

REVIEW

FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

A PERIODIC BRIEF ON RENEWABLE ENERGY

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INSIGHTS FROM THE FIFTH LEGISLATORS FORUM

The fifth IRENA Legislators Forum gathered parliamentarians from over 30 countries to discuss parliamentary action to accelerate the energy transformation while engaging communities and promoting a fair and just transition. The meeting took place in Abu Dhabi on 10 January 2020 in conjunction with the tenth Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

Parliamentarians participating in the Forum were welcomed by IRENA's Director-General, Francesco La Camera, as well as Saqr Gobash, Speaker of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), César Ernesto Litardo Caicedo, Speaker of the National Assembly of Ecuador, Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment of the UAE, Claude Turmes, Minister of Energy of Luxembourg and former Member of the European Parliament, and Gabriela Cuevas-Barron, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Senator from Mexico.



Parliamentarians shared their experiences and the challenges they faced in adopting adequate mitigation and adaptation policies that can support countries in the deployment of renewable energy and discussed national policies and measures to further improve the engagement of women in the renewables sector.

Participants of the IRENA Legislators Forum were also invited to attend IRENA's Public-Private Dialogue to discuss how to adapt market design and policies to support the integration of high shares of variable renewable energy and scaling up private sector investment to accelerate Africa's energy transition.

[Agenda of the 2020 IRENA Legislators Forum]

WHY PARLIAMENTARIANS MATTER

Parliamentarians are instrumental in formulating and approving laws that govern the deployment of renewable energy and in overseeing their implementation, Francesco La Camera told the fifth IRENA Legislators Forum, giving welcome remarks to the forum as IRENA's Director-General for the first time.

The Director-General emphasised the importance of the coming decade to fulfil the commitment set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and stressed that more investment is required to achieve a climate-safe global energy system beyond 2030. He also highlighted the crucial role of parliamentarians in gathering the necessary support from communities to move climate policies and underlined the importance of the IRENA Legislators Forum in inspiring the development of individualised policies, pursuing active engagement and initiating concrete steps towards transformative action on the ground.

As the energy transformation takes place, the IRENA Legislators Forum provides great opportunities for parliamentarians to exchange national experiences and solutions to meet their countries' needs for clean energy, the Speaker of the Federal National Council of the UAE, Saqr Ghobash said. He also cited the pivotal role of the Council in providing the legal framework to establish and develop renewable energy projects in pursuit of the UAE's goal to reach 50% clean energy by 2050.

Dr. Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment, emphasised the need to develop robust and flexible regulations and policy frameworks and leverage public-private partnerships. While underlining the renewable energy capacity increase in the Gulf Region in the last five years, he stressed the need to double the pace to meet the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and agreed on the importance of the IRENA Legislators Forum to explore strong regulatory frameworks for the global energy transition.



Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment, Saqr Ghobash, Speaker of the UAE Federal National Council and Francesco La Camera, Director-General, IRENA

Mr Claude Turmes, Minister of Energy of Luxembourg and former Member of the European Parliament, noted that the Forum has become much larger and more globalised since its first session in 2016. He emphasised that it should contribute to underpinning stable legal frameworks that enable access to finance and facilitate investment from both government and private sector, including into grids, education and training.

Further echoing this idea, Mr César Ernesto Litardo Caicedo, Speaker of the National Assembly of Ecuador said that investors, governments and legislators must work together to implement the use of renewable energy, while he also stressed that the joint force of parliamentarians worldwide can foster innovative solutions to advance the energy transformation.

Ms. Gabriela Cuevas-Barron, President of the IPU and Senator from Mexico, pointed out the responsibility of parliamentarians to use their power and authority to help transform all national legislations in aid of changing the planet. She also emphasised that parliamentarians can make a real difference through international co-operation, and commented that the IPU is ready to work with national parliaments as a bridge with civil society, governments, and other international actors.

BOOSTING WOMEN'S ROLE IN THE SECTOR

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

- » **In 2019, women represented 32% of the renewable energy workforce, substantially higher than the 22% average reported for the global oil and gas industry;**
- » **Women empowerment in the renewable energy sector can be substantially improved in both the modern energy and the access contexts by unlocking new livelihood opportunities.**

In recent years, the number of people living without electricity dropped, but there are still roughly 800 million people living without adequate access to energy. Women are the worst affected, especially in terms of personal safety, with too many areas without enough lighting on the streets, and poor health conditions when cooking in poorly ventilated spaces, said Vandana Chavan, Member of Parliament from India and moderator of the session of the IRENA Legislators Forum. The disproportionate impact of the lack of energy access on women needs to be more widely acknowledged, she added.

