

Patagonia Wind –Using Methanogenesis to Store Hydrogen on Large Scales

S. Dupraz, Sylvain Stephant, A. Perez, Catherine Joulian, M Blessing,
Laurent André, E. Pérez, J. Bolcich

► **To cite this version:**

S. Dupraz, Sylvain Stephant, A. Perez, Catherine Joulian, M Blessing, et al.. Patagonia Wind –Using Methanogenesis to Store Hydrogen on Large Scales. 22st World Hydrogen Energy Conference - WHEC 2018, Jun 2018, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. hal-01742093

HAL Id: hal-01742093

<https://hal-brgm.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01742093>

Submitted on 23 Mar 2018

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

Patagonia Wind –Using Methanogenesis to Store Hydrogen on Large Scales

S. Dupraz^{1*}, S. Stephant¹, A. Pérez², C. Joulian¹, M. Blessing¹, L. André¹, E. Pérez² and J. Bolcich²

¹BRGM (French Geological Survey), 3 Av. C. Guillemin, 45060 Orléans - France

²Hychico S.A. Av. Córdoba 950, Piso 5C (C1054AAV) Buenos Aires – Argentina

(*) s.dupraz@brgm.fr

Subject Topic: Energy storage using hydrogen produced from excess renewable electricity: Power to hydrogen.

Due to its perpetual windy climate, Argentine Patagonia is a unique place and for this reason HYCHICO has foreseen an opportunity to develop there green energy production and exportation by means of hydrogen. While numerous technologies were developed to store hydrogen on small scales, there are few options for large scales such as saline cavities, depleted gas reservoirs and aquifers.

As HYCHICO's facilities are located in an oil and gas field, the well "F-160" was selected for a pilot project where BRGM and HYCHICO have started to develop four years ago a new technology based on the transformation of hydrogen into methane through methanogenesis (a).



The process takes place directly in a dedicated depleted gas reservoir where H₂ and CO₂ are injected together. This technology is called UCM for Underground Controlled Methanogenesis and could bring benefits on different levels:

- methane is far easier to handle and to store than hydrogen, it has a poor reactivity within geological environments and does not diffuse as easily as hydrogen
- it is possible to benefit from the long acquired experience regarding natural gas exploitation during decades to control and monitor the methane production
- if we want to transport and use directly the produced methane, there will be no need for further adaptation of the existing natural gas infrastructures
- contrarily to methanation, methanogenesis is a microbial natural process that can be harnessed and used in the reservoir without any additional cost, the small heat requirement being provided by the geothermal gradient of the gas reservoir

In order to be effective in terms of environmental value, this transformation requires taking care of the fate of the newly created methane. Therefore, the UCM technology also includes the use of integrated oxy-combustion cycle that would lead to the production of electricity and heat without emitting any additional gas. To validate the overall process, tests have been launched since 2014 both at laboratory and industrial scales, to harness the methanogenic process. Namely, water content and composition, temperature shifts during injection, pH regulation and the repartition of the different gas into the reservoir, could induce variations or heterogeneities regarding the transformation kinetic that have to be addressed. The results of these tests demonstrate the validity and feasibility of the UCM approach but also display a high sensitivity of the microbial populations regarding those parameters, namely pH and phases distribution. Together with the UCM concept, these results will be exposed and discussed during the presentation.