some that mainly involve enhancements to the technology. The lectures by our Japanese speakers from Toshiba and Panasonic regarding stationary fuel cells in the area of household energy supply promise to be particularly interesting. We have also been able to find well-known speakers from Daimler, Toyota, Renault/Nissan, and

Mitsubishi who will provide us with information on mobile applications in vehicles. This year, by the way, we wish to cover electromobility in general and not simply vehicles with fuel cells. There is also more technical progress: At the f-cell, for example, Ziv Gottesfeld of the Israeli company CellEra will report on the development of a platinum-free fuel cell. This is of course good news, as the use of platinum and other materials in fuel cells leads to the – still – high costs of the systems.

Mr. Sauber, with the f-cell you have now been accompanying this line of industry for ten years now. What has taken place during this period and, in your opinion, how will things continue?

**Peter Sauber:** An incredible amount has taken place during this period. There has been a lot of exciting progress in the technology, most of which went unnoticed by the general public, often creating the impression that fuel cells were no longer an issue. In 2008, this changed instantly with the introduction of the National Innovation Program for Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technology (NIP) and the National Organization for Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technology (NOW), which was founded to implement the program. The topic was given a further boost last year when, under the auspices of Daimler, large vehicle manufacturers agreed to place several hundred thousand fuel cell vehicles on the roads by 2015. This formed the basis for the H2 Mobility initiative, which will work on establishing the corresponding hydrogen filling station infrastructure by the same date. It is now the joint task of the industry to keep hydrogen and fuel cells at the center of public discussions and to provide the required information. If customers are to purchase the first fuel cell vehicles and heaters from the middle of the decade onwards, they must know something about the technology in order to be able to trust it. As organizers of the congress, we can make a contribution here.

**More information on the internet:**

f-cell, September 27 - 28, 2010, in Stuttgart: [www.f-cell.de](http://www.f-cell.de)

WHEC, May 16 - 21, 2010, in Essen: [www.whec2010.com](http://www.whec2010.com)

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Wirtschaftsförderung  
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Peter Sauber, CEO of the Peter Sauber Agentur Messen und Kongresse GmbH, Stuttgart, and event organizer of the fuel cell specialist forum f-cell ([www.f-cell.de](http://www.f-cell.de)).

Photo: Peter Sauber Agentur

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