



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
RESEARCH DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate K - Energy
New and renewable energy sources

Brussels,
RTD AP/cl D(2008)

Dear participants of the APOLLON workshop,

My name is Andreas Piontek and I am the EC Project Officer for the APOLLON project. Unfortunately, I am unable to join you in Cyprus for this important APOLLON workshop, due to a prior commitment. Although I can't be there with you, I wanted to write a few words with the intention of providing an 'energy policy framework' around your workshop.

As you may know, in January 2008 the European Council adopted the Commission's proposals for mandatory targets for 2020 of reducing CO₂ emissions by 20% (of 1990 levels) and increasing the share of renewable energy to 20% our energy mix. Furthermore, these targets should also be seen as interim targets, and our efforts will have to be maintained and increased into the second half of the century as we make the unprecedented transition from our current fossil-fuel based energy system to a low-carbon one. The longer we take to adapt our energy system, the more difficult and costly it will be.

Fundamentally, the problem we face is not a lack of energy or resources, but a lack of time.

All of this leads to one conclusion: we must continue to develop, innovate and grow in photovoltaics – and we must do so with a strong sense of urgency. In the coming decade, competition will be fierce; rapid innovation and high volume will be crucial.

Against this backdrop, I believe that the APOLLON project comes at a very important stage of development of photovoltaics in Europe. In recent years, CPV has moved closer to commercial application, and the European Commission has recognised this and increased funding notably for CPV in these first years of FP7 with respect to previous programmes. In fact, the APOLLON project is to date the biggest photovoltaic project funded under FP7, with an EC contribution of EUR 8.3 million. Of course, with this support comes the expectation and the responsibility that significant progress be made during the duration of the project, such as the ambitious objective of APOLLON to develop CPV systems with a target cost of 2 EUR / watt. However, I am confident that your expertise, your innovative work programme and your professional managerial approach will stand you in good stead for this challenge.

I think it was Victor Hugo who said, "There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come", and I strongly believe that the time of low carbon technologies like photovoltaics has come. Photovoltaics is receiving increasing high-level political recognition too. The European Commission, recognising the important role that solar electricity will play in the future energy supply, proposed that a large industrial initiative be launched in this field as part of the so-called Strategic Energy Technology, or SET Plan. The SET plan aims to develop a European-wide blueprint for the coordinated development of key energy technologies in the coming decades.

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Sometimes the enormity of the challenge our energy system poses can invoke a sense of resigned pessimism in some. However, workshops like this are testament to the dynamism and vision the European photovoltaic community, and I am convinced that Europe will lead the way in the adaption of our energy system and in the fight against climate change.

I wish you all the best for a successful workshop in Cyprus, a country which has the goal to produce their electricity 100% from renewable sources to be the first "Green" country in the European Union, and a productive continuation of the APOLLON project.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Piontek'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'P'.

Andreas Piontek
Project Officer