



ISSUE 2
OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2011

IRENA newsletter

It is hard sometimes to remember that IRENA has not yet quite reached its first birthday – so much has been accomplished in the past nine months. Great progress was made in 2011 and the Agency has now gained the internal strengths and international reputation that will position it for the challenging year ahead.

IRENA's second Assembly is almost upon us and I look forward to the debate, negotiations, networking opportunities and exchange of ideas that the event will bring. The first Assembly successfully allowed us to create structure, consolidate capacities and set our first objectives. Although there are still administrative and procedural details to be decided, and high-level negotiations to undertake, the second Assembly will focus much more on action – in particular the implementation of the 2012 Work Programme and Budget.

OUR YEAR FOR ACTION

2012 is the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, an event in which IRENA, as the only international agency dedicated to the promotion of renewable energy, will play a central and crucial part. Our participation in the UN Secretary-General's High Level Group recognises our potential, but it will be our activities and influence during the year that will cement IRENA's position at the core of this all-important global agenda.

In June the 2012 Rio+20 Conference will take place, and again IRENA's importance has been marked with a central role as special advisor. Much can be achieved at this event and we must ensure that our participation is strong, coordinated and effective.

Internally, we have grown. New staff appointments have been made, REmember, the new delegate's area, is taking shape and promises to be an effective and innovative tool, and IRENA's new Innovation and Technology Centre (IITC) in Bonn is now fully operational.

I wish you all the best in 2012 and look forward to working alongside you in pursuit of our goals.

Adnan Z. Amin

IRENA Director-General

RENEWABLE ENERGY COMES OF AGE WITH IITC OPENING IN BONN

The official opening of IRENA's Innovation and Technology Centre (IITC) in Bonn, Germany on 7 October brought a message to the global community that "renewable energy has come of age" according to IRENA Director-General, Adnan Z. Amin.

After paying tribute to the German government for their support of IRENA and the financial contribution that makes the work of the IITC possible, Mr. Amin added: "We have at hand the means to provide effective solutions, the technology that can transform the path to sustainability and, with the establishment of IRENA, an international framework that can help to bring together all those who seek to contribute to effective solutions."

While IRENA is headquartered in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, the new IITC Bonn office will now be responsible for work on technology development and deployment support, and renewables competitiveness and markets.

The opening ceremony at Bonn's Steigenberger Grandhotel Petersberg was attended by numerous high-level officials, including Dr. Norbert Röttgen, Germany's Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Dr. Guido Westerwelle, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, UAE Special Envoy for

