



ISSUE 3  
JANUARY 2012



 IRENA  
International Renewable Energy Agency

# IRENA Newsletter

special  
edition

## SPECIAL ISSUE

- PACIFIC LEADERS MEETING
- IRENA SECOND ASSEMBLY
- WORLD FUTURE ENERGY SUMMIT







## CONTENTS

### Pacific Leaders Meeting

- [IRENA PACIFIC LEADERS MEETING HERALDS NEW REGIONAL ENERGY ERA](#) 2

### IRENA Second Assembly

- [SECOND IRENA ASSEMBLY ENDS ON AUSPICIOUS NOTE](#) 3
- [MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES](#)
  - Ministerial Roundtable on the Medium-term Strategy for IRENA 4
  - Ministerial Roundtable on Cooperation with the Private Sector 5
- [IRENA WORKSHOPS](#)
  - Expert Workshop Shows Support for IRENA's Capacity-Building Policy 6
  - Power Sector Costing Study Gives Decision-Makers Accurate Information 6
  - End Users' Workshop on Global Solar and Wind Atlas 6

### World Future Energy Summit

- [WORLD LEADERS PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR IRENA](#) 7
- [IRENA BOOTH PROVES POPULAR FOCUS POINT FOR WFES NETWORKING](#) 7

### New Partnerships 9





IRENA Director-General Adnan Z. Amin pictured with some of the Pacific leaders attending the meeting

## IRENA PACIFIC LEADERS MEETING HERALDS NEW REGIONAL ENERGY ERA

A Pacific Leader's Meeting held ahead of IRENA's Second Assembly resulted in a public communiqué confirming the Agency's proposed work activities to accelerate renewable energy deployment in the region, which is currently heavily dependent on fossil fuels.

"The Pacific Region is an area where volatile fuel prices, long and costly supply routes and relatively small energy markets have resulted in high costs and limited access to energy," said IRENA Director-General Adnan Z. Amin. "Renewable resources are a competitive, low-cost alternative for fossil fuels for the Pacific, and some inspiring renewable energy goals are being set. Some States are aiming for 100% renewable power supply, while others plan to balance their increased use of renewable against substantial reductions in fuel imports."

The meeting – which included six Heads of State and IRENA Members in the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu – discussed IRENA's proposed role in accelerating renewable energy deployment, opportunities for collaboration with other stakeholders and development partners, and provided guidance on IRENA's new proposals, ensuring that they accord with the Pacific Leaders' policy goals and priorities.

In the communiqué the leaders welcomed IRENA's activities and agreed to work with the Agency to map the renewable energy readiness of the region's countries and territories to measure opportunities for implementation and identify pathways to close any gaps. The leaders will support IRENA in creating a common up-to-date information platform; tackling grid stability issues; fostering a sustainable renewable energy market; conducting capacity-building initiatives and making a special assessment of the region's renewable energy, land use and water resources nexus. "Limited land and water resources, the isolation of many communities and the high cost of polluting fossil fuels have long been a barrier to the region's economic growth," added Prime Minister Henry Puna of the Cook Islands. "At the same time our region includes some of the nations most threatened by climate change and environmental degradation. With IRENA as our partner we can liberate local innovation and industry, bring electricity and light to remote villages, and balance energy costs. We welcome IRENA's assistance in helping our Pacific island countries realise their full potential as they make the transition to a renewables-based future."

## Pacific Leaders Meeting

# IRENA Second Assembly

## SECOND IRENA ASSEMBLY ENDS ON AUSPICIOUS NOTE

The successful conclusion of the Second Assembly of IRENA in Abu Dhabi (January 14-15) signalled a new era for the Agency and recognition of the strategic importance of its mandate – to increase the worldwide adoption and deployment of renewable energy.

“I believe the Second Assembly has shown that IRENA is now emerging onto the world stage as an operational intergovernmental organisation ready to generate change,” said IRENA Director-General Adnan Z. Amin.

In a closing address UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told nearly 1,000 delegates from 137 countries, the European Union and 57 organisations, that the success of the Assembly on the eve of the launch of the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) marked an auspicious start to this important initiative.

“Renewable energy is a central element in meeting the Millennium Development Goals related to poverty alleviation, environmental sustainable development and health,” he added. “Sustainability cannot be tackled by isolated action. IRENA has provided much-needed political impetus and direction to our efforts.”

The Secretary-General said he welcomed the participation of IRENA’s Director-General on his High-level Group for SE4All and said that IRENA would play a key role in meeting the initiative’s objective of doubling the share of renewables in the world’s energy mix by 2030.

