

PCATDES. Successful Final Meeting & International Workshop for Euro Funded EU/ASEAN Photocatalysis Consortia in Hanoi

A successful Final Meeting and an International Workshop took place from January 12th to 14th, 2017 in Hanoi, Vietnam to conclude the EU funded PCATDES project.

The 4 year, EU/ASEAN Consortia has investigated using photo catalysis to further improve the destruction of recalcitrant organic waste not currently being destroyed by processes used by Food Industries. The Project has culminated with 3 scaled up Reactors being deployed in South East Asia where industrial wastewater is a problem for both the Palm Oil and Seafood industries. It is hoped that the body of research created by the PCATDES Team along with the first class collaboration will attract further interest from academic; industrial or, even, government quarters.

The event was hosted by the Vietnam Academy of Science & Tech, Hanoi and delegates were warmly welcomed by the Director of the Institute for Material Sciences, Professor Nguyen Quang Liem. All 11 PCATDES Partners were represented in Hanoi. The Universities of Aston; Bath; Bath, Cardiff and UCL from the UK. The Universities of Rey Juan Carlos and Rostock from Spain and Germany respectively along with the ASEAN Institutions: SIRIM-Berhad (Malaysia); NSTDA-MTEC (Thailand) and both the ICT and IMS Teams from the Vietnam Academy of Science & Tech. Sampas Nanotechnology, a Turkish SME, provided a business and marketing focus for the Consortia.

A productive opening day, saw Work Package Leaders report on progress to date to a packed, attentive and lively audience. Each Presentation built up the journey taken by PCATDES from a conceptual Work Plan to the production of the second version of a prototype photocatalytic reactor that has been deployed in Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam for initial field testing. Teamwork and collaboration has kept the PCATDES Project 'on track'. The scale of the industrial wastewater problem and the variances between Industries and Countries suggest that further research and development is required.

On Day 2, PCATDES held an International Workshop. This was a great opportunity for the Consortia to showcase not only the research produced by PCATDES but also the excellent young researchers who have made significant contributions to the Project. These young researchers, some of whom benefited from overseas placements, have worked alongside and been mentored by experienced, specialist, highly regarded scientists involved with the Project. Their presentations identified exciting young talent who will serve the scientific community and others for years to come.

A special and poignant moment on Day 2 was a named Lecture in honour of the late Professor Ron Stevens of Bath. Ron had significant involvement in putting together the PCATDES Consortia and his Bath colleague, Professor Chris Bowen, introducing the lecture and initiating a period of warm applause, suggested that Ron would have been particular pleased by the positive collaboration between European and ASEAN Partners. Fittingly, the lecture was delivered by David Bell from Foseco, UK – a Company that had worked with Ron and played a welcome role in the latter stages of PCATDES. Dave shared his considerable expertise on ceramic foams and explained their relevance and use in industries, such as, Steel. Dave's presentation illustrated the journey from scientific concept to an economical, industrial process and was well received by the audience.

On Day3, PCATDES held a series of short internal meetings focusing on use of the reactors; potential future collaboration and production of the PCATDES Final Report. Again, teamwork; collaboration and enthusiasm were very apparent. Partner Organisations and individual delegates will keep in touch and shall look for opportunities to continue their collaboration and research.

The European Funded, PCATDES FP7 Project will officially end on 31 January 2017. The Final Report, available to the public, will follow around 2 months later. The story of PCATDES – along with a body of research – will be added to the www.pcatdes.eu to encourage industrial or further academic interest.