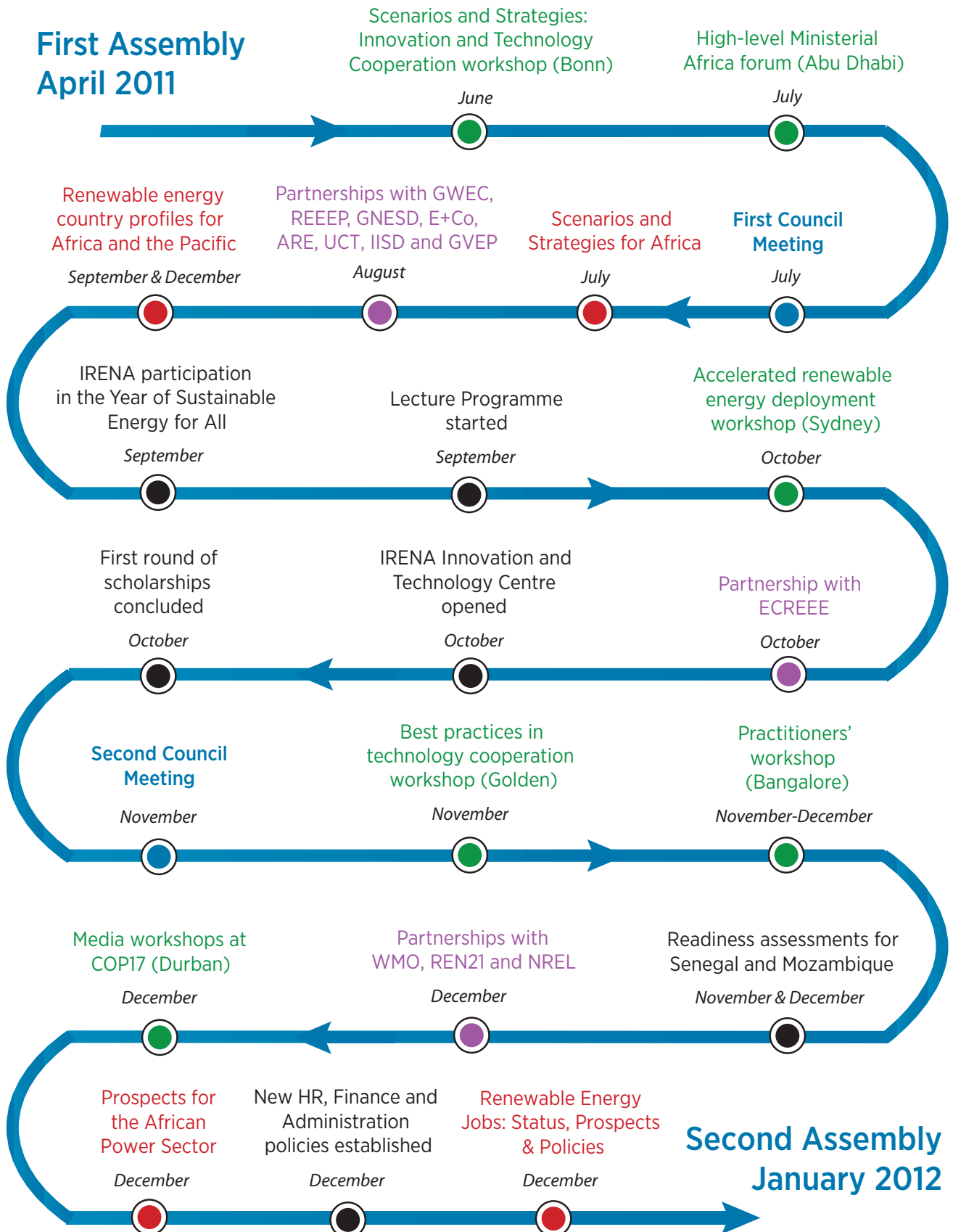
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High-level officials attended the opening of the new Bonn IITC in October.

2011 AT A GLANCE

KEY: IRENA governance meetings Meetings/Workshops Selected Partnerships Publications



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Energy and Climate Change and Chief Executive Officer of Masdar, and the Minister of Energy of the UAE, Mr. Mohamed bin Dhaen Al Hamli.

"Today is a special day – for Bonn, for Germany, but most of all for the global energy agenda," said Minister Röttgen. "IITC is not just yet another innovation centre. It is unique because it is a part of the only international agency for renewable energy."

"The IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre will provide crucial input to the Agency's activities," added Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber.

The potential of renewables in addressing the defining energy challenge of our times – the search for affordable, clean and secure energy for all – was the theme of Towards the Age of Renewables, a panel discussion organised as part of the opening ceremonies. Dr. Röttgen and Mr. Amin were joined as panelists by Mr. Louis Seck, Minister of Renewable Energy, Republic of Senegal; Ms. Maria van der Hoeven, Executive Director, International Energy Agency; and Prof. Dr. Ottmar Edenhofer, Deputy Director and Chief Economist, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and the session was moderated by Dr. Mohamed El-Ashry, Senior Fellow, UN Foundation and Chairman of REN21.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT MARKS SECOND COUNCIL MEETING

IRENA Director-General Adnan Z. Amin praised the Agency's "sense of community" and "strong and active engagement" at the opening of the second meeting of the Council on 13-14 November in Abu Dhabi.

The Director-General gave the 142 participants from 21 Member countries and 44 Observer countries an overview of IRENA's strategic and programmatic activities during 2011, information on its human and financial resources, as well as its policy, capacity building, innovation and technology projects.

During this meeting the Council deliberated the draft 2012 Work Programme and Budget and discussed a draft of the Mid-term Strategy. Each of the three committees serving IRENA's Council – Governance and Legal, Finance, and Policy and Strategy – held meetings in the two days prior to the Council meeting to form views and recommendations for the Council.

The Work Programme and Budget 2012 will now be conveyed to the Second Session of the Assembly, to be held in January 2012, where the Mid-term Strategy will continue to be discussed by Members and high-level officials.

