NEWS

UT Austin and NTOU Partner on Taiwan Geothermal

UT Austin and NTOU have signed an MOU to boost geothermal development in Northern Taiwan, advancing joint research and green energy innovation.

The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) (https://www.utexas.edu/) and National Taiwan Ocean University (NTOU) (https://english.ntou.edu.tw/) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to jointly advance geothermal development in Northern Taiwan.

The announcement was made on April 23, 2025, in the presence of representatives from both institutions, including Dr. Ken Wisian, Deputy Director of the Bureau of Economic Geology at UT Austin, and Professors Chao-Shing Lee and Chung-Cheng Chang of NTOU. The partnership will focus on joint research, technical collaboration, and co-development of geothermal resources, particularly in the promising onshore and offshore regions from Taipei to Yilan.

"Taiwan's geothermal industry is still in its early stages. Through international collaboration, we can accelerate the development of deep geothermal as a key baseload power source," said Prof. Chao-Shing Lee.

Supporting Taiwan's Geothermal Ambitions

Earlier this year, Taiwan's Bureau of Energy raised the national geothermal target for 2030 to between 1.2 and 1.5 GW, as part of a broader plan to decarbonize its energy mix. The northeast of the island—where geothermal potential overlaps with existing power infrastructure—is considered one of the most favorable regions for development.

The collaboration aligns with global trends. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), global geothermal capacity is forecast to reach 800 GW by 2050, and international partnerships are key to driving both innovation and deployment.

Texas Know-How Meets Taiwan's Resources

Dr. Wisian shared UT Austin's achievements in geothermal innovation, including the university's "Geothermal Anywhere" initiative and its advanced techno-economic modeling framework, which uses more than 150 variables to assess project viability. He emphasized that geothermal energy has multiple use cases beyond power generation—such as agriculture, district heating, and cooling systems—which could offer cost-effective solutions for Taiwan's local communities.

"Geothermal doesn't have to be just about electricity—it's about using heat smartly, in ways that match local needs," said Dr. Wisian.

Broad Industry Support

The MOU signing event drew strong industry representation, including:

- Joe Nieh, Director General of the State of Texas Taiwan Office (STTO)
- Nasikul Islam, Manager at Exceed Geo Energy
- Eddie Y. Wang and Marc Ching-Hui Liao, Chairmen of Far East Renewables Group (Texas & Taiwan)
- Cheng-Yan Gao, Chairman of Lanyang Geothermal Corp.
- Dr. Shou-Cheng Wang (https://www.thinkgeoenergy.com/interview-taiwan-at-a-critical-juncture-for-geothermal-development/), Executive Director of the Taiwan Geothermal Association (TGA)

This cross-sector collaboration underlines the rising momentum for geothermal energy in Taiwan (https://www.thinkgeoenergy.com/google-baseload-capital-ink-geothermal-ppa-in-taiwan/) and positions both institutions as leaders in academic-industry partnerships for clean energy.

The UT Austin–NTOU collaboration represents a model for international academic cooperation aimed at de-risking and accelerating geothermal deployment in emerging markets. It also reinforces Taiwan's position as a regional innovator in geothermal technologies, backed by global expertise.

Source: CNA/ Taiwan (https://www.cna.com.tw/Postwrite/Eng/400076)