

## News-Archiv Stuttgart

### **American energy research centre NREL and DLR extend their collaboration**

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In November 2010, the largest American renewable energy research centre, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), and the German Aerospace Center (Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt; DLR) agreed to extend their collaboration for a further three years. The two institutions are collaborating to improve the efficiency and service life of solar-thermal power plants. The two research facilities, both world leaders in this field, have been working together since 2008.

#### **Fast market launches for more efficient power stations**

"NREL and DLR want to expand their expertise in the design and construction of solar-thermal power plants. The objective of our collaboration is to develop innovative and efficient components for solar power systems and bring them more rapidly to market readiness," said Professor Ulrich Wagner, DLR's Director for Energy and Transport, during the signing ceremony at Golden, in the US state of Colorado.

The aim of the collaboration is the further development of solar power stations and thermal storage systems, which make power generation possible even at night or on cloudy days. The partners also want to establish quality standards for solar-thermal power plants and their components, and work together on systems analysis tasks. This will be made possible by joint projects, workshops and staff exchange programmes.

#### **Major projects being planned**

Solar-thermal power stations concentrate sunlight to collect heat, which is then converted to electricity by conventional generation systems. Experts expect that this technology will play an increasingly important role in power generation in the future. Commercial installations are already in operation, delivering some 100 megawatts of electricity to the grid. Four large-scale power stations are planned in California's Mojave Desert, with a total output of around 1000 megawatts. European and American companies are among the market leaders in this technology sector.

NREL is the biggest American renewable energy research agency, and is a national laboratory of the US Department of Energy. The laboratory, like DLR, has many years of experience in the development of solar-thermal power plants. DLR conducts research in this area at its facilities in Cologne, Stuttgart and Almería, Spain. It has already advised a number of industrial partners on the construction of these

systems and has evaluated their cost effectiveness.

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