The integration of gender perspectives and energy access programmes has been identified as important to increase gender inclusivity in the renewable energy sector. In this regard, measures to improve women's



Abshiro Soka Halake, Member of Senate, Kenya

engagement in the sector were discussed in the thematic session of the 5th IRENA Legislators Forum.

Abshiro Soka Halake, Senator and Chairperson of the Centre for Multiparty Democracy in Kenya, elaborated on the importance of the role of women in the renewable energy sector as a prosumer, which is a combined term of producer and consumer, rather than just as a consumer. Pointing out the low percentage of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields, she highlighted the necessity of promoting laws and policies to increase the engagement of women in the renewable energy sector as workforce and entrepreneurs. Fostering women in the field and building their networks are interconnected to each other, she added.

To overcome gender norms and lack of opportunities to participate in the renewable energy sector which is commonly perceived as being more suitable for men, parliamentarians should adopt policies and programmes that provide women with opportunities to participate in STEM areas and make the education system more inclusive, she continued.

In the transition to renewable-based energy systems, including off-grids and mini-grids, public and private investments will significantly increase in the next few years, especially in developing countries in Africa and Asia, added Senator Halake. She reflected on how legislators can enable women to participate in the value chains of these new energy systems. To promote gender empowerment, governments' budgets and private investments should all support women's participation as a pre-requisite for making the energy transitions a reality.

Bärbel Höhn, former Member of Parliament from Germany, and current Chair of the Global Renewables Congress, highlighted that cross-gender collaboration should be addressed by parliaments through cross-party coalitions. In 2019, renewables-based electricity scored 46% of Germany's entire electricity and surpassed the share of fossil fuels for the first time. This success, she added, was possible due to cross-party work that allowed to draft and adopt the Renewable Energy Law (EEG) together, with support from a big coalition of parties. The success of this experiment can further inspire cross-gender collaboration in support of accelerating renewable energy deployment.



Bärbel Höhn Chair of the Global Renewables Congress and former Member of Parliament, Germany

Mrs Höhn presented the “Green People’s Energy” programme of the German International Co-operation Agency (GIZ – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), as an example promoting women’s empowerment by offering special training courses provided only to women. In presenting that, Mrs Höhn pointed out the need for parliaments to start promoting laws and policies that strengthen women’s participation and education in the renewable energy sector by establishing mandatory quota for women. Women’s participation in the renewable energy sector can be promoted only by encouraging women to take responsibility and supporting network building among women, she added.

Before concluding her intervention, Mrs Höhn also highlighted the relevance of the decentralisation of energy and incurred benefits for women’s empowerment, especially in the rural areas of developing countries. Instead of spending hours on the street looking for energy sources such as biomass or being stuck in poorly ventilated kitchens, women can save their time and health with efficient cooking systems and other innovative devices that benefit from the deployment of decentralised renewable power plants. Decentralisation of energy is an efficient and democratic way to achieve gender empowerment, and renewable energy can offer women new and different jobs that bring greater benefits for communities. Renewables can offer than conventional energy more in terms of expanding energy access and creating gender equality.

“Women have to be involved at all stages, from policymaking to planning to actually action being taken” – Vandana Chavan, Member of Parliament, India

Sam Onuigbo, Member of the Federal House of Representatives of Nigeria, highlighted the importance of enactment of renewable-based solutions for women and their actual implementation, while sharing his own experience on women’s significant contribution to the renewable energy sector.



Samuel Onuigbo, Member of the Federal House of Representatives, Nigeria

Parliamentarians must endorse and approve laws and policies that empower women and make sure that women are put in a condition to benefit from them. He also emphasised the specific duties that legislators must consider while working on legislation in support of women’s engagement in the renewable energy sector. This includes interacting with women, identifying their concerns, enacting laws to convey them, and making the solutions available to women by providing funding or critical infrastructure also through investments from the private sector.



Charity Kathambi Chepkwony, Member of Parliament, Kenya

As a supplemental intervention towards the necessity of increasing the relevance of women in STEM fields, participants highlighted the importance of ensuring a better integration of social science disciplines - in which women are already dominant - in the renewable energy sector. This would increase gender empowerment and benefit also the advancement and deployment of the renewable energy sector by widening the sources of input from other disciplines. Furthermore, there is a global need to deal with social issues also in relation to the deployment of renewable energy, and technology must be combined with social sciences and finance, areas in which women already have competence, added Bärbel Höhn.

