



Swiss Knowledge Network with Outposts in:

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## **Swiss Solar Taxi in Singapore 24-27 March 2008**

### **General Information**

Swiss Adventurer Mr Louis Palmer started his trip around the world in his solar energy powered vehicle, the "Solartaxi", on the occasion of the European Sustainable Energy Forum in Lucerne, Switzerland, on 3 July 2007. It took 3 years to build the Solartaxi. The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETHZ) and three Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences have been involved in its making, integrating top-notch solar energy technologies and a flexible steering-wheel that allows the passenger to take control of the vehicle running at a maximum speed of 90 kph, the sustainable way.

Louis Palmer travelled overland from the heart of Switzerland through 18 countries to the Middle East and India. From there he pursued his journey by ship to his next destination, Indonesia, just in time to reach Bali for the Climate Change Conference in early December 2007, where the Solartaxi became a major attraction at the gates of the summit. After New Zealand and Australia, Louis Palmer finally arrived in Singapore, where he showcased the Solartaxi and gave presentations to a variety of publics ranging from businessmen to students.

The embassy of Switzerland together with its platform swissnex Singapore assisted Louis Palmer in the organization and promotion of the various events in Singapore. Whilst the embassy assisted Mr Palmer in resolving administrative issues, organized a media conference, a road show in the city center, and a dinner at the Swiss Club, swissnex Singapore set up events for the research and academic communities.

### **Objectives**

Mr Palmer's main intentions are twofold. On the one hand, he is promoting his tour with the Solartaxi and therewith raising awareness about global warming. On the other hand, he is already planning for the World Advanced Vehicle Expedition (WAVE), bound to begin in December 2009. Although details on the project still remain to be determined, Mr Palmer intends to organize a solar car convoy around the world. The convoy is meant to consist of about 5 teams from Asia, Europe, the United States, Australia and Africa. Liaising with the groups of interest in the different locations therefore allows Louis Palmer to motivate the stakeholders to embark on this new adventure.

### **Organization by swissnex**

To promote the event in Singapore swissnex addressed major players in the sustainable energies field including departments of Electronic or Mechanic Engineering, Environment, Material Research and Energy Studies in universities and polytechnics, as well as networks and associations such as Earthlink NTU (Nanyang Technological University), the NTU Solar Car Competition Team for Suzuka, the Sustainable Energy Association of Singapore (SEAS), the Singapore Environment Council (SEC), Youth Habitat, Solar Club HQ, the Environmental Challenge Organization (ECO), the Nature Society (Singapore) and the National Environment Agency (NEA). Nanyang Technological University and

Singapore Polytechnic both decided to host Louis Palmer and his Solartaxi in public events embedded in the respective relevant programs and activities. swissnex supported both institutions by coordinating activities with the organizers and launching extensive marketing through the newsletter and mailers addressed to a selected audience. Specific meetings for Mr. Palmer were organized, and a list of relevant contacts in Singapore was provided.

### **Event Summary**

*Tuesday, 25 March, Nanyang Technological University*

In front of a passionate audience of students, professors and researchers, Louis Palmer presented the objectives of his adventure, the technology of the Solartaxi, and his new project, the World Advanced Vehicle Expedition (WAVE). Moreover, a meeting was organized with NTU's Solar Team which is building its very own solar car for a competition in Suzuka (JP). Their interest in Mr Palmer's endeavors was very high and discussions were launched to pursue a cooperation with regards to WAVE.

*Wednesday, 26 March, Singapore Polytechnic*

Addressing an audience of about 200 junior college and secondary students, teachers and industry players, Louis Palmer gave a lively speech and caught the attention instantly. After the presentation, attendees eagerly gathered around Mr Palmer's car, asked the team many questions and took pictures. The event was embedded in a Singapore Polytechnic solar energy event and a comprehensive package was offered to the attending participants, introducing their very own Mini Solar Car Competition, showing a solar farm on top of one of their buildings and providing additional information on solar energy.

Mr Palmer took the opportunity to meet with professors and business stakeholders, regarding possible collaboration in WAVE 2009.

### **Outcome**

Both Nanyang Technological University and Singapore Polytechnic are strongly involved in solar energy research and therefore provided exquisite network opportunities to Mr Palmer, who had the opportunity to address the appropriate audience and engage in discussions about his future project, WAVE 2009. swissnex Singapore will stay in touch with the respective stakeholders to follow up and support Louis Palmer in this new adventure.

Reporters and photographers showed up at both events and due to the effort by the embassy, media coverage was very satisfying and comprehensive for Mr Palmer's entire stay in Singapore. Reports had been published in newspapers such as TODAY, Straits Times, MyPaper and appeared on TV stations like ESPN and Channel News Asia, creating awareness about Louis Palmer's initiative, and about Switzerland as a country highly concerned with and investing in alternative energies.

### **Singaporean Contacts**

- [Dr Jiang Fan](#) (Singapore Polytechnic)
- [Dr Rajnish Gupta](#) (Singapore Polytechnic)
- [Ms Hannah Leong](#) (NTU Earthlink)
- [Ms Monica Khoo](#) (NTU Corporate Communications Office)
- [Assoc Prof David Butler](#) (Head of NTU Solar Car Competition Team)

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