“Meeting the needs of developing countries requires dramatic growth in the global energy sector,” said Mr. Amin. “Renewable energy will play an essential role in improving the access of millions to energy, while ensuring





energy security and mitigating the risk of climate change by reducing emissions.”

The Assembly approved IRENA’s 2012 Work Programme and Budget. “The countries’ decision to significantly increase the IRENA core budget, despite current global financial constraints, is a sign of confidence in IRENA and its activities,” said Mr. Amin.

An important outcome of the two-day Assembly was the establishment of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development procedure, which has positive implications for developing countries. Other highlights were the interactive Ministerial Roundtables, one of which discussed cooperation with the private sector, while the second focused on policy issues related to IRENA’s medium-term strategy. Activities also included technical meetings of the Global Solar and Wind Atlas, and on the competitiveness of renewable power generation. The main Assembly events were preceded by a special IRENA Pacific Leaders Meeting and ran alongside meetings of the UN Secretary-General’s High-level Group for SE4All.

IRENA also partnered with the German Federal Government to organise a thematic reception to discuss “the Water-Energy-Food Nexus - The Role of Renewable Energy in the Green Economy” at which Mr. Amin spoke. The meeting was held to consider the links between water, energy and food in the developing world in the light of the UN’s SE4All targets of doubling both the rate of energy efficiency improvements and the share of renewables in the global energy mix.

Many of the Assembly delegates also attended the 2012 World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi where IRENA and its partners hosted an information and discussion booth, joining more than 150 eminent speakers, 650 exhibiting companies and 20 national pavilions under an underlying theme of Powering Sustainable Innovation.

Dr. Sultan Ahmad Al Jaber, President of the First IRENA Assembly, UAE Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy for Energy and Climate Change, officially opened the event and announced the appointment of the incoming President of the Second Assembly, Mr. Salvador Namburete, Minister of Energy for Mozambique.

Mr. Namburete said: “Interest in this Assembly shows that renewable energy has moved from the margins to centre stage of global debate. I salute the IRENA Secretariat for having catalysed this change in a relatively short period



of time and laying the foundation for taking IRENA to even greater heights.”

The Assembly was also addressed by Mr. Sha Zukang, UN Under-Secretary General for the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), who emphasised the role of IRENA in developing the use of renewable energy across the world.

In his final address to the Assembly Dr. Sultan Ahmad Al Jaber said: “If 2011 was about ensuring that IRENA is on the right track, then 2012 will be about proving that we are able – together – to seize this unique and opportune moment to take further concrete action. 2012 will be about empowering IRENA and its leadership.”

## MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES

### Ministerial Roundtable on the Medium-term Strategy for IRENA

Country feedback, advice and insights were sought at a Ministerial Roundtable held during IRENA’s Second Assembly into how the Agency can best refine its proposed Medium-term Strategic Framework for 2012-2015.

High-level representatives, including Ministers of Energy, from about 60 countries attended the Roundtable and were asked to consider four key questions:



*IRENA team members celebrate after the successful conclusion of the Second Assembly*

- » How can IRENA position and structure itself to become a global voice for renewable energy and technologies?
- » How can IRENA position itself to become a renewable energy and technology advisory resource for developing countries?
- » How can IRENA increase the breadth and depth of its regional programmes?
- » How can IRENA establish itself to help developing countries make a business case for renewable energy?

The session, moderated by Mr. Farooq Abdullah, Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, India, began with expert views on the likely impact of IRENA's Medium-term Strategy from Mr. Mohamed El-Ashry, Chairman of REN21's Steering Committee; Mr. Jeremy Oppenheim, Director, McKinsey & Company and Mr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director, Institute of Advanced Sustainability Studies.

Many points were raised in the lively discussion from the floor including the questions of technology transfer; the founding of technology excellence centres; strategy and budget; risk management: the need to act quickly on climate change; and the necessity of having a long-term vision to complement the Medium Term Strategy.

## Ministerial Roundtable on IRENA's Cooperation with the Private Sector

IRENA's cooperation with the private sector and the setting up of a Business Council were debated during the second Ministerial Roundtable organised as part of the Agency's Second Assembly.

The roundtable, moderated by Mr. Carlos Pascual, the US State Department's Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs, began with three presentations: from Mr. Xabier Viteri, CEO of Iberdrola Renovables, who gave an overview of the state of renewable energy technologies and the challenges facing IRENA; author and President of the Foundation on Economic Trends, Mr. Jeremy Rifkin, who described the forthcoming "third industrial revolution" in which changes in communications and energy technology come together to create a new economic paradigm; and Ms Christine Eibs Singer, Managing Director of E+Co, who spoke on the need to remove barriers to financing the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) which will play a crucial role in the development and adoption of renewable energy.

