



ISSUE 1

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IRENA newsletter

Recognition of IRENA's importance has come quickly in its first six operational months. Invitations to participate in the UN Secretary General's High Level Group on Sustainable Energy, a key role next year as a partner in the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All global campaign, and as a special advisor for the 2012 Rio+20 Conference are achievements we can all be proud of.

Developments such as these prove that, while IRENA may be a new Agency, it is bursting with ideas and innovation and already a powerful and credible voice in the interlinked worlds of renewable energy and sustainable development.

PICKING UP THE PACE

Our own operations have broken new ground with a successful high-level Africa meeting and our contribution to the Pacific Leaders Forum. Internally, many successful activities have been undertaken – inaugural meetings of the Council and various Committees; speedy implementation of the Work Programme; the strengthening of organisational infrastructure and the hiring of new staff.

Full details of these and other activities can be found here, in the first issue of IRENA's quarterly newsletter, a publication designed to keep staff, governments, and partners abreast of the developments in the world of renewable energy and the role that IRENA is playing in their progress.

To realize IRENA vision the Agency must become, and be recognized as, the global authority on renewable energy. We still have much to do. Over the next six months our new IITC centre in Bonn will become fully operational, we will build on our Africa and Pacific initiatives and increase our efforts in knowledge and technology, policy advisory services and capacity building. This newsletter and our website will keep staff and stakeholder abreast with developments.

Adnan Z. Amin

Director-General, IRENA

FIRST COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS IRENA'S ACHIEVEMENTS

The Inaugural Council meeting, held in Abu Dhabi from 10-11 July, was an historic moment in IRENA's evolution, said the Director General in his opening address highlighting the many achievements already made by the Agency. All three of the Agency's permanent organs (Assembly, Council and Secretariat) were now in place and fully operational.

Considerable progress had already been made in implementing the 2011 Work Programme. Members agreed to establish three Committees which are Finance, Governance and Legal, and Policy and Strategy.

Mr Amin stressed the progress made at the Africa High-Level Consultative Forum, which took place immediately before the Council Meeting; the plans made for Pacific island engagement; and the increase in partnering activities. He said IRENA would play an important role next year as a core partner in the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All and as an advocate for renewable energy at the 2012 Rio+20 Conference.

The Inaugural Council Meeting was attended by 21 Council members and 32 observers, representing a total of 53 countries. High-level delegates included the Prime Minister of Tonga, Ministers of Energy from Eritrea, Senegal and South Africa, as well as the Vice-Minister for Energy of Poland and India's Secretary for New and Renewable Energy.

Council members and delegates after their Inaugural Meeting.





The new Governance and Legal Committee met in Abu Dhabi.

NEW COMMITTEES SECURE GLOBAL REPRESENTATION

Global interest was evident at the first meetings of two of IRENA's new Committees – Governance and Legal and Policy and Strategy – which attracted delegates from all around the world.

Institutional issues – including rules of procedure, an agreement on privileges and immunities for IRENA, and a draft policy on ethics and conflict of interest – were debated by 21 delegates from 12 countries at the Governance and Legal Committee Meeting in Abu Dhabi on 24 and 25 August. The Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting in Kuala Lumpur gathered delegates from 23 countries who discussed two main issues – IRENA's Work Programme for 2012, and its Strategic Plan.

DATABASE DEVELOPMENT FILLS GAPS IN RENEWABLE ENERGY INFORMATION

IRENA's Atlas and Statistics databases, which have already been used to generate country profiles for Pacific and African countries, continue to be developed

The Atlas database, which collates all existing references to online atlas and reports and presents this information as a map, highlighting any gaps, is being developed in partnership with the Clean Energy Ministerial Multilateral Working Group on Solar and Wind Atlas, and the World Meteorological Organisation, Geneva. Financing measurement has already been identified as a bottleneck for resource assessment, and a financing scheme is being negotiated with the World Bank Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme (ESMAP). A demonstration of the Atlas database methodology is also being developed in partnership with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Namibian government.

Developing the IRENA statistics database involves expanding and upgrading the information on renewable en-

ergy production in existing UN and IEA databases. A questionnaire has also been developed for collecting further information from focal points in IRENA Member countries.

SENEGAL AND MOZAMBIQUE TO PILOT ASSESSMENT STUDY

Senegal and Mozambique were selected to pilot a renewable energy readiness assessment for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern African Development Community regions. The assessment is being done in collaboration with the International Institute for Sustainable Development and an indicative work programme was proposed. The methodology to be applied for the readiness assessments will be discussed at a Roundtable to be held on 7 October in Bonn.

AFRICA HIGH-LEVEL FORUM DEBATES OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Opportunities and challenges for renewable energy for Africa, strategic partnerships, and best practices and challenges in investment were high on the agenda at the IRENA High-Level Africa Consultative Forum on Renewable Energy in Abu Dhabi Friday, 8-9 July. Deliberations by the Forum, which included over 35 Ministers of Energy and other high-level officials including delegates from the African Union Commission and Regional Economic Commissions, were issued as a Communiqué on Renewable Energy for Accelerating Africa's Development.

