

# FOREWORDS OF THE DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF FOR FRANCE AND SOUTHERN FRENCH SPEAKING COUNTRIES, GUEST-EDITOR OF THIS SPECIAL ISSUE

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It is a great pleasure for me to write the forewords for this special issue of the International Scientific Journal for Alternative Energy and Ecology, devoted to France and french speaking (or partially french speaking) countries of the south.

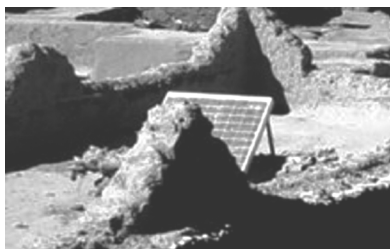
This volume is the result of a call for papers launched in June 2007 with the aim to give an overview on the research in the field of alternative energy and ecology in the mentioned geographical zone. To stimulate the international contacts and

collaborations we proposed to publish also a short description of laboratories, groups, and institutes participating in this activity.

Obviously, our goal has only partially been reached, even if we received about one hundred propositions of papers: because of the “information screening” caused by the explosive development and competition in the field of renewable energies and related topics, several important french institutes are not yet represented in this special issue. In contrast, we have a vast representation of african french speaking countries that, albeit being potentially the main consumers of the renewable energy technologies, are frequently with an insufficient access to international journals. It is indeed important to keep in mind that the most important solar resources are located on the african continent, and that only few percents of the area of the Sahara region being covered by solar powerplants could satisfy the contemporary needs in the electrical energy!

The regain of interest in the field of renewable energies is clearly caused both by the explosive increase of prices of the non-renewable energy sources and by the global tendency of climate warming that is the origin of the present collective awareness. In this respect, we are certainly still only at the beginning of activities in this field: first because the pressure of civil societies on the scientific community will increase in future, with the confirmation of the emergency to find new solutions, then because a maturity of scientific groups working in this field will occur, and finally because the corresponding market will likely appear to be a motor of world economy in future.

This situation should reasonably result in the enhancement of north-south collaboration in this field and in number of related fields, and we hope that the information published in this issue about southern institutions will encourage further north-south collaboration contacts.



In France, activities on solar energy have started early, with the construction of the solar furnace of Mont-Louis in 1947, and of the big solar furnace in Odeillo around 1970 by CNRS, close to the former. Then, in 1983, an experimental solar powerplant was built in Targassonne, also in the south of France, but was stopped prematurely. It is significant that this experimental powerplant, which has inspired several models of so called “tower powerplants” over the world, is now rehabilitated, and gives the opportunity to experience new processes in near future.

For now, several french organisms, institutions, and associations, are working entirely or partially in the development and the use of renewable energies, and for the improvement of sustainable development approaches. We can mention ADEME (Agence de l’Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l’Energie – Agency of Environment and Mastering of Energy), CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research), ANR (Agence Nationale de la Recherche – National Agency for Research), EDF and particularly EDF-EN (Electricité de France; Energies Nouvelles – Electricity of France; renewable energies), ministries of research, for sustainable development, etc.

In southern countries, the same tendency is appearing, in particular with the appearance of structures for developing specifically the renewable energies. It is highly desirable in future to follow a global approach, in particular for optimizing the use of desert zones for energy production and for organizing research and industrialization in the frame of the sustainable development.

For all these reasons, this special issue is certainly a pale reflect of the forthcoming volumes in next years! If, nevertheless, this volume of ISJAEE may modestly help in structuring collaborations between southern and northern countries, it will play a significant role in the right direction.



*Opening of the international meeting “Energaia” on renewable energies,  
organized by the “Conseil Régional Languedoc-Roussillon”  
Montpellier (France) 6-8 december 2007*

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