The following debate heard the views of Ministers of Energy, government officials, representatives of international energy organisations and lending institutions. They spoke of the need to consider local economies when considering business models; the importance of regulatory and legal frameworks to encourage stability and investor con-

fidence; the need to bring costs down; the importance of facilitating lending to SMEs in developing countries; and the need for IRENA to facilitate the sharing of knowledge experiences and best practices. Above all they stressed the need for action and said Business Council discussions should not be allowed to become another “talking shop”.

## IRENA WORKSHOPS

### Expert Workshop Shows Support for IRENA's Capacity-Building Policy

An expert workshop on capacity building, held on the margins of IRENA's Second Assembly attracted representatives from 20 countries across Europe, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East as well as delegates from other organisations concerned with the promotion of renewable energy.

Discussions during the meeting confirmed that IRENA was on the right track with the development of its capacity-building support services, with representatives showing their support for the actions initiated by IRENA so far and confirming their readiness to share lessons learned.

The meeting focused on four main lines of discussion.

- » Links to regionally and nationally anchored actors are essential to make capacity building work.
- » There is a need for a global space in which to share and disseminate capacity-building information.
- » Address the demand of the market for qualified human resources able to work in the sector.
- » A comprehensive approach is needed.

Delegates attending the workshop included representatives from the European Union Commission, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development as well as dedicated organisations and associations such as the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership, the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency. Industry associations such as the International Geothermal Association, the World Wind Energy Association, the Sustainable Energy Industry Association for the Pacific, also participated, along with representatives of utilities and a university.

### Power Sector Costing Study Gives Decision-Makers Accurate Information

A presentation on IRENA's Power Sector Costing Study was made to interested delegates as part of the Agency's Second Assembly.

The Costing Study, which is designed to assist governments, recognises that although economics are a key decision factor, the cost of renewable energy has declined rapidly in recent years and decision-making is often either based on outdated numbers, or on figures which are not accurate and have been coloured by the opinion of the author. Costs also vary by project, country and over time.

The completed study, which will be complemented with a cost/benefit analysis, will help IRENA become a trusted source for accurate data that enable cost comparisons between technologies.

Information for the study is being gathered from a variety of sources including business journals, consultancies, auctions and tenders as well as project design studies. A questionnaire, to be initially conducted in 12 countries and sampling 10 projects from each, is also being used to collect actual project data.

Many points were raised in the lively discussion from the floor including the questions of technology transfer; the founding of technology excellence centres; strategy and budget; risk management; the need to act quickly on climate change; and the necessity of having a long-term vision to complement the Medium-term Strategy.

### End Users' Workshop on Global Solar and Wind Atlas

A workshop on the Global Solar and Wind Atlas, held during the IRENA's Second Assembly attracted more than 80 participants from around the world.

The Atlas is designed to combine and expand existing databases on wind and solar potential around the globe into one open web-portal from which user-tailored data can be derived and accessed.

The workshop was divided into three main parts; one explained the latest technical background on the project's work and achievements; another provided regional and national perspectives from end-users; and a third was an interactive audience discussion.

