

Eighteenth meeting of the Council
Abu Dhabi, 5-6 November 2019

Background Note

IRENA's Areas of Engagement in Supporting Renewable Energy Deployment

1. Regional cooperation is a key element to boost efficiencies and bring about economies of scale in the deployment of renewable energy technologies. Working from the outset to promote regional cooperation, IRENA worked to date to provide tailored support to create frameworks more conducive to renewable energy investments. Several programmatic streams were created to this end, particularly the Clean Energy Corridor (CEC) initiatives and Regional Action Agendas. IRENA's inclusive membership and clear mandate, underpinned by its expert knowledge, have made it a sought-after partner by regional organisations and development partners in undertaking such efforts.
2. Overall, IRENA's regional work contributed greatly to building technical knowledge and capacity, and enabling environments for an increased deployment of renewable technologies. This success can be attributed to several key factors. Among those is the high-level political commitment, and IRENA's emphasis on local leadership and guidance. Along with active stakeholder engagement, significant progress has been made in many regions.
3. The action agendas identified for each regional initiative are intended to be fully aligned with the broader regional and national development agendas driven by climate objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To maximise impact while efficiently using its limited resources, IRENA will seek to be proactive in both anticipating the needs of Members and creating the partnerships that can accelerate progress in the development and deployment of renewable energy. To be more targeted in its programmatic focus on enabling action on the ground, IRENA will organise its work around 15 sub-regions.
4. New forms of collaboration will be required to engage the private sector and cross-industry stakeholders, most notably the financing and investment entities. This is particularly important given that many IRENA Members face considerable challenges to make projects bankable and to access finance with reasonable terms. To create strategic links with those and to share the objective of a sustainable and climate-safe future to all, the Agency has been formalising results-oriented partnerships with several UN entities, multilateral development banks and others to facilitate renewable energy investments. One concrete step forward in this effort was the announcement of the Climate Investment Platform during the United Nations Climate Action Summit 2019 by IRENA, Sustainable Energy for All (SEforAll), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in coordination with the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The Platform intends to facilitate integrated and streamlined support to countries in scaling up sustainable energy investments.

5. To be proactive in this work, IRENA will convene regular *Forums*, tailored to regional and sub-regional needs and requirements. The *Forums* will be shaped by the Agency's latest empirical and analytical information, underpinned by a thorough understanding of countries' needs and existing partner activities. Regular dialogues among and with countries will also help prioritise IRENA's technical assistance and capacity building efforts while promoting its work achieved to date. This strategic orientation is a natural step forward, given that renewable energy is perceived as both a key element in the necessary transition towards sustainability and as a competitive alternative to meeting the global demand. Fully aligned with the operation of the Climate Investment Platform, these *Forums* will be tailored to the specific needs and priorities of the sub-regions identified by IRENA for operational purposes. In addition to providing a platform for discussing policy, regulatory and technical challenges hindering renewables deployment, they will also highlight promising renewable energy projects and assist developers, financiers, investors and service and technology providers bring projects to fruition.

Objective of the session

6. This session will seek feedback from the Council on the proposed approach of organising IRENA's knowledge, analytical, convening and supporting work along regional and sub-regional areas. It will encourage Members to reflect on benefits of such an approach to IRENA's mission and how their national priorities and needs can benefit in this regard.

Guiding questions

- Are there new partner and stakeholder groups that IRENA needs to engage with to enable action on the ground?
- Which types of synergies could be explored at a regional/sub-regional level (e.g., investment frameworks, project design, capacity building, developer support)?
- Are there existing venues that need to be considered when advancing sub-regional engagement through IRENA Forums?

Associated publications

- [Unlocking Renewable Energy Investment: The role of risk mitigation and structured finance](#) (2016)
- [Global Landscape of Renewable Energy Finance](#) (2018)
- [Advancing Renewables in Developing Countries](#) (2019)