UPCOMING EVENTS – DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

13 January, Abu Dhabi: Pacific leaders meeting

13 January, Abu Dhabi: Global Solar and Wind Atlas – gathering the end-user community

14-15 January, Abu Dhabi: IRENA Assembly

14 January, Abu Dhabi: Technical working group of the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All

15 January, Abu Dhabi: Update on the competitiveness of renewable energy power generation

15-16 January, Abu Dhabi: Principals' Meeting of the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All

16 January, Abu Dhabi: Renewable readiness assessments meeting

16 January, Abu Dhabi: Capacity Building Strategy expert meeting

16-19 January, Abu Dhabi: World Future Energy Summit and launch of the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All

25-29 January, Davos: World Economic Forum Annual Meeting

3-7 February, Delhi: Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2012

The Council congratulated IRENA on the work it has initiated, and the progress it has made since its formal establishment in April 2011. The Members expressed their desire to see the Agency continue to position itself at the centre of renewable energy worldwide and to become the global depository of renewable energy knowledge.

The second meeting of the Council was opened by the Chair, Mr. Martin Hoffman, Deputy Secretary of the Australian Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism and was supported by the Vice-Chair, Mr. Heung Kyeong Park of the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Finally, the United Arab Emirates was elected as the Chair for the 2012 Council, with Sweden as the Vice-Chair.

AFRICA RENEWABLE ENERGY COUNTRY PROFILES LAUNCHED AT DURBAN COP

IRENA launched its Renewable Energy Country Profiles on Africa as part of the events surrounding the 17th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP17) in Durban, South Africa (28 Nov– 9 Dec). The profiles were widely

COP 17 HIGHLIGHTS

distributed and well received by COP17's influential international delegates.

The 108-page colour publication, available on the IRENA website, features the latest available facts, statistics and information from a vast array of sources, combined with IRENA analysis, to give a succinct, comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the situation of renewable energy including energy supply, power capacity, energy access, policies, targets, investment climate, projects and endowment in renewable energy resources.

Each country has its own section featuring maps, graphs, demographic information, a national energy profile, and key energy policies that promoted renewable energy.

IRENA has already published Renewable Energy Country Profiles on the Pacific. In 2012 the series will be extended to cover Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

AFRICAN POWER SECTOR PAPER LAUNCHED AT IRENA SIDE EVENT

A new IRENA Working Paper entitled "Prospects for the African Power Sector" was launched at a side event at the Ushaka Aquarium in Durban on 4 December during the 17th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP17). IRENA hosted the event in cooperation with the South African Department of Energy.

MEDIA TRAINING SESSIONS GIVE JOURNALISTS NEW INSIGHT INTO ENERGY ISSUES

Journalists were given a direct line to resonating stories that make the case for renewable energy deployment at a series of media training workshops organised by IRENA at the 17th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP17) in Durban, South Africa.

The series of six two-hour sessions, taking place in COP17's second week (December 1-7) gathered top experts, experienced journalists and political leaders to explore cutting edge issues and offered participating journalists the chance to question leading authorities from government, the private sector and intergovernmental organisations on major issues; obtain guidance from experienced journalists on identifying story opportunities at the Durban COP and over the coming year; and obtain valuable background materials and information that bring together the most recent and credible facts and figures on renewable energy.

Each session in the well-attended series featured a panel of experts and covered topics such as: Bringing Renewables to Scale – Lessons from South Africa and

Elsewhere; Access to Energy: What Role for Renewable Energy? Subsidies to Energy – How much is being spent, and to what effect? Barriers to Renewable Energy: What are they and how can they be overcome? Unlocking the Door to a Green Economy: Renewable Energy, Job Creation and Economic Growth; and a closing session on Renewable Energy in Africa.



Journalists training sessions at COP17 introduced the media to energy experts.

The working paper, part of the larger Scenarios and Strategies for Africa study, describes various scenarios, not as forecasts of what will happen, but as a route for analysis of the complex interaction of markets, costs and other core drivers in order to identify key trends, development opportunities and critical technologies or assumptions. In this way it provides insights into the opportunities and costs of various renewable energy development pathways.

“Prospects for the African Power Sector” also presents a Renewable Scenario that shows that if the right policies are put in place, there could be a future path for least-cost development, providing universal electricity access in Africa through renewable systems.

