

Successful Icelandic-Polish Cooperation Seminar on Geothermal Energy, Green Energy Transition, and Carbon Capture and Storage held in Warsaw on June 14

Green by Iceland, in collaboration with the Embassy of Iceland in Poland and Orkustofnun, organized a highly successful seminar on geothermal energy, energy exchange, and carbon capture and storage in Warsaw on June 14. The event also included cooperation with the MEERI PAS organization in Poland. The seminar aimed to explore and promote increased cooperation between Poland and Iceland in geothermal energy, renewable energy sources, enhanced energy security, as well as various opportunities regarding energy exchange, renewable energy, hydrogen and carbon capture and storage.

The course also addressed the urgent need to reduce pollution and carbon dioxide emissions to mitigate climate change, aligning with Poland's Energy, Environment, and Climate EEA Grant Program. The seminar welcomed leading companies and speakers from Iceland and Poland in the fields of geothermal energy, energy exchange, and carbon disposal and storage, both domestically and globally. The forum was open to individuals, companies, institutions, and municipalities interested in these topics.



Hannes Heimisson, ambassador of the Icelandic embassy in Poland, and staff. Photo: B. Petursson

In today's geopolitical landscape, the challenges of reducing carbon emissions from energy systems and ensuring energy security are of paramount importance. Iceland, renowned as the world's largest producer of green energy per capita, has been a pioneer in renewable energy for over a century. Recognizing the global energy security challenges and the impacts of climate change, the dialogue and knowledge sharing between Iceland and Poland on these issues proved beneficial for all participating parties.

The seminar brought together representatives from governments, companies, and public sector groups from both countries, with the goal of strengthening cooperation in achieving climate goals and enhancing energy security. The seminar focused on innovations and advancements in the field of clean energy, featuring presentations on technical and innovative solutions to expedite the green energy transition.



About 100 persons attended the seminar. Photo B. Petursson

Ambassador Hannes Heimisson of the Icelandic embassy in Poland inaugurated the forum, emphasizing the new step and opportunity in cooperation between Poland and Iceland created by the opening of the embassy. He highlighted the increased interest in further collaboration between the two countries, particularly in the field of geothermal energy, green energy exchange, and energy security.

The seminar welcomed the participation of a distinguished Icelandic business delegation, comprising high-ranking representatives and speakers from renowned Icelandic companies at the forefront of sustainability and renewable energy.

A high-level delegation from Poland also attended the event, including government officials, local authorities, and business representatives. Prominent figures such as Arkadiusz Mularczyk, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; Paweł Dębski, Deputy Director General of the Economic and Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Paweł Sałek, Minister in the Chancellery of President Andrzej Duda, represented the government.

During their presentations, the Polish delegation highlighted the growing interest in cooperation between the two countries, referring to previous training courses and the presence of approximately 380 thermal power plants in Poland. They expressed admiration for Iceland's activities in carbon capture and storage (CCS) and identified potential areas for further collaboration in this field. The importance of the EEA grant system was also emphasized, generating considerable interest among local authorities.



Persons from Green by Iceland, Icelandic embassy in Poland, Orkustofnun and MEERI PAS and the Ministry of Environment - and Climate in Poland. Photo: B. Petursson.

Natalia Roguska from the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, along with Piotr Bogusz, Deputy Director of Projects of the European Fund within the Ministry of Climate and Environment, discussed the funding available for transformation projects in the field of geothermal and green energy in Poland. The Polish government has significantly increased funding for such activities in recent years as part of its Green Energy Transition and Energy Security Policy, presenting further opportunities for cooperation between Poland and Iceland.

Professor Krzysztof Galos, CEO of MEERI PAS, highlighted successful bilateral cooperation projects with Iceland that have facilitated the development of activities and collaboration between the two countries. Beata Kępińska, project manager of Key Geothermal at MEERI PAS, and Baldur Petursson, project manager of Key Geothermal at Orkustofnun, described major geothermal projects undertaken by their organizations in cooperation with other countries.



From left. Paweł Sałek, Minister in the Chancellery of President Andrzej Duda, Arkadiusz Mularczyk, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Poland, Halla Hrund Logadóttir Director General, Orkustofnun, and Hannes Heimisson, ambassador of the Icelandic embassy in Poland, Photo: Icelandic embassy in Poland

They also emphasized the expected benefits of the EEA grant in the energy, environment, and climate sector, projecting an annual decrease of 600,000 tons of CO₂ emissions in Poland, contributing to global efforts to combat climate change.

During the seminar, Icelandic companies presented and discussed various topics, emphasizing the growing activity and cooperation. Icelandic companies have expanded their presence in the field in Poland. For instance, EFLA in Poland currently employs around 40 experts and is expanding its activities in electricity transmission, power lines, and other energy projects. Verkís has participated in several geothermal projects in Poland in recent years, ISOR is involved in one project, and Arctic Green Energy is currently participating in multiple projects across Poland. These companies and speakers from Iceland and Poland are recognized experts in their respective fields, both domestically and globally.

Halla Hrund Logadóttir, CEO of Orkustofnun, moderated the discussions and provided a summary at the end of the meeting. The course aimed to explore and promote various opportunities for cooperation between Poland and Iceland in geothermal heating, renewable energy sources, energy security, as well as options for energy exchange, renewable energy, hydrogen, and CCS. Approximately 100 individuals participated in the course, and overall, there was general satisfaction with the discussions, content, and implementation.

Green by Iceland reported on the seminar on its website, featuring pictures from the event and access to all the presentations delivered during the course.



From left. Maciej Miecznik, Beata Kepinska, Krzysztof Galos from MEERI PAS Poland, Halla Hrund Logadóttir og Baldur Pétursson from Orkustofnun. These institutions have worked on several cooperation geothermal projects within the EEA Grant in past years. Photo: Icelandic embassy in Poland.

The report highlighted the remarkable growth in cooperation between Poland and Iceland in the domains of geothermal and renewable energy, as well as environmental and climate initiatives. These collaborations have been facilitated through various programs and projects under the EEA Grant Agreement. Notably, pre-feasibility studies conducted in Poddebice and other locations in collaboration between the National Energy Authority, MEERI PAS, and additional experts from Poland have provided a deeper understanding of the potential for geothermal energy utilization and laid the groundwork for future endeavors. The ongoing KeyGeothermal project, which includes geothermal training in Poland, study trips to Iceland, and expert visits to Polish cities, has played a significant role in preparing for the seminar and facilitating increased cooperation between municipalities, cities, and the business sector in both Poland and Iceland.

The seminar served as a platform for extensive knowledge sharing and expertise exchange, resulting in valuable insights and innovative ideas. Throughout the seminar, Icelandic companies explored various topics in their presentations and discussions, highlighting a growing trend of activity and partnership between the countries on their journey toward a greener future. Polish authorities have notably increased funding for geothermal energy as part of their green energy transition and energy security policies in recent years, creating opportunities for further collaboration between Poland and Iceland. The outcomes of the seminar underscored the shared interests and objectives of both countries in promoting sustainable energy practices and addressing climate change.