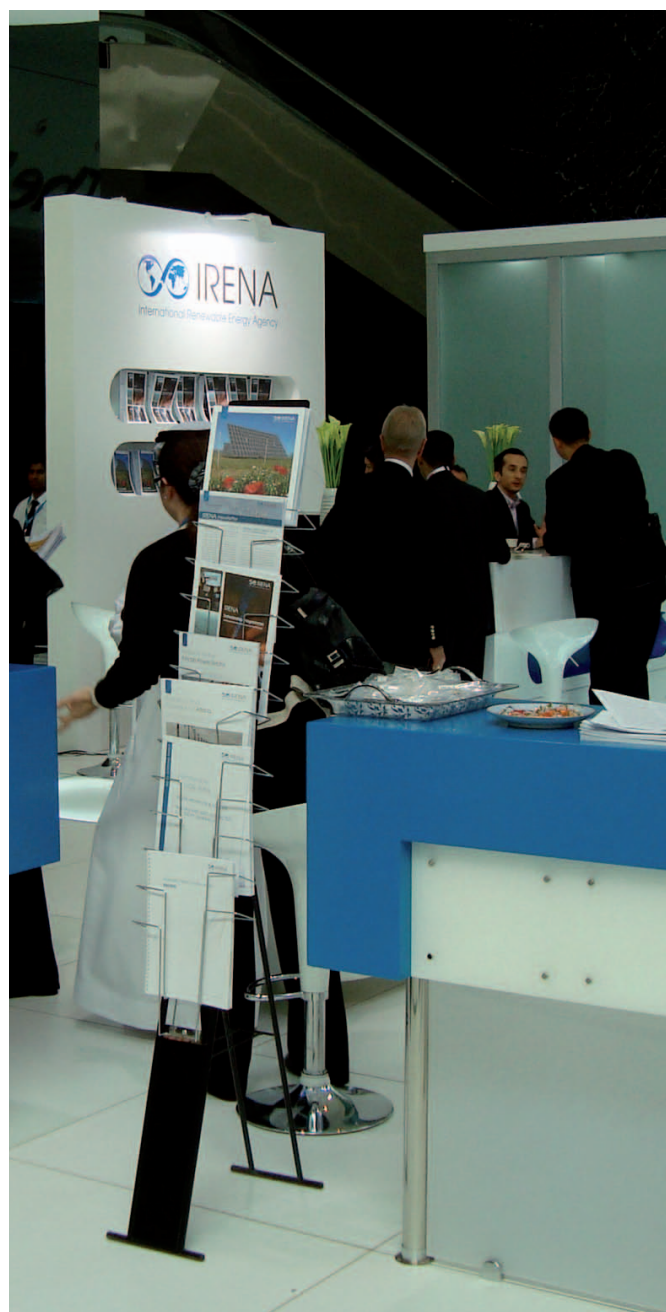


The next steps in developing the Atlas will include consolidating the inputs received from the workshop and translating them into action.

## WORLD LEADERS PLEDGE THEIR SUPPORT FOR IRENA

World leaders used the World Future Energy Summit (WFES) to express their support for the work of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

In a speech at the opening ceremony Mr. Wen Jiabao, Premier of China, said that his country would continue to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with the Agency, while Mr. Kim Hwang-sik, Prime Minister of the Republic



## World Future Energy Summit

of Korea commended the role of IRENA in promoting renewable energy technology.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, visited IRENA's information stand at the WFES where he discussed renewable energy issues with the Agency's Director-General Mr. Adnan Z. Amin.

Earlier UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who launched his International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) at the WFES, had told delegates to the IRENA Second Assembly, which preceded the WFES, they had an important role to play in meeting the initiative's objective of doubling the share of renewables in the world's energy mix by 2030.

## IRENA BOOTH PROVES POPULAR FOCUS POINT FOR WFES NETWORKING

An information and discussion booth hosted by IRENA at the World Future Energy Summit (WFES) proved a popular meeting point for many delegates wanting to learn more about the Agency's work.

High-level visitors took advantage of private meeting facilities to hold talks with IRENA executives while others posed questions to IRENA staff or browsed through the selection of IRENA publications on view.

IRENA partners REEEP, REN21 and IISD also mounted displays within the booth area, which was visited by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, as he toured the exhibition.

The exciting atmosphere of WFES provided an ideal background for the signing of four new partnership

agreements, under which IRENA marked new stages in the Agency's relationships with REN21, Masdar Institute of Science and Technology, the International Energy Agency and Japan's New Energy and Industry Technology Development Organisation (NEDO). (See Partnerships box)

IRENA Director-General Adnan Z. Amin attended the launch of the International Year on Sustainable Energy for All during WFES and also met with Ministers, heads of international organisations and industry figureheads alongside media interviews and his speaking engagements.

At the WFES he spoke at a panel discussion on "Insights from the International Agencies – Building Successful Partnerships; and made a keynote address to the Young Future Energy Leaders programme.

The Director-General also met with many leaders and decision-makers from the world of renewable energy in between WFES events including Ms. Cristiana Figueres,

Executive Director of the UNFCCC, Mr. Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, President of Iceland and other Icelandic officials; Mr. Thomas C. Heller, Executive Director of the Climate Policy Initiative; Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou the President of Niger; Mr. Timur Ivanov, Director General of the Russian Energy Agency; Mr. Daniel Johansson, State Secretary for the Ministry of Enterprise and Energy in Sweden and Mr. Max Bjurh, Sweden's Ambassador to the UAE; Mr. Jim Leape, Director General of the WWF; Mr. Andris Piebalgs, European Commissioner for Development; Mr. Plutarchos Sakellaris, Vice President of the European Investment Bank; Ms. Nina Scheer of the Herman Sheer Foundation; Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP; Mr. Jakob von Uexkull, of the World Future Energy Council; Mr. Mitsuyoshi Yanagisawa, Vice Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry from Japan; as well as other high-level figures from the worlds of industry, banking and academia.