In his opening remarks IRENA's Director General highlighted Africa's need for enabling policy frameworks that will attract private investment in renewable energy. Other speakers highlighted Africa's under-investment in energy infrastructure, the potential for renewable energy to ensure Africa's energy security, and the need for education and training in renewable energy technologies. Delegates stressed that skills and capacities need to be built locally to ensure accelerated and sustainable deployment of renewable energy. Specialised regional education and training centres can play a role in this process and IRENA will support existing centres and promote the establishment of additional ones.

Africa has been in the forefront of the renewable energy debate in recent months with a brainstorming session for African officials, held in advance of the high-level Forum, and a Workshop on Scenarios and Strategies for Africa, held in Bonn from 29-31 August.

The brainstorming session, which has already produced several partnership opportunities, will be followed up with workplan development with African regional entities in-

cluding SADC, ECOWAS (via ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency – ECREEE) and MENA (via the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency – RCREEE).

IRENA APPLAUDS AMBITIOUS PACIFIC ISLAND GOALS

Pacific Island states aspiring to transform their energy sectors by embracing renewable energy will find a reliable and supportive partner in IRENA, said the Agency's Director General at the Pacific Leaders Forum in Auckland, New Zealand on 7 September.

There are already many positive examples in the region, he said, pointing to Tonga, Tokelau and the Cook Islands – states which, among others, were already working towards encouraging energy goals. It was inspiring, he added, to see that some countries already envisaged a prosperous future which included 100% renewable energy power supply.

He told the Forum that the creation of IRENA showed that the international community was firmly committed to creating a clean, sustainable and more secure energy future. Africa and the Pacific Islands were a top priority and IRENA stood ready with a generous US\$5 million UAE grant resource to jump-start the growth of renewable energy in the region, in addition to on-going support from New Zealand.

Mr Amin, who joined UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and Commonwealth Secretary General Kamalesh Sharma as special speakers to the 16 leaders of the Pacific islands gathered at their plenary session, extended an invitation to host a Pacific Leaders summit on renewable energy in January immediately before the next IRENA Assembly.

SENIOR MANAGERS RETREAT FOR A DAY'S BRAINSTORMING

IRENA senior managers met for a brainstorming retreat on 4 September in Abu Dhabi to consider work programme implementation, including progress on activities and recruitment, as well as future plans for workshops, meetings and outreach activities.

Each director gave a summary of important developments while Administration and Management Support updated the group on IRENA's current financial situation and the Agency's projected expenditures for the remainder of the year.

Other items on the busy, all-day agenda included upcoming intergovernmental meetings, plans for the Second Council and Assembly meetings, a review of submissions on priorities for 2012 and discussion of the 2012 Work Programme and Budget, communications, and IRENA's five-year strategy.

IRENA'S VOICE HEARD AT INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

IRENA representatives have contributed to several important international meetings in recent months including attendance at the Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP) preparatory Ministerial meeting in Johannesburg on 15-16 September and a speech at the Economic and Environmental Forum of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Prague on 14-16 September.

Other meetings with IRENA representation have included: the UN Private Sector Forum (New York, 20 September); the UN Secretary General's High Level Group on Sustainable Energy for All (New York, 19 September); the launch of the Japan Renewable Energy Forum (Tokyo, 12-13 September); the Meeting of Senior Advisors to the Secretary General on Rio +20 (Beijing 9-10 September); the Pacific Leaders Forum (Auckland, 5-7 September); and a Joint IRENA-Renewable Energy Technology Development workshop (Bonn, 29 June).

IRENA SCHOLARS HOLD THE FUTURE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THEIR HANDS

The first group of IRENA scholars will commence their studies and research projects in renewable energy in October. The scholarship programme has admitted 20 encouraging and ambitious students from countries as diverse as Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Cameroon, China, India, Nepal, Spain, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, whose education will help shape and influence the future development of energy frameworks around the globe.

Kuala Lumpur meeting for the Policy and Strategy Committee.



An exclusive lecture programme designed for the IRENA scholars will give them access to leading experts and allow the scholars to have academic discussions with them on the highest level. The students are scheduled to attend their first lecture – on the Socio-Economic Impacts of Renewable Energy – given by Professor Thomas B. Johansson, of Lund University, Sweden, and Co-Chair, Global Energy Assessment, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), at the Masdar Institute in Abu Dhabi on October 4. Future speakers include Paolo Frankl, Head of the Renewable Energy Division, IEA.

INNOVATIONS HELP BOOST ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A series of innovations and organisational developments have been instituted to aid IRENA's efficiency and working practices.

Communications have been improved with the completion of a corporate communications strategy, a publications policy and branding exercise. IRENA staff are now provided with daily global coverage of renewable energy and related media news items including analysis by global, regional and country specific indicators and inter-office communications have been improved with a new, efficient,

cost-effective voice and data communication link between the Abu Dhabi and Bonn offices.

