

3rd SCCER CREST Conference 2016

On Innovations for the Energy Transition

Report by Dr. Carmen Kobe

September 1, 2016 – ZHAW in Winterthur

The conference, hosted by ZHAW (SCCER CREST Co-Leading House), offers a platform for the exchange of recent research results among CREST researchers, with researchers from other SCCERs and other institutions, as well as implementation partners. We were pleased to welcome around 170 participants in total with over 90 CREST members, around 25 partners from industry and the public authority, a dozen researchers from other SCCERs and over 30 energy researchers from other institutions outside the SCCER.

The topic of the conference was “Innovations for the Energy Transition – which innovations and changes are needed for the successful implementation of the Energy Strategy 2050?” Prof. Dr. Bettina Furrer, ZHAW, Deputy Head SCCER CREST, showed in her opening speech how CREST has already contributed to innovations for the energy transition and Prof. Dr. Frank Krysiak, University of Basel, Head SCCER CREST, gave an outlook on how CREST will contribute to the energy transition in the future. The close cooperation between research and practice partners plays an important role, as shown by Dr. Jonas Mühlethaler, R&D Manager at Swissgrid AG and Prof. Dr. Mario Paolone, Head SCCER Furies at EPFL, who presented their collaborations with CREST at the event. Prof. Dr. Rolf Wüstenhagen discussed in his keynote speech the question, who would be the most important innovators – the incumbent companies or the dynamic startups? His answer: both of them.

Scientists of the SCCER CREST presented innovations and changes in specific fields in five parallel sessions on the topics of grid tariff systems / new business models, change of energy consumption behaviour, current and future electricity markets, acceptance of the energy transition and energy-entrepreneurship. Co-presentations and panel discussions with practice partners and scientists from other SCCERs complemented the sessions.

The final panel discussion „How much innovation and change do we need to master the energy transition? How much innovation and change does the energy transition bear?” reunited the participants for the last part of the event. The discussed aspects were as diverse as the panel guests: Prof. Dr. Bettina Furrer, ZHAW; Dr. Henning Fuhrmann, Siemens Building Technologies; Christoffel de Winter, Mobilier and Dr. Christina Würthner, Enersis. There were no real controversies between the panel guests, but a common conclusion that innovations and step-by-step-changes with the courage for experimentation would be needed on all levels of the energy system.