BUSY WORKSHOP SEASON PUSHES IRENA MESSAGES

IRENA has been pushing forward the agenda for the deployment of renewable energy at several important international workshops in recent months. Full details of these meetings can be found on the IRENA website.

Bonn (6 October): IRENA held a workshop on Renewables – Competitiveness and Innovation on 6 October 2011, as one of two events marking the inauguration of the new IITC in Bonn, Germany. IRENA’s Director-General Adnan Z. Amin opened the workshop by saying that he hoped that its findings would assist in finalising IRENA’s upcoming work programme.

Many distinguished scientists, industry representatives and government official took part in the workshop which featured sessions on the Economics of Renewables, focusing on competitiveness, costs and benefits; Costs of Systems Integration and Benefits of Renewables; Innovation for Accelerated Development; Upcoming Developments in Renewables; and concluded with a discussion of the IITC Roadmap.

Concluding remarks from the workshop suggested that IRENA could be the leading global think tank on both renewables and energy efficiency; that it was critical that IRENA continue to serve as an objective source of information in its work, both as a global forum for work on innovative policy, frameworks and innovative technologies, and as a partner with individual countries; and that the Agency should continue to stress the importance of encouraging the use of renewable energy to meet the needs of the energy poor.

Sydney (26-28 October): IRENA partnered with the government of Australia and the World Bank, to host a workshop addressing the challenges and opportunities for accelerat-

ing the deployment of renewable energy systems in the Pacific region. It was attended by around 60 representatives and experts from Pacific island countries and territories, other small island developing states, development partners, inter-governmental regional organisations and industry, who shared their experiences and state-of-the-art knowledge on renewable energy technology deployment in the region. The meeting successfully identified some of the specific needs and challenges in deploying renewable energy technology and provided guidance on how IRENA can contribute best to support existing efforts.

Berlin (22 November): Highlights of the Clean Energy Ministerial’s recent Multilateral Solar and Wind Working Group meeting in Berlin, Germany included the presentation of an initial prototype of the Global Atlas on Wind and Solar Energy. This prototype has since been refined to better represent user data needs and integrate additional tools and data sets and is now ready for presentation at the IRENA Assembly in January 2012 where an end-user workshop will be held to obtain further feedback.

The Berlin meeting also discussed progress on the Working Group’s current projects, including updates on current capacity-building efforts; initiated new projects, including the launch of a new activity to analyse economic value along the wind and solar value chain; and made preparations for the third Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM3) taking place in London on 25-26 April 2012, where an enhanced prototype of the Solar Atlas will be presented.

Golden, Colorado (21-23 November): IRENA linked forces with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to hold a workshop aimed at identifying the best practices experiences of IRENA Members and its partner organisations and discuss the best way to highlight and disseminate these practices. Valuable inputs gathered at the meeting will feed into the Best Practices Survey Report that will be presented to IRENA Members for discussion on the Technology Cooperation activity.

Bangalore (30 November-1 December): Ways in which governments, financiers and entrepreneurs can work together to enable the growth of renewable energy entrepreneurship to grow and the creation of rural renewable energy markets were explored in a two-day practitioners’ meeting hosted by IRENA. The meeting provided a platform for sharing lessons and best practices for promoting small and growing enterprises that provide renewable energy services for households, villages and communities. More than 50 participants from different stakeholder groups met to discuss the main challenges faced by local renewable energy entrepreneurs, including financing, capacity and skills, policies and regulations, as well as public awareness and demand for



A two-day practitioners' workshop in Bangalore attracted more than 50 participants.

new technologies. They also sought to identify coherent, practical recommendations that would help governments overcome barriers by creating suitable legal, regulatory and institutional framework conditions.

SENEGAL AND MOZAMBIQUE LEAD FIRST PHASE OF RRA

The first phases of the Renewables Readiness Assessment (RRA) programme, which enables material to be developed in time for the January 2012 IRENA Assembly have taken place in Senegal and Mozambique.

In Senegal the RRA team held fact-finding interviews with stakeholders from the renewable energy sector and took part in working sessions with officials from the Ministry of Renewable Energy, where they were extended political, organisational and technical support. The team also visited a recently electrified village, many kilometres from the main grid that has successfully combined wind, solar and diesel generation in a novel business model.