Mr. Amin also gave several media interviews including TV interviews with Ms. Katie Fielder from Dubai One and Ms. Nina Abu Wardeh from BBC World.



*H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, discusses renewable energy issues with IRENA Director-General Mr. Adnan Z. Amin while visiting the Agency's information stand at the WFES.*



## MASDAR INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MIST)

The development of the Global Atlas for Solar and Wind Energy took another step forward today with the signing of a partnership agreement between IRENA and Masdar Institute of Science and Technology.

The aim of the Global Solar and Wind Atlas is to combine and expand existing databases on wind and solar potential around the globe into one open web-portal from which user-tailored data can be derived and accessed.

Under the agreement, Masdar's Research Centre for Renewable Energy Mapping and Assessment will help develop the solar dataset and the architecture of the Global Atlas. In the future, Masdar will maintain the Atlas on its servers in Abu Dhabi. Masdar and IRENA will also work together in other areas related to the Atlas, such as its definition, technical compatibility, methodological harmonisation and data transparency protocols.

## NEW ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION (NEDO)

Global renewable energy deployment has taken another step forward with a new partnership agreement between IRENA – the International Renewable Energy Agency – and Japan's New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organisation (NEDO).

The two organisations will undertake joint activities, including development of a “green city” concept and a capacity-building programme for renewable energy technologies, which will include a series of regional workshops. Other areas of cooperation include information sharing on knowledge and best practices for renewable energy technology and its implementation.

NEDO, founded in 1980, is Japan's largest public research and development management organisation. Its mission is to coordinate technology development in collaboration with the industrial, academic and governmental sectors, contribute to the resolution of energy and global environmental problems, and further enhance Japan's industrial competitiveness. It is widely recognised as a world leader in new energy and energy conservation technologies, including photovoltaic power generation and fuel cells. NEDO's

## PARTNERSHIPS

influence extends beyond Japan to other Asian countries, where its activities include highly regarded PV technology training courses.

## INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY (IEA)

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the International Energy Agency (IEA) have signed a partnership agreement, which will strengthen co-operation between the two organisations. Although the agencies have collaborated since IRENA's inception in 2009 – including developing a joint approach on renewable energy statistics – this agreement will launch a number of new initiatives, such as development of a joint Global Renewable Energy Policies and Measures Database.

The proposed new areas of work include improving the existing IEA database, which will now be known as the IEA/IRENA Global Renewable Energy Policies and Measures Database, and will benefit from additional datasets from IRENA Members and Signatory countries. Both parties will collect and verify information for the database, which will be open to free public access and be updated at least twice a year.

Other points covered in the Letter of Intent include the regular exchange of information, the organisation of joint conferences and workshops and reciprocal participation in technical committee meetings.

There will also be increased collaboration between the two agencies at the Secretariat level, and in energy technology networks, including the IEA's Multilateral Technology Initiatives.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY POLICY NETWORK FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY (REN21)

REN21, the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and IRENA, the International Renewable Energy Agency, have signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding under which the two organisations will work together to advance the renewable energy agenda globally with a range of activities including kick-starting a joint project on building a qualitative and quantitative renewable energy database framework.

**Cover photo:**

Adnan Z. Amin, IRENA Director-General; Salvador Namburete, President of the Second Assembly;  
Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General; Sultan Ahmad Al Jaber, President of the First Assembly

**Back inside cover photos:**

- 1 – Ban Ki-moon (UN)
- 2 – Karsten Sach (Germany)
- 3 – Christine Eibs Singer (E+Co)
- 4 – Maria van der Hoeven (IEA) and Adnan Z. Amin (IRENA)
- 5 – Zitouni Ould-Dada (United Kingdom) and Okko Ziegler (Italy)
- 6 – Mohamed El-Ashry (REN21)
- 7 – Farooq Abdullah (India)
- 8 – Sultan Ahmad Al Jaber (United Arab Emirates)
- 9 – Carlos Pascual (United States)
- 10 – Ogunlade Davidson (Sierra Leone)
- 11 – Conrod Hunte (Antigua and Barbuda) and John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda)
- 12 – 'Akau'Ola (Tonga)



IRENA Secretariat  
C67 Office Building, Khalidiyah (32<sup>nd</sup>) Street  
P.O. Box 236, Abu Dhabi  
United Arab Emirates  
[www.irena.org](http://www.irena.org)

Copyright 2012