Charity Kathambi Chepkwony, Member of Parliament from Kenya, stressed that women are still given very little space or importance in the climate change discourse, even though women and children represent most of the population affected by climate change, especially when related to floods, droughts, and landslides.

In concluding her remarks, Mrs Chepkwony also emphasised the importance for legislators to continue working to advance women empowerment and engagement in the renewable energy sector and to benefit from international gatherings such as the IRENA Legislators Forum to share more information, especially on policies and funding, and start working at regional level through cross-country and cross-party initiatives to support the development of the renewable sector.

“Women are the main actors in the national economy... strongly involved in processing local products” – Adji Diarra Mergane, Member of Senate, Senegal

Adji Diarra Mergane, Member of Senate from Senegal, placed great emphasis on the role of parliamentarians in empowering women within the renewable energy sector. Sharing the experience of Senegal, where the country’s parliament demanded that the gender element be taken into account and included in relevant laws, she explained that women’s participation became a reality in all elements of public policy of all ministries, especially when implementing long-term policies and strategies.

Women are the main actors in the national economy as they are strongly involved in processing local products and in other activities of rural sectors, such as agriculture and forestry, she added before concluding that thanks to the adoption of national laws that promote women empowerment and provide them with clean sources of energy, women can continue their economic activities, produce local products and sustain their rural communities.

During the discussion, many requests were addressed to IRENA to further contribute to gender empowerment and continue working on emphasising the importance and relevance of women in the renewable energy sector, especially in developing countries. In line with previous research studies already conducted by IRENA, legislators expressed the need to obtain up-to-date data and information at national and regional level to ensure that adequate and relevant actions are taken by national parliaments and regional parliamentary bodies.

Considering the nature of IRENA as an intergovernmental organisation, legislators attending the IRENA Legislators Forum encouraged IRENA to use its convening power to support female legislators promoting and sponsoring renewable energy and climate laws, by enhancing the gender perspective.

CLIMATE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION POLICIES

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

- » **Countries need to be increasingly ambitious in their pledges to scale up renewables and cut energy-related carbon dioxide emissions;**
- » **Meeting the climate challenge would require cumulative investments of USD110 trillion in the energy sector through 2050;**
- » **An integrated policy framework will be essential to ensure a just transition.**

Legislators, as representatives of people and communities, are able to directly and effectively approach and communicate with local stakeholders. In a dedicated session that explored mitigation and adaptation policies that support the deployment of renewable energy across regions, parliamentarians shared their views on the importance of engaging at the local community level, while thinking globally.

In approving laws and budgets, legislators are responsible for enhancing the speed and scale required to mitigate the effects of climate change, as well as transform global energy systems with the deployment of renewable energy, stressed Kandeh Yumkella, Member of Parliament of Sierra Leone and former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All.



Kandeh Yumkella, Member of Parliament, Sierra Leone, and former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All

Radha Kumari Gyawali, Member of Parliament from Nepal, emphasised that there is a need to strengthen international co-operation as climate change is a global problem which should be addressed at a global scale. She noted, as an example, that while the melting of glaciers in the Himalayas is not caused by Nepal alone, the country is inequitably facing the repercussions in its own. International co-operation and assistance is required to support the country with this, to enable it to meet its national targets in terms of mitigation and adaptation strategies.



Radha Kumari Gyawali, Member of Parliament, Nepal

According to Andries Gryffroy, Member of the Flemish Parliament and Member of the Senate of Belgium, local authorities are more important than national authorities in supporting the deployment of renewable energy to promote mitigation and adaptation policies: in Europe, local and regional authorities implement 70% of climate mitigation measures and 90% of climate adaptation policies. They represent one-third of public spending, and two-thirds of public investment. National authorities need to support them with effective instruments, good governance structures, simple policies, and sufficient resources. Legislators also need to ensure that the cost of the energy transition is acceptable for consumers.

The effects of economic incentives on the deployment of renewable energy in Italy were positive as they helped to reach national targets for 2020 already in 2017, said Loredana De Pretis, Member of the Italian Senate. The Senate is now pushing for a new green deal in which the tax system is expected to further push towards green investments, she concluded.

Taxation and detaxation were repeatedly stated by different countries within the context of their respective strategies. In Tunisia, the country minimised the taxes on renewable energy technology and legislators put pressure on the government to commit to producing 30% of its electricity from renewables by 2030, added Leila Ouled Ali, Member of the Tunisian Parliament.