Working and organisational practices have been further improved with a new project reporting mechanism on the IRENA intranet; an ICT Assets management system for better recording and organisation of ICT equipment; a Work Programme Project Management Office (PMO) tracking progress and resources; and the award of an Enterprise Resource Planning contract.

Salary payslips have been automated so that staff members can review all deductions, earnings and Provident Fund details, including organisation contributions.

This first issue of the IRENA quarterly newsletter is one of several projects underway in the Agency's new publications programme. The proceedings of the Scenarios and Strategies Workshop have been published on the IRENA website in the Delegates section; the Renewable Energy Country Profiles for the Pacific Region have been posted on the main website; a new, updated IRENA brochure is being produced; new papers on Scenarios and Strategies for Africa, Africa Power, Solar Photovoltaic and Concentrating Solar Power Costs, technology fact sheets, and Africa Country Profiles are under preparation.

UPCOMING EVENTS – DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 6 October, Bonn:** Workshop on cost and innovation for renewable power generation.
- 7 October, Bonn:** Official opening of the IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre.
- 7 October, Bonn:** Roundtable on renewable energy readiness in Africa.
- 10-11 October, Oslo:** Energy for All: financing access for the poor conference.
- 11-12 October, Copenhagen:** Global Green Growth Forum.
- 19-21 October, Beijing:** China Wind Power conference.
- 26-28 October, Sydney:** Workshop on accelerated renewable energy deployment in islands.
- 11-12 November, Abu Dhabi:** Meetings of the IRENA Committees.
- 13 November, Abu Dhabi:** Launch of the Africa Scenarios and Strategies publication.
- 13-14 November, Abu Dhabi:** Second meeting of the Council.
- 21-23 November, Colorado:** IRENA/NREL Workshop on best practices for technology cooperation.
- 30 November-1 December, Bangalore:** Practitioner's workshop with E+Co and the Solar Electric Light Company (SELCO) focusing on enterprise-driven solutions.
- November-December, Durban:** Participation in COP17.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP)

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP) on the IRENA Renewable Energy Learning Platform (IRELP). The MOU covers plans to jointly develop and implement capacity building, exchange information and knowledge about policy and financial frameworks, facilitate replication of successful local business models, collaborate on knowledge management and dissemination strategies, and conduct joint outreach activities.

Over the next few months REEEP will be providing support to IRELP's conceptual design, and assist in establishing a global database on education and training. REEEP will also support IRENA in building up networks in the RE sector.

Global Network on Energy for Sustainable Development (GNESD)

Collaborative analysis of existing renewable energy-based access-to-electricity programmes in developing countries is at the heart of a new Memorandum of Understanding recently reached with GNESD. The MOU covers the sharing of knowledge and case studies, joint implementation of projects and analyses, document publishing, reciprocal participation in meetings, and joint outreach activities.

By working together GNESD and IRENA aim to learn from national and local experiences with policy and institutional frameworks and financing and business models, find technological solutions, and make recommendations for best-practice approaches adjusted to national contexts.

E+Co, the Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE) and the Global Village Energy Partnership (GVEP)

Support for IRENA's efforts to measure the socio-economic impacts of renewable energy entrepreneurs who improve access to energy in developing countries and the dissemination of lessons learned from their enterprise-driven solutions are at the core of three new partnership

agreements covered by MOUs with E+Co, ARE and GVEP.

PARTNERSHIPS

The MOUs also cover ways in which IRENA can work with its three new partners in a wide range of activities including information sharing, joint implementation of projects, analyses and outreach activities, and collaboration in publishing and meetings activities.

Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC)

An analysis, based on 10-15 case studies, of the best policy and regulatory practices that strengthen the uptake of wind energy, is to be made by IRENA in partnership with GWEC. The analysis is a first step towards building cooperation networks and engaging the private sector and its findings will help develop work plans for target countries. Plans are underway to expand this initiative to the solar, hydropower, and geothermal industries in the near future.

Rio+20 and the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All

IRENA Director General Adnan Z Amin has received a personal invitation from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon to participate in his high level panel on sustainable energy in the lead up to the upcoming UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 (Rio+20). IRENA is already a core partner in 2012: the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All – part of the UN Secretary General's new Sustainable Energy for All global initiative.

The 2012 initiative will focus global attention on the importance of energy for development and poverty alleviation and calls for private sector and national commitments. Its ultimate goal is to achieve three key objectives by 2030 – i) universal access to modern energy services; ii) a doubling of the rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and iii) a doubling of the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

by the appointment of Ms Ghislaine Kieffer from France as Special Assistant for Policy and Programming.

Two departments of Administration and Management Service will also benefit from the recruitment drive. Mr Armands Cakss from Latvia will join the Finance Department as Chief Finance Officer while two new Human Resources Officers – Mr Filip Borkowy from the UK and Ms Kim Hoe Yap from Malaysia – will join the HR department. All three take up their new responsibilities in November. IRENA's recruitment drive is underway, and an additional 15 people are expected to join during the fall.