In its conclusions the RRA team noted that Senegal has a favourable legislative and political framework for renewable energy deployment with two new laws and a number of national institutions promoting renewable energy. There are also two funds – one for biofuels and one for electricity generation – operated by the Ministry of Finance and Economics, and in many cases, such as water pumping and biomass, long-standing experience to draw upon. The team noted constraints and barriers and produced a preliminary list of key actions to be taken forward.

In Mozambique the RRA was undertaken in collaboration with the National Directorate of New and Renewable Energy, Ministry of Energy. The team worked with the key gov-

ernment stakeholders, academia, research organisations and the multilateral and bilateral funding agencies and also made a site visit to a rural school that had been electrified using solar power.

The team noted that Mozambique has a history of successful hydro projects and an excellent resource base that provides reliable low-cost power to the country while surplus power is exported to South Africa. The RRA's key finding was that although large public sector hydro power plants provide sufficient electricity, there also exists a potential to also develop small hydro projects, which can connect to recent grid extensions, reducing distribution losses and provide a framework to promote independent power producers and develop a dynamic private sector.

When the first phase of the RRAs is completed by the end of February 2012 a second phase will focus on further pilot studies in Pacific and Latin America before the programme being rolled out in Africa and selected countries in western and southern Africa.

TWO-DAY HEARING FOR RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

PACB hosted a two-day practitioners' meeting at the prestigious Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore, India (30 Nov-1 Dec). Over 50 participants from diverse backgrounds and more than 20 countries convened to explore the best policies and strategies to enable local renewable energy entrepreneurship.

The workshop provided a platform for an exchange of viewpoints on barriers hindering the deployment of renewable energy technologies in rural areas in developing countries. Discussions also revolved around innovative approaches,

World Meteorological Organisation (WMO):

An important partnership between IRENA and the WMO was announced during the UNFCCC COP17 in Durban last month. Under the partnership, initiated in Cancun at COP 16 last year, the two organisations will jointly implement various activities related to the assessment of renewable energy potentials.

The partnership is important because it brings the WMO's scientific knowledge and networking, technical capabilities and programmes together with IRENA's knowledge and convening power. Under the agreement, IRENA and WMO will exchange their publications and consult on matters of mutual interest, particularly on scientific, technological, regulatory and development issues.

This first agreement will provide meteorological information and scientific expertise on climate services to better serve the needs of the energy community. IRENA will use the information from WMO's international networks to assess renewable energy potentials in countries where this information is not available. The two organisations will develop their respective competences and activities to implement the Global Framework for Climate Services.

At the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) IRENA Director-General Adnan Z. Amin noted that it "illustrates the need for cross-sectoral cooperation to respond to the twin challenges of energy security and climate change. The contribution of meteorology to the accurate mapping of renewable energy potentials is essential and will enable IRENA to effectively address the needs of its stakeholders by providing critical information for decision-making."

conducive policies and appropriate institutional frameworks for creating viable local renewable energy markets.

Participants highlighted that there still remains a long way to go. In many countries small renewable energy businesses compete with government subsidies for grid extension, while current grant-based support schemes do not encourage sustainable markets. Other barriers include a scarcity of appropriate market data, numerous bureaucratic hurdles, and a shortage of skills and capacity in rural populations.

Attendees agreed that successful business models must be scaled up, while simultaneously considering the relevant resources and capacity needs along each stage of the value chain, the technology specific requirements for market development and the solutions provided by local governments and financial institutions.

PARTNERSHIPS

WMO's Secretary-General Mr Michel Jarraud added: "This partnership between WMO and IRENA is symbolic of the extensive synergies developed over the last decade between the meteorological and climate community and the renewable energy community to jointly address the challenge of climate change."

National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL):

IRENA has announced that it will work with the NREL to produce an analysis of innovation policies in a group of OECD countries and emerging economies.

The project will focus on the design of criteria for conducive policy frameworks that reduce cost and accelerate innovation, with a particular emphasis on success/failure factors based on past experience with renewables, and try to extract general policy design guidelines covering the full technology innovation chain, from basic science to commercial deployment.

ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE):

An MoU detailing areas of cooperation has been drawn up between IRENA and ECREEE to include the exchange of knowledge and information on capacity building and renewable energy policy, the assessment of renewable energy potential in West Africa, and other joint activities between the two organisations promoting the deployment of renewable energy.