“Legislators have the opportunity to create the stable environment to crowd in the amount of investments and the technologies we need to deploy” – Kandeh Yumkella, Member of Parliament, Sierra Leone

In Mali, legislators drafted a bill to adopt the detaxation on any device or service related to the production of renewable energy to reduce the price of renewables for the whole population and help speed up the pace of the energy transition, emphasised Ndoula Thiam, Member of Parliament, while stressing that compared to conventional energy, the cost of renewable energy is still higher in many countries, including Mali.

Adji Diarra Mergane, Member of Parliament of Senegal, agreed that budgetary issues still represent serious constraints on the practical implementation of laws and policies that promote the deployment of renewables in support of tackling the challenges posed by climate change.



Adji Diarra Mergane, Member of Senate, Senegal



Barry Gardiner, Member of Parliament and Shadow Secretary of State for International Trade and Shadow Minister for International Climate Change, United Kingdom

She applauded the IRENA Legislators Forum for providing opportunities to have an exchange of best practices amongst parliamentarians and urged fellow legislators to take these good practices back to their countries to implement their own laws in practice.

Long-term commitments, as well as long-term plans with high ambitions, are compulsory to attain long-term goals, achieve climate targets and support the deployment of renewable energy, stated Guy Lentz, Co-ordinator for EU and International Energy Policies for Luxembourg. He also added that legal instability is significantly slowing down the implementation of renewable energy, and encouraged legislators to ensure stable long-term commitments by avoiding changing legislative frameworks every 3 or 5 years.

In this regard, Barry Gardiner, Member of Parliament and Shadow Secretary of State for International Trade and Shadow Minister for International Climate Change of the United Kingdom, emphasised that setting a clear long-term climate goal, which is net-zero within the second half of this century, is the only way to fight against climate change and stay within the 1.5-degree threshold.

The discussions demonstrated that although there are still many limitations to promoting renewable energy deployment, a variety of avenues towards establishing adequate mitigation and adaptation policies exist in several national and regional contexts, as shared in the 5th IRENA Legislators Forum. International co-operation on funding, technology, and knowledge sharing, such as know-how and best practices, is of great importance. No single country can stop climate change alone. Now is the time to make each local action global, in line with our universal goal.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE DIALOGUE ON RENEWABLES

The IRENA Coalition for Action calls on all governments to urgently enhance their climate pledges, deploy higher shares of renewables and increase investments.

Current energy systems are falling short of supporting the transition to a renewables-based system, participants of the third Public-Private Dialogue, organised by IRENA's Coalition for Action, agreed. The policy makers, legislators, private sector and civil society representatives present, called for greater system flexibility, more active participation of market actors, and a redesign of today's power system setup to accommodate higher shares of renewables.

"We should be seeing explosive renewable energy growth, yet this is not the case everywhere in the world. Creating encouraging market designs will be key," emphasised Ben Backwell, CEO of the Global Wind Energy Council and co-chair of the Coalition's 'Business and Investors Group'. This sentiment set the tone for discussions focused on how to achieve a 100% renewables-based power system.

Over the past decade, many countries have witnessed tremendous advancements in renewables according to the latest findings of the Coalition for Action in its white paper on utilities in transition to 100% renewables. Rainer Hinrichs-Rahlwes, Vice-President of the European Renewable Energies Federation and co-chair of the Coalition's 'Towards 100% renewable energy' working group, pointed out that: "More and more countries, regions, cities and utilities around the world recognise the benefits of shifting to very high shares of renewables, not only in the power but in all end-use sectors too."



Ben Backwell, CEO of the Global Wind Energy Council and co-chair of the Coalition's 'Business and Investors Group'



Safiatou Alzouma, African Renewable Energy Initiative

Addressing perceived risk

Scaling-up investment is critical to advancing renewable energy, particularly in regions with high renewable energy potential, such as Africa. Participants of the dialogue demonstrated significant interest in investing in Africa, however the presence of real and perceived risks limits the flow of bankable renewable energy projects — both small and large.

While each country presents unique investment landscapes, common solutions were identified to manage and mitigate risk, including the creation of long-term and stable policy frameworks; improving market design with a focus on de-risking investments; and adopting renewable-focused integrated planning strategies.

Participants also agreed that early involvement of local communities, continued collaboration among all stakeholders, and inclusive decision-making processes are key to ensuring that renewable energy projects lead to an inclusive development.

