



As a reaction to the seismic events in the surrounding of the Basel DHM project, and to the subsequent public discussion, the Swiss Geothermal Association / Géothermie.CH, member of EGEC, has issued a press release on January 19, 2007. This press release is given here below in a translation by EGEC:

After the setback for the Geothermal Project in Basel the Swiss Geothermal Association SVG calls for a national research program dedicated to research and application of deep geothermal energy.

The insufficient experience and scientific knowledge that became obvious after the earthquake happening in the Deep Heat Mining geothermal project in Basel highlighted the necessity of a broad research program concerning electric power generation from deep, hot rocks. The use of deep geothermal energy, scarcely investigated and developed up to now, must be supported more. Advantages and risk of geothermal energy shall be evaluated diligently. This states a decision of the Committee of the Swiss Geothermal Association SVG at its meeting on January 17, 2007.

Geothermal heat offers a huge potential for future energy supply. It can contribute a considerable amount to sustainable electric power production. Geothermal heat is free of CO₂, renewable, always available, and it does not produce waste. In the light of a dooming electric power gap, geothermal energy has a particular role among the renewable energies.

The geothermal project in Basel, however, proves that there is still a substantial need for research. Hence GEOTHERMIE.CH demands that efforts are made fast and determined, in order to create the basis for a successful use of this energy resource. Because nature cannot be investigated in the laboratory or at the computer only, full-scale research plants need to be part of it. In consequence, a national research project "Geothermal Energy" is needed urgently.

Mass media, politics and society have high expectations towards deep geothermal energy. However, the use of deep geothermal energy for electric power production is hardly tested – other than the use of shallow geothermal energy for heating through borehole heat exchangers (100-300 m depth) and heat pumps. To develop the technology of power production with geothermal heat into industrial maturity, the construction of further pilot- and test-plants is required. Similar efforts were necessary in the past in order to develop nuclear energy technologies. Deep Heat Mining and the so-called Hot Fractured Rock process are only slightly tested on a world-wide scale, and little is known today about their possibilities and impact. The development of this technology is one of the big challenges for the future.

Published Januar 19, 2007

Contact:

President: Dr.sc.nat.Kathy Riklin,Nationalrätin,Tel.+41 44 210 32 38, +41 79 272 74 76

Secretary:Dr.phil.-nat.Roland Wyss,Tel.+41 52 721 79 00, +41 79 410 79 07

GÉOTHERMIE.CH

