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UCT and Germany's Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems to collaborate on research

A partnership between the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE, which is based in Germany, has served as a stepping stone in developing new and innovative technologies for South Africa.

Under the official Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed recently, hydrogen and fue cell technology experts will collaborate closely on activities to accelerate progress in these fields.

Speaking at the signing of the MoU, UCT Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price said he "hoped this was the beginning of a long partnership between UCT and Fraunhofer ISE".

Having developed a good working relationship over the years, the UCT Department of Chemical Engineering and Dr Christopher Helbing, who is the director in the Division of Hydrogen Technologies at Fraunhofer ISE, decided to formalise the collaboration at a ceremony where an MOU centred around hydrogen technologies was signed in the presenc of the President of the Fraunhofer Gesellschaft, Professor Reimund Neugebauer.

Fraunhofer ISE's work in hydrogen technologies comprises fundamental research on the production, conversion, and catalytic processing of hydrogen, as well as models to investigate the role of hydrogen in the future energy system.

The Catalysis Institute in the Department of Chemical Engineering at UCT hosts HySA/Catalysis, one of the three Centres of Competence that form part of the South Africa Department of Science and Technology's National Hydrogen and Fuel Cells Technologies Flagship project, Hydrogen South Africa (HySA).

The centre's overall aim is to transform South Africa from a resource-based economy to a knowledge-based economy and in doing so, add high value to the country's mineral wealth

Using electricity from renewable energy sources such as wind and solar, hydrogen can be produced by water electrolysis, and used as fuel in diverse applications including zero-

emissions fuel cell cars and buses. Hydrogen is also an excellent feedstock for catalytic conversion with carbon dioxide to produce liquid synthetic fuels that replace diesel or gasoline (gas-to-liquids).

ENDS

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