In this context, Francesco La Camera, Director-General of IRENA highlighted the importance of platforms for public-private exchange and knowledge sharing. "The Public-Private Dialogue has become an important platform for IRENA to engage a variety of stakeholders in the discussion on how we can better work together to scale up deployment of renewables and maximise socio-economic benefits," he stated.

Throughout the meeting participants expressed concern that renewable energy targets, and particularly the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) adopted under the Paris Agreement, fall short of what is needed to meet global climate objectives, especially in wealthy and high-carbon emitting nations.



“Significantly more ambitious renewable energy targets and domestic frameworks are required to achieve the Paris Agreement goals” – Bruce Douglas, Deputy CEO, Solar Power Europe

When reporting back from the meeting at the opening of the IRENA Assembly, Bruce Douglas, Deputy CEO of Solar Power Europe, on behalf of the Coalition for Action, called on all governments to urgently enhance their NDCs this year and reminded countries that, “significantly more ambitious renewable energy targets and domestic frameworks are required to achieve the Paris Agreement goals.”

The dialogue was organised by IRENA’s *Coalition for Action* on the side-lines of the IRENA Tenth Assembly on January 10. The meeting sought to foster a common understanding of the steps necessary to urgently increase the share of renewable energy and accelerate investments.

See also the Coalition’s [full report](#) on the Public-Private Dialogue to the Assembly.



The IRENA Coalition for Action is a multi-stakeholder network that facilitates dialogue on industry trends, best practices and actions to accelerate the global energy transformation.

The Coalition brings together approximately 100 leading players in renewable energy, including representatives from the private sector, industry associations, civil society organisations, research institutes and international organisations. Coalition members engage on key renewable energy topics through working groups, public-private dialogues and various strategic and programmatic activities of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

REPORT TO ASSEMBLY ON FIFTH LEGISLATORS FORUM

On 10 January 2020, more than 130 Members of Parliament from over 40 countries gathered for the 2020 edition of the IRENA Legislators Forum, aiming to highlight the key role of renewables in accelerating the energy transformation. The meeting put a specific emphasis on the need to engage communities in promoting a fair and just transition.

In this regard, discussions focused on the significant role that parliamentarians can play to advance the adoption and effective implementation of national policies that contribute to mitigation and adaptation efforts and support gender empowerment efforts through the deployment of renewable energy.

Participants in the 2020 IRENA Legislators Forum emphasised the key role of parliaments in promoting the deployment of renewable energy projects, including in rural and local communities, as well as ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of national commitments. Support for renewables aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations and national climate pledges under the Paris Agreement.

To that end, legislators discussed key ways to emphasise the urgency of action and increase ambition at the national level, foster social dialogue and raise public awareness about of renewable energy, and engage local communities in the energy transformation.

Participants in the 2020 IRENA Legislators Forum underlined that the need to encourage citizens and communities to actively participate in the acceleration of the energy transformation. Parliamentarians hold a unique position to boost public support and raise awareness about the socio-economic benefits of renewable energy, including jobs, increased welfare and local value creation.

Legislators discussed ways to emphasise the urgency of action, raise national ambitions, foster dialogue and engage local communities



Vandana Chavan, Member of Parliament from India, reporting back to IRENA Tenth Assembly on the 2020 IRENA Legislators Forum

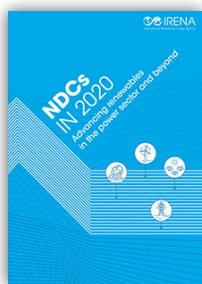
Parliamentarians recognised the responsibility in contributing to national efforts and measures that could improve women's engagement and representation at all levels especially in the renewables sector, and explored ways to prioritise women's empowerment in national development strategies through the adoption of policies, gender targets and actions at the local level to accelerate development of renewables. Furthermore, gender inclusiveness can be enhanced through targeted capacity building, education and training for women, participants noted.

Participants emphasised the importance they attach to IRENA's pivotal role as the lead inter-governmental agency in the global energy transformation, and encouraged the continuation of its engagement with Parliamentarians to promote a fair and just transition through renewables. They proposed that the Assembly request the Secretariat to continue to work with and support Parliamentarians in accelerating the energy transformation on the ground.

Parliamentarians further encouraged IRENA to engage in parliamentary meetings at the regional level, in synergy with regional parliamentary networks and assemblies as well as other relevant regional and international entities to further support Parliamentarians in their consideration of legislation necessary for the energy transformation.

