

GEOELEC promotional workshop Germany, Essen, 11/11/ 2013

Introduction

The German promotional workshop "*Geothermal Electricity (GEOELEC)*", hosted by the Helmholtz Centre Potsdam German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ), Energie Baden Württemberg (EnBW), the Institute of Energy Economics and Rational Use of Energy (IER) and the Lawyer's Office Gaßner, Groth, Siederer & Coll (GGSC) was held in Essen, on the 11th of November 2013.

The programme highlighted the results of the GEOELEC project as well as current developments within the German geothermal electricity market. Invited speakers from industry and research presented their experiences from ongoing geothermal projects, public authorities and private consultants informed about financial and legal issues in Germany.

Key issues

David Bruhn (GFZ), from the programme office of the Joint Programme of Geothermal Energy within the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA), gave an overview about the framework for research initiatives on deep geothermal technology in the European context. Burkhard Sanner, President of the European Geothermal Energy Council (EGEC), presented the GEOELEC project, its goals and key results. A special emphasis was given on the geothermal resource map developed by TNO (Netherlands) for the European continent.

Session I titled "*Risk communication or crisis communication?*" provided the basis for a controversial discussion about public acceptance of geothermal technology, which is actually a sensitive issue, not only in Germany. The lecturers presented practical background from empirical studies published within the GEOELEC project as well as experiences from geothermal projects in Brühl (NRW) and Bernried (Bavaria). Lasse Wallquist, Stiftung Risiko-Dialog Switzerland explained how a fair and faithful dialogue can help to manage critical situations with the public using the St. Gallen project as an example.

Session II focused on specific aspects of "*Project development and implementation*". Harald Asum from GGSC presented the design of a simulation software, which was developed within the GEOELEC project to help with a first calculation of costs and profitability of a geothermal project. Further presentations gave insight into risk assessment and risk control as well as into the approval procedure of geothermal projects.

Session III presented "*Practical experiences of power plant operators*". The technical manager of the power plant Unterhaching (Bavaria), Dirk Rosemeier, spoke about the results of the recent general revision after five years of operation. The manager of the geothermal plant in Bruchsal, Rolf Ottenschläger, gave an overview of the daily procedures and problems encountered in the operation of a geothermal power plant, followed by a talk by Julia Scheiber from GEIE at Soultz-sous-Fôrets on the reduction of scaling through inhibitors. The final discussion about the barriers in the field of project development and implementation provided interesting facts and food for thought.

Evaluation summary

The workshop was met with great interest by the German geothermal community, 50 participants from industry, research institutions and public authorities were registered. The composition of the programme and the quality of the talks received positive feedback. The workshop had an interactive approach, which was perceived as a valuable aspect, allowing participants to discuss and share experience on the various issues. So the workshop was a good platform for the transfer of knowledge and technology from research into industry and vice versa, showing the multifaceted technical and social challenges for an environmental-friendly use of geothermal electricity.

The presentations of the workshop will be available for download on the GEOELEC website.