

press release

For the first time in Switzerland, renewable methane is produced using an ancient microorganism.

Solothurn, Switzerland, June 19, 2019 - **On Friday, May 31, 2019, renewable methane was produced for the first time on the Aarmatt site of Regio Energie Solothurn using renewable electricity and the biomethanation process developed by Electrochaea. A few days later, the first injection into the gas network took place. The biological process used is unique in Switzerland. The STORE&GO facility is part of a pan-European research project.**

Biological methanation is an important building block in the power-to-gas process; a process that will be of central importance in the future for the seasonal storage of surplus renewable electricity. On Friday, 31 May 2019, the Regio Energie Solothurn in Zuchwil, Switzerland, used renewable electricity to produce renewable methane, for the first time in Switzerland using a biological process, as part of the European Union "STORE&GO" project on the Aarmatt site. The biological methanation technology was contributed by the German company Electrochaea GmbH that offers a solution for electricity storage, recycling of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and production of renewable fuels.

In this innovative process, archaeae (ancient microorganisms) convert hydrogen and CO₂ into renewable methane. From a methane concentration of 96%, the renewable gas can be injected into the conventional natural gas grid without restriction. This took place in Zuchwil, Switzerland for the first time on

June 6, 2019 after running for only 4 days. Since then, more than 370 kg of renewable methane has been injected into the grid. This amount is enough for a small gas-powered car to travel about 10,000 km. In the coming weeks and months, the project partners will carry out intensive tests and optimizations. The knowledge gained will be used to further develop the power-to-gas process at an industrial scale.

STORE&GO stands for innovative large-scale energy STORagE technologies AND power-to-Gas concepts after Optimisation. The international project was launched in 2016 as part of Horizon 2020, the European Union's research and innovation program. 27 project partners from six European countries are involved in developing and advancing power-to-gas technology. The research is based on three different Power-to-Gas concepts at three locations: Germany (Falkenhagen, Brandenburg), Italy (Troia, Apulia) and Switzerland (Solothurn). In Switzerland, in addition to Regio Energie Solothurn, Electrochaea, the Rapperswil University of Applied Sciences, the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale Lausanne, the Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Testing and Research and the Swiss Association of the Gas and Water Industries are involved in the project.

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Solothurn, 7. August 2019