IRISH ENERGY STORAGE ASSOCIATION

IESA Calls for National Green Hydrogen Strategy

PRESS RELEASE

21 July 2020: The Irish Energy Storage Association (IESA) welcomes the UCD Energy Institute's call for the development of a National Hydrogen Strategy in their recent Paper entitled "*A National Hydrogen Strategy is needed to develop Ireland's Hydrogen potential".* IESA supports this call and urges the new Minister to establish a Hydrogen Task Force as a matter of priority to develop such a strategy – but with the focus clearly on Green Hydrogen.

Recently, the Programme for Government has referenced green hydrogen and highlighted the need to 'invest in research and development in "green" hydrogen (generated using excess renewable energy) as a fuel for power generation, manufacturing, energy storage and transport'. The next logical step for the Government is the development of a National Green Hydrogen Strategy.

Hydrogen is a highly versatile energy source and has the scope to play a key role in transforming the energy scenario and moving to a zero-carbon economy by 2050. To date, over 99% of the world's hydrogen production has been derived from fossil fuels, but the scope for largescale production of green hydrogen is a growing reality in the coming decades with the development of large offshore windfarms.

In the past two weeks the European Commission has launched its strategy document entitled *"A hydrogen strategy for a climate-neutral Europe"* in which it states "hydrogen [is] essential to support the EU's commitment to reach carbon neutrality by 2050 and for the global effort to implement the Paris Agreement while working towards zero pollution". This follows similar hydrogen strategies from the Netherlands, Germany and Portugal as well as from China, Japan and Australia.

Green Hydrogen is seen as having a pivotal role for decarbonising economies and could be one of the most important solutions for clean energy. It is an area where Europe is still leading so there is an opportunity for Ireland to fully engage and play an important and growing role at the cutting edge of R&D in green hydrogen technology. Indeed, it is incumbent on Ireland to engage in this work from an early stage and ensure it is not left behind.

Further afield, the Green Hydrogen Coalition (GHC) in California has recognised the important role green hydrogen will play in the future, and where it is making huge strides in R&D. Some of this research is highlighting the significant role green hydrogen can play in the decarbonisation of the energy sector.

Green hydrogen's versatility and wide range of uses is part of what makes it so appealing in Ireland's future energy portfolio. It provides an opportunity to decarbonise transport and heat at scale, while also enabling higher integration of renewables on the electricity system. At times of surplus renewable energy (wind, solar and ocean) green hydrogen can be produced and stored and then used to generate electricity when demand exceeds supply from other sources. Furthermore, green hydrogen can be stored not just in pressurised tanks but also in the national gas grid, thereby somewhat reducing the need for very high voltage electricity transmission wires. This allows the electricity and gas grids to be coupled, enabling an integrated energy supply throughout the island of Ireland.

In conclusion, we again welcome the UCD Energy Institute's call for the development of a National Hydrogen Strategy, and we urge the new Minister to establish a Hydrogen Task Force to formulate such a strategy as a matter of priority – but with the focus clearly on green hydrogen. The Irish Energy Storage Association believes that immediate action is required from the Irish Government if we are not to be left behind by our fellow EU-Members and the wider global economy in this rapidly developing hydrogen economy.

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