



Research Success Stories



July 2012

International collaboration needed for a product that sells internationally

The members of the project MacSheep aim to develop a system of heat pump and solar thermal panels that works with 25 percent less electricity demand than current systems. To make the system competitive, they have to draw on each others knowledge about their markets.

The heating system that the members of MacSheep aim to develop is to be sold internationally. Therefore, it has to meet differing demands: "The requirements that have to be met for a heating system in Switerland may be quite different from the requirements in other European countries", says Michel Haller, coordinator of the MacSheep project.



Dr. Michel Yves Haller
Coordinator MacSheep

Common funding brings closer collaboration

Having partners from all over Europe also enables MacSheep to exploit the expertise of institutions that are highly specialized in certain areas. This degree of specialization would be hard to find in one country alone. "And because we receive funding from the same source, we are all bound to closely collaborate and

"If we only worked with Swiss partners, we may develop a system that sells only in Switzerland. Thanks to the involvement of nine institutions from six countries, we are able to develop a product that can be sold in many European countries."

"If we only work with Swiss partners, we may develop a system that sells only in Switzerland."

to deliver on time what we agreed to deliver", says Michel Haller. According to him, finding these partners was not difficult, because of

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Systems of heat pumps and solar thermal panels that heat water or space need a certain input of electricity. With that input and the "free" energy of sun, air and earth, these systems produce an output in the form of useful heat. MacSheep aims to develop a system that needs 25 percent less electrical input than current systems. In the first phase of the project, system simulations are used to show the performance of combinations of newly developed materials, components and control systems applied on a whole system concept. In a second step, prototypes are developed and tested. The resulting systems are to be sold internationally at competitive prices.

his extensive network. Not so easy was it to create an application for funding from the European Union.

Application as an iterative process

According to Michel Haller, creating an application for funding is an iterative process: "If we had had a detailed plan for a project and then looked for a call that exactly fitted our plan we probably would not have been successful." Instead, he knew the partners and had an idea for the project, looked for calls that such a project might fit in, and then adjusted our plans to the call's requirements.

"In the final process of writing the application, the help of Euresearch was extremely helpful for understanding the process of submission and evaluation and what kind of information on the project the European Union exactly wanted to see", says Michel Haller

FACTS AND FIGURES

Project Name:	New Materials and Control for a next generation of compact combined Solar and heat pump systems with boosted energetic and exergetic performance (MacSheep)
Research Area:	FP7-Energy
Coordinating Institution:	Institut für Solartechnik SPF of the University of Applied Sciences Rapperswil (HSR)
Coordinator:	Dr. Michel Yves Haller
Project website:	macsheep.spf.ch
Number of Partners:	9
Start Date – End Date:	02.01.2012– 01.01.2016 (48 months)
Project Cost:	3,088,642 €

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