

Halle (Saale), 18 November 2024

Press release

## Prof Dr Ralf Wehrspohn reappointed as Distinguished Adjunct Professor at KENTECH

As a Distinguished Adjunct Professor at the Korea Institute of Energy Technology (KENTECH), founded in 2021, Prof Dr Ralf Wehrspohn has been supporting the institute's vision for the past three years: Together with international energy companies and research centres, KENTECH aims to establish a leading university for future research in the energy sector. Now, Prof Wehrspohn has been reappointed as Distinguished Adjunct Professor for a further three years.

Prof Dr Wehrspohn, Head of the “Microstructure-based Material Design” department at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg and Co-CEO of ITEL – German Lithium Institute, was appointed as the first Distinguished Adjunct Professor at the Graduate School of Energy Engineering of the Korea Institute of Energy Technology in November 2021. The appointment follows ten years of collaboration with research colleagues from the KENTECH environment. Over the past three years, Prof Wehrspohn has taught courses on hydrogen materials, microstructure and technology transfer at the institute and supported the establishment of KENTECH.

Now that the initial phase has been successfully completed, KENTECH aims to establish itself as a small but intellectually strong university with 1,000 students and 100 teaching staff by 2025, focussing on conducting research and development work in the energy sector and developing future entrepreneurs.

In this context, the reappointment of Prof Wehrspohn for a further three-year term from 18 November 2024 to 2027 is a logical decision, emphasises KENTECH Dean Prof Chinho Park: “Our university is truly honoured to continue having Prof Wehrspohn as a part of our faculty. We are confident that his exceptional knowledge and experience will continue to contribute to the growth of our university, and we eagerly anticipate the achievements we will accomplish together.”

Plans for further collaboration have already been made: In addition to further courses at the institute, Prof Wehrspohn is also driving forward a cooperation between KENTECH and the German Lithium Institute and its shareholders. The aim is to establish a German-Korean cooperation in the field of the lithium circular economy. The Republic of Korea faces challenges similar to those in Europe when it comes to securing critical raw materials and creating value from by-products in the development of a lithium economy. The planned cooperation is intended to develop solutions for this.

### **About the ITEL – German Lithium Institute**

Founded in September 2021, the private-sector research institute ITEL – Institute for Technologies and Economics of Lithium (Deutsches Lithiuminstitut GmbH) supports the development of an interdisciplinary, CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral circular economy for lithium in Germany. The switch to electromobility will make Germany the central location for battery production in Europe and thus also for the production of the crucial precursor lithium hydroxide. The Institute's work focuses on the circular use and economic utilisation of the by-products generated during the processing of lithium as well as the development of techno-economic solutions for CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral and ESG-compliant industrial value creation in Germany.

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