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CI success in European bid for solar research grant

The kick-off meeting of the OPTS project (Optimization of a Thermal energy Storage system with integrated Steam Generator), funded by the 7th Framework Programme, recently took place in Brussels.

The three-year project, which has an European Commission financial contribution of 8.65mln euros, is coordinated by the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development (ENEA) and involves ten other partners, from France, Germany, Israel, Cyprus, Spain and Portugal.

Studying and improving technologies for storing the harvested energy is of major importance and one of the most promising technologies relies on storing thermal energy by elevating the temperature of a fluid, such as molten salts.

OPTS aims at developing a new system for thermal energy storage using molten salts, increasing the operational temperatures up to 550 °C, in order to provide efficient, reliable and economic energy storage for the next generation of solar-thermal plants. The objective is to develop and test the new thermal energy storage – steam generator concept for industrial scale solar-thermal plant.

The Cyprus Institute (CyI), a major partner in the consortium, has secured a budget of 515,000 euros, which will create four new positions for researchers, and include both experimental studies and simulations of the various physical phenomena occurring in the device. CyI will contribute to the design and testing of the full scale test section, and to the impacts on the economics of solar-thermal power plants.