



Press Release

**Grenoble-Isere economic partnership with Colorado:
TENERRDIS and NREL sign memorandum of understanding**

Grenoble and Paris, France – April 12, 2010 – AEPI, the Grenoble-Isere Economic Development Agency, today announced the signature of a memorandum of understanding between TENERRDIS, a competitive cluster specializing in new energy technologies, and NREL, the U.S. National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado. The agreement is the result of two years of relationship building by the AEPI and its partner CORA (an initiative of the French-American Chamber of Commerce) in Colorado.



Left to right:

- Veronique Pequignat, International Business Development Manager, AEPI
- Herve Fradet, Director, AEPI
- David E. Rodgers, United States Department of Energy
- Ron Benioff, International Lab Program Manager, NREL
- Daniel Harris, Minister Counselor for Commercial Affairs, United States Embassy, Paris
- Jean-Pierre Chardon, Chairman, TENERRDIS
- Claude Graff, former Chairman, TENERRDIS
- Jean-Daniel Tordjman, Ambassador-at-Large

AEPI, with the support of Denver-based CORA (Colorado Rhone-Alpes Economic Development Partnership), identified Colorado as a potential economic development partner for Grenoble-Isere. The regions share similar economic ecosystems and approaches to business and boast comparable synergies between higher education, research, and industry. In partnership with CORA, AEPI has over the past two years run several events in Denver, Colorado and in Grenoble. TENERDIS and NREL were among the numerous businesses and government agencies from both France and the United States to take part in these programs. The purpose was to raise the awareness of businesses and government agencies in Colorado of the benefits offered by Grenoble-Isere and to identify possible areas for collaboration on key technologies. TENERDIS and NREL were able to immediately identify areas in which they were complementary; the partners decided to explore the possibility of joint development in the field of renewable energies. The memorandum of understanding is the result of these efforts to build ties between the two regions.

CORA, an initiative of the French-American Chamber of Commerce in Colorado, was founded in 2008. The network facilitates introductions and initiates collaboration between businesses and research labs, especially in the field of new energy technologies.

TENERDIS has developed a strategy built on networking with the world's top labs—and NREL is the United States' leading renewable energies research center.

The memorandum of understanding signed by TENERDIS and NREL covers solar energy (photovoltaics and CSP) and smart grids. TENERDIS counts two particularly active members in these fields: INES (the French National Institute for Solar Energy) and Grenoble Institute of Technology. The two-year, renewable memorandum of understanding will bolster joint actions and the sharing of best practices on issues of common interest. The agreement could, in the medium-term, be extended to other innovative fields.

“In order for regional economic development to happen, research and industry must come together. AEPI facilitates these connections and plays an active role in forming partnerships with strategic regions around the globe. The fact that we chose Colorado was no accident—the state's synergies between research and industry drive the local economic ecosystem, very similar to what we see here in Grenoble-Isere,” said AEPI Director Herve Fradet.

“TENERDIS, a hub for new energy technologies, and NREL, a leading new energy research lab, have now established the foundation for joint technology development,” said TENERDIS Chairman Jean-Pierre Chardon. “This represents a turning point for TENERDIS. Under former Chairman Claude Graff, the cluster broke new ground with its international strategy. The memorandum of understanding is proof that these choices were—and are—the right ones,” Mr. Chardon said.

“NREL feels strongly about the benefits international R&D collaboration can bring. These partnerships deliver added value and provide considerable leverage for enhancing technological performance while reducing costs. NREL is pleased to be working with TENERDIS, a partner of choice in Grenoble-Isere, with whom we share common goals for the development, deployment, and commercialization of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions,” said NREL International Lab Program Manager Ron Benioff.

Partners

About AEPI

<http://english.grenoble-isere.com/>

AEPI, the Grenoble-Isere Economic Development Agency, is a non-profit organization with offices around the world, including Los Angeles for development actions targeting North America. AEPI provides free information, introductions, and services to businesses seeking to explore opportunities in Grenoble-Isere, France's "Silicon Valley" and leading center for renewable energy technologies.

About TENERRDIS

<http://www.tenerrdis.fr/en/>

TENERRDIS, a renewable energies cluster, aims to respond to the world's energy challenges by developing new technologies and transforming them into viable sources of energy. The cluster builds partnerships between higher education, research, and industry to create new expertise, markets, and jobs.

About NREL

<http://www.nrel.gov/>

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) was founded in 1991 by the United States Department of Energy. Located in Golden, Colorado, NREL focuses on renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development. NREL's R&D expertise covers four areas: renewable electricity, renewable fuels, integrated energy system engineering and testing, and strategic energy analysis.

About CORA:

<http://www.coranetwork.org/>

The Colorado Rhone-Alpes Network) an initiative of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the French-American Chamber of Commerce (FACC), the largest and most active of the European Chambers of Commerce in the state. CORA's mission is to facilitate crossborder investment between Colorado and the Rhone-Alpes region.

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