



## Integrated Project

# **“Preparing for the hydrogen economy by using the existing natural gas system as a catalyst (NATURALHY)”**

## **PRESS RELEASE NATURALHY Project Initiation**

The first meeting of the full consortium of the **NATURALHY** project took place on 6 –7 May 2004 in Leiden, The Netherlands.

The NATURALHY project brings together 39 European partners, including 15 from the gas-business. It is an Integrated Project within FP6 with a total budget of 17.3 M€ of which 11 M€ is an EC grant. This is the largest support provided to a project funded by EC under FP6 in the field of Hydrogen and Fuel Cells. The project's official start date is 1 May 2004 and its duration will be 5 years.

The main objective of NATURALHY is to prepare EU countries for the hydrogen economy by identifying and removing the potential barriers regarding the introduction of hydrogen into society, using the extensive, existing natural gas system. The basic concept of the project is the smooth and short term introduction of hydrogen, at relatively low cost, by using the existing natural gas system to carry and distribute mixtures of natural gas and hydrogen.

The main drivers for hydrogen are the improvement of energy security, the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions, according to the Kyoto protocol, and the improvement of air quality. However, the transition to the hydrogen-economy will be lengthy, costly and will require significant R&D.

The project “kick-off” meeting, which was held on May 6 - 7 May in Leiden, Netherlands, actually initiated this ambitious project by consolidating all of the necessary operational arrangements. Agreement was successfully reached between all partners regarding the way forward, and the project implementation road map was put in place.

The project will be co-ordinated by Gasunie Research of the Netherlands. For more information contact: Onno Florisson (tel. +31 50 521 2651) or Rolinda Huizing (tel. +31 50 521 2239).