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Iceland proceeds towards hydrogen fuel

Transportation with hydrogen from renewable energies instead of Diesel

Politics and economy in Iceland keep pursuing their objective to create the first hydrogen economy in the world and to finally convert the whole transportation sector of the country to hydrogen fuel made on the basis of renewable energies. This was heard on 20. October in Berlin during the inauguration of the new [Icelandic embassy](#) by the President of the republic Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson. Iceland's ambassador in Germany, Ingimundur Sigfússon, plays an important role in the project, in particular in the contacts with German partners.

Project participants say that the work is proceeding according to schedule. The various subtasks are in different stages. They are:

- Introduction of fuel cell buses running on hydrogen in Reykjavik,
- introduction of fuel cell cars for individual transportation, possibly with methanol as initial fuel,
- production and distribution of hydrogen,
- possibilities to produce and distribute other hydrogen carriers (like methanol), and
- use of fuel cells for the fishing fleet.

The Reykjavik bus project with initially three vehicles is closest to realization. The project planning for this is the most advanced, and possibilities for financing and funding are considered. Apart from technical matters also economical feasibility and public acceptance will be investigated. The results will be the basis for the decision of the Icelandic side whether and how fast the fleet of 180 buses in Reykjavik will be converted.

Converting the fishing fleet to hydrogen fuel will take more time because the demands to the reliability of the storage method are higher than usual for a vessel which may be on sea for weeks.

Background: Iceland has no fossil fuels except some peat, but a vast amount of renewable energies, in particular geothermal energy and hydropower. Stationary devices are supplied almost exclusively from these sources. Even the streets of Reykjavik are heated. Nevertheless the country imports about one third of its total energy consumption as mineral oil products to supply cars, buses and fishing boats.

In order to change this, the the whole public and private transportation will finally be converted from conventional fuels to hydrogen generated by means of renewable energies.

This will also be an Icelandic contribution to the reduction of the CO₂ emissions.

On 17. February a cooperation agreement about the founding of a joint venture called "Icelandic New Energy Ltd." was signed in Reykjavik. Half of the shares amounting to 1 million \$ are held by the Icelandic group Vistorka hf. (EcoEnergy Ltd.), the other equally by [DaimlerChrysler](#), [Norsk Hydro](#), and [Royal Dutch/Shell](#). The new company will investigate various applications for hydrogen fuel cells and other methods to carry hydrogen. One of them could be the buses of Reykjavik, another the important Icelandic fishing fleet which is responsible for about 30 % of the country's oil import.

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