"It is important for us to listen to the practitioners' point of view in order to convey their specific needs to IRENA member states," commented Dr. Rabia Ferroukhi, Senior Programme Officer – Policy Advice at IRENA. "The meeting identified a number of practical recommendations on how to overcome barriers through enabling policy frameworks, which can hopefully be replicated in other countries."

IRENA INVITES SECOND ROUND OF SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Applications are now being invited for the second round of the prestigious IRENA Scholarships at the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology and a new brochure has been produced by IRENA to help attract the best and brightest

applicants from tomorrow's renewable energy innovators. The Scholarships are the flagship of IRENA's educational programme and are aimed at building national capacity by encouraging innovation, collaborative working and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned.

The brochure, which can be found on the IRENA website, lists the many educational and networking opportunities that will be enjoyed by the 20 successful candidates and gives a step-by-step guide to the application process. Applications for the 2012-2013 academic year close on 31 May 2012.

Meanwhile students on the 2011-2012 programme have been continuing their studies with lectures from international experts including Mr. Simon Müller from the International Energy Agency who presented the latest IEA publication "Deploying Renewables 2011: Best and Future Policy Practice" and Professor Zhang Xiliang from the Institute of Energy, Environment and Economy, Tsinghua University, Beijing, who spoke on issues related to Technology and Innovation Processes for Renewable Energy.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL TAKES IRENA TO INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

IRENA Director-General Adnan Z. Amin has represented the Agency at a series of international meetings over the past few months including the Arabic launch of REN21's Global Status Report, where he made a keynote speech at the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (1 November); the Intersessional Meeting of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, where he serves as a Senior Advisor to Rio+20; and the UNFCCC COP17 (Durban 4-7 December). Mr. Amin also attended the China Wind Power 2011 event in Beijing (16-19 October).

Mr. Amin met with Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of Energy in Nairobi (5-8 November), attended the IITC opening (Bonn 5-7 October) where the REN21 Steering Committee meeting

was also held, and the inauguration of the Gemasolar Plant in Sevilla, Spain (3-4 October).

Other conferences and workshops on Mr. Amin's busy schedule included the Bonn2011 Conference: The Water, Energy and Food Security Nexus – Solutions for the Green Economy (16-18 November); a Monaco workshop on the sustainable use of oceans in the context of the green economy and poverty eradication (28-30 November); the Global Environmental Action International Conference 2011 "Building Sustainable Societies through Reconstruction: Working with the International Community for Regenerating Japan" (Tokyo 13-15 October) and an Oslo conference entitled "Energy for All: Financing Access for the Poor" (10-11 October).

REMEMBER DISPLAYS INNOVATIVE AND EFFICIENT NEW FEATURES

Details of the new REmember system designed to improve communication and collaboration with members have been released. The new delegates' platform boasts many user-friendly, technologically innovative and secure features including: enhanced content management to replace bulky email storage; video-streaming to replace CD distribution; full accessibility by mobile users – all of which provide a greener, more useful and productive site.

Communications and interaction will be made more user-friendly with automatic email or SMS notifications of updates, a shared calendar and a shared collaborative area with discussion boards. Security has also been improved with individual access passwords, different permission levels for content and the encryption of sensitive content.

REmember also features advanced contact and search services for delegates; a file dissemination service with auto-classification of documents, and a "first-stop" home page with an instant overview of alerts, announcements, delegate events, links to member workgroups and other services.

ABU DHABI AND BONN APPOINTMENTS BOOST IRENA'S STRENGTH AND EXPERTISE

A series of new appointments has increased IRENA's programmatic, finance and technological strengths in recent months. In Abu Dhabi Mr. Luay Shalkhoub from Jordan becomes IRENA's Chief Procurement Officer in the Administrative and Management Services office, where Ms. Nadine Zaghari from the US has also been recruited as Administrative Assistant.

The Finance Department has also been strengthened with the appointment of Ms. Noora Khoshen from Somalia as Finance Assistant.

Also based in Abu Dhabi is Mr. Imran Habib Ahmad from Pakistan who takes up his duties as Senior Programme Officer (Regions) in Knowledge Management and Technology Cooperation; Mr. Agbessi Amewoa from Togo joins as Programme Officer - Capacity Building in Policy Advice and Capacity Building.

Finally, there has been one appointment at the new IITC in Bonn – Mr. Rudolf Kempener from the Netherlands, who becomes Analyst, Renewable Energy Technology Roadmaps.