

New International Collaboration on Separation Technologies

New collaboration on separations technology R&D is being established under the aegis of the International Energy Agency. The new project's interim Executive Committee, which will manage the work, met on 3-4 December at the Energy Research Centre of the Netherlands. Participants discussed possible collaboration in three areas: thermal drying, distillation and membranes.

Thermal Drying: Work on energy-efficient drying technologies will likely start with two parallel activities:

- an energy audit of drying processes in industries of interest to participating countries, together with the benchmarking of selected dryers, and
- the development of a computerised database covering case studies, dryer selection software, advanced and emerging drying technologies, and completed and on-going drying projects.

The area leader is Dr. Tadeusz Kudra (tkudra@nrcan.gc.ca) of CANMET Energy Diversification Research Laboratory, Natural Resources Canada.

Distillation: Five areas were identified as being of most interest in distillation:

- heat-integrated distillation columns,
- hybrid processes,
- flow imaging/measuring techniques,
- energy audits and benchmarking,
- reactive distillation.

A detailed proposal for work will be developed in connection with a Distillation and Absorption Conference scheduled for September 2002 in Baden-Baden, Germany. The area leader is Dr. Žarko Olujic (z.olujic@wbmt.tudelft.nl) of the Energy Research Centre of the Netherlands.

Membranes: Work will likely start with two tasks:

- the creation of a database on membranes and their characteristics, and
- the identification of R&D needs.

To proceed toward establishment of a database, a questionnaire will be circulated to membrane and equipment manufacturers and users. A roadmapping activity may be initiated, as may energy audits and benchmarking. The questionnaire will be developed in a meeting in July 2002 in Toulouse, in connection with the International Congress on Membranes and Membrane Processes (ICOM2002). The area leader is Dr. Ashwani Kumar (ashwani.kumar@nrc.ca) of the National Research Council of Canada.

The project's interim Executive Committee members are from Canada, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands. The Committee is chaired by Jean Paquette of Natural Resources Canada's Energy Diversification Research Laboratory.

Interest in joining the collaboration has been expressed by IEA Members Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Japan, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Non-IEA members Poland and Russia have also manifested interest.

The next meeting will most likely be held in late 2002. Please contact the area leaders above if you would like more information, would like to help shape the collaboration or wish to be kept informed as the collaboration develops.

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