



## Interview with Dominique Alpe-Conchy (CEA)

### “Indian companies have already shown an interest in setting up near Cadarache”

Iter and Cadarache: two now closely related names that have an influence well outside the boundaries of the PACA region. The ITER program is attracting interest all around the world. The proof is in the conferences and missions organised around it, that are becoming more and more regular. Dominique Alpe-Conchy, CEA mission leader for regional economic development was in India for this reason in mid-October. She tells us about the stakes with this type of operation.

#### > What was the purpose of the Iter mission to India in October this year?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: It was in the framework of the first Franco-Indian conference on the industrial dimension of nuclear energy, to present the state of progress of Indian and French contributions to the Iter project and to build up relations with a view towards cooperation.



**Dominique Alpe-Conchy**

#### > How was this conference organized?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: remarkably, by Ubifrance and the economic mission in Bombay! The French delegation was composed of institutions, national and regional companies.

#### > Were Indian participants well prepared?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: Yes! Both for the “nuclear fission” part - taking account of the ambitious program of the Indians with the project to build six power stations, and for the “fusion” part with the ITER project.

#### > What was the content of the French part of the ITER daily program?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: It was very full. The French contribution was built around:

- the “industrial accompaniment” components
- the attractiveness of the country to encourage new company installations and partnerships with regional companies,
- “fusion” research in France and other research activities carried out on the Cadarache site.

French companies also demonstrated their know how in various technological fields.

#### > And the Indians?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: The ITER India agency presented the state of its progress, the institute of plasma physics and its ambitious program that includes the construction of a new tokamak (magnetic confinement chamber designed to control a plasma) in India, to prepare for the industrial electricity production step.



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### > What is the result of this operation?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: The ITER India agency is very advanced and will be in a position to provide technological packages for the ITER machine when the time comes, that were assigned to it as part of the ITER International treaty. They welcomed an American delegation in July this year. Therefore it is not too early for French industrials to demonstrate their skills and make service proposals. Indian companies have already shown their interest in setting up close to the Cadarache site and searching for local partners.

Some French industrials have extended their stay in order to finalise short or medium term cooperation. The network of agencies and the Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CRCI) has contributed by writing proposals to which the ITER PACA mission and CEA Cadarache will be able to contribute, each within their own expertise. The result is positive and illustrates the advantage of the approach to be adopted in the long term.

### > And what is the long term potential?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: Ubifrance's organisation provided a means of making first contacts that should continue within the framework of a specific regional mission in the second half of 2008 to materialise and prospect interested Indian companies more closely.

### > What is the global context of this mission?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: The region has made a strong commitment to Cadarache's candidature, particularly financially. Regional players in the economy should continue to work in close cooperation to maximise results obtained due to the lever effect of a quite exceptional international R&D project (obviously consistent with actions carried out within France).

### > And for the network of PACA economic development agencies?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: the objective is to prospect all foreign and particularly Asian partners whose needs are undoubtedly greater than European or American partners (the PACA agencies network had already been fully responsible for the mission in Korea and Japan in June last year). The ITER Business Forum planned in Nice from December 10 to 12 will provide a good opportunity to catch up with progress on the project and to meet many persons from all the countries involved.

The CEA is closely involved in the organisation of this event controlled by the DRIRE and the ITER mission, and also in preparation of the ICFRM, the international scientific conference on research related to fusion materials.

### > And what about the contribution of economic development agencies to the CEA?

Dominique Alpe-Conchy: This is a successful cooperation in which the objectives of the two parties can be easily understood, with the end purpose of maximising regional economic outfall. CEA Cadarache will be a very large customer, particularly in the current period and over the next 10 years, with more than a billion Euros of investments. It would like to work alongside regional developers and contribute to the region's economic and scientific development.