

EURACOAL – Press Release

Coal has a future

Inaugural speech of EURACOAL's President in Brussels/First operational experience with carbon dioxide separation in coal-fired power stations in Germany

Brussels (26.01.2009) - The current and repeated bottlenecks of supplies of imported energy in the EU underline the necessity, mentioned in the European Commission's current energy strategy, to maintain and further develop coal as a substantial component of Europe's energy mix, explained the new President of the European Association for Coal and Lignite, EURACOAL, Petr. Pudil, after his election in Brussels.

Currently, said Pudil, a high-ranking personality in the Czech coal and energy industry, coal covers about 29 per cent of power generation in the European Union. Its share in the 27 Member States varies between 92 per cent in Poland and 4 per cent in France. However, access to reserves and maintaining domestic resources are a common task for all European Union Member States. In addition to energy savings, domestic energy reserves are the most effective protection against supply risks. „I am against unnecessarily restricting coal production, either by hastily closing down mines because of short-term considerations or because of planning obstacles concerning current and new projects, “said Pudil to representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament and of the European coal industry on Monday in Brussels.

According to EURACOAL's new President, coal utilisation can comply with the EU's ambitious climate protection objectives in the long term. Pudil even assumes that without new climate-friendly coal technique, effective climate protection is not possible in Europe nor globally. Compared with old installations, a new coal-fired power station currently saves 2.5 to 3 million tons of carbon dioxide when generating the same amount of power. The separation and storage of carbon dioxide from coal-fired power stations opens completely new perspectives for future climate-friendly coal utilisation. If today's familiar technologies are successfully perfected economically and industrially, and the storage and logistic problem is solved

reliably, then CO₂ emissions from coal-fired power plants could be decreased by over 85 per cent in the next decades. Decisions concerning the mandatory use of CCS technologies in power stations should only be made, however, according to Pudil, if the technical and economic feasibility is proven by demonstration units and by an adequate, reliable legal framework.

Hartmuth Zeiss, Member of the Board at Vattenfall Europe Mining and Generation, reported in Brussels on Vattenfall's first operational experience with carbon dioxide separation. Vattenfall already planned a pilot plant at Schwarze Pumpe in Saxony/Germany mid 2005. Vattenfall chose the oxyfuel procedure, characterised by pure oxygen being supplied for combustion. The pilot plant, with a thermal output of 30 megawatts (MW), went into operation during the second half of 2008. To date, more than 100 tons of carbon dioxide have been separated and liquefied. Zeiss reported that Vattenfall plans to test different coal qualities and to simulate conditions similar to those that will prevail in a future 700 °C coal-fired power plant. Zeiss also pointed out that an oxyfuel installation requires major expenditure before development and operation and that going on line, compared with a conventional power station, would take much longer.