In concluding the fifth IRENA Legislators Forum, Parliamentarians once again recognised the Forum as an effective way and platform to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and national experiences, while accentuating the multiple interlinkages of the energy transformation with the deployment of renewable energy.

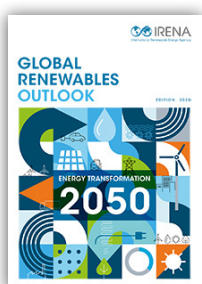
SELECTED PUBLICATIONS



NDCs IN 2020

Countries need to be increasingly ambitious in their pledges to scale up renewables and cut energy-related carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. The first round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) pledged under the Paris Agreement are not sufficient to meet climate goals. The new NDC round starting in 2020 represents an important chance to strengthen targets for renewables. This brief, released at the global climate meeting COP25 in late 2019, underlines the opportunity to address the climate threat, decarbonise energy use and simultaneously achieve multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

IRENA, December 2019



GLOBAL RENEWABLES OUTLOOK: ENERGY TRANSFORMATION 2050

IRENA's new flagship outlook report highlights climate-safe investment options until 2050, policies for transition and specific regional challenges. It also explores options to eventually cut emissions to zero. As the world seeks durable economic solutions, accelerated renewable energy uptake can drive sustainable development, boost well-being and create tens of millions of new jobs. The response to COVID-19 crisis could also lay the foundations for a Global Green Deal.

Key findings are also available in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian and Spanish.

IRENA, April 2020



PEOPLE, PLANET AND PROSPERITY: RAISING CLIMATE AMBITION THROUGH RENEWABLES

Renewable energy is a key solution and the most practical action tool to address climate change. With rapid uptake of renewables, carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions would be about 70% lower than in recent years, IRENA analysis shows. Beyond achieving climate stability, the shift offers long-term socio-economic advantages.

Available in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian and Spanish.

IRENA, July 2019

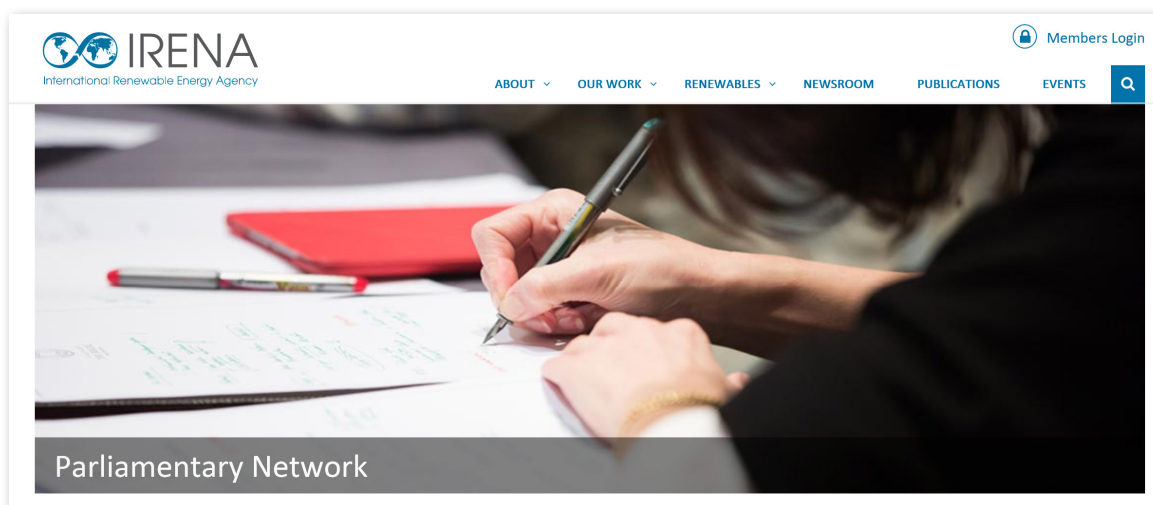


REVIEW FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS: ISSUE 10 A GENDER PERSPECTIVE ON THE GLOBAL ENERGY TRANSFORMATION

The ongoing transformation of the energy system, driven by the widespread shift to renewables, is bringing far-reaching, systemic change to economies and societies worldwide and offers important opportunities for greater inclusion and equality. Amid the accelerating changes in global energy use, the renewable energy industry needs to engage and retain more women – and promote them – to fill its growing needs for skills.

English Français Español

ENGAGING WITH IRENA THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



RReview for Parliamentarians



Legislators Forum



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