

## SUMMARY OF THE SECOND ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY: 14-15 JANUARY 2012

The second session of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Assembly took place from 14-15 January 2012 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE). Over 750 delegates from 74 member states, 50 signatories and accession states, 13 other non-member states, and 70 observer organizations participated. Delegates adopted decisions on, *inter alia*: work programme and budget for 2012, the secondment of personnel, ethics and conflict of interest, and the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development. Two ministerial roundtables were also held on the proposed medium-term strategy of IRENA, and IRENA's cooperation with the private sector. The close of the Assembly included an address by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The decisions taken at the meeting, together with insights gained during the two ministerial roundtables, saw the solidification of IRENA's institutional structure, clear support for its work to date through an impressive expansion of its budget for 2012, and clear political signals from delegates on the direction the Agency should take.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF IRENA

IRENA was established to promote the widespread and increased adoption and sustainable use of all forms of renewable energy. The IRENA statute was adopted on 26 January 2009, and entered into force on 8 July 2010. One hundred forty-eight countries and the European Union (EU) are signatories of IRENA, with its statute having been ratified by 84 states and the EU.

**PREPARATORY CONFERENCE:** The Preparatory Conference for the Foundation of IRENA was held from 10-11 April 2008, in Berlin, Germany. Delegates from 60 countries expressed support for the creation of an international agency for renewable energies, and discussed issues such as objectives, activities, organizational structure, and financing for the new agency. Two preparatory workshops for IRENA followed in Berlin, Germany, on 30 June and 1 July 2008, focusing on IRENA's work programme, statutes and finances.

**FINAL PREPARATORY CONFERENCE:** This meeting took place from 23-24 October 2008, in Madrid, Spain. Delegates concluded discussions on IRENA's statute, resolving issues such as financing, the criteria and procedures for selecting the Interim Director-General and the interim headquarters, and the design of the initial phase of IRENA.

**FOUNDING CONFERENCE:** IRENA's Founding Conference took place on 26 January 2009, in Bonn, Germany, where 75 countries signed the IRENA statute.

**PREPCOM 1:** The first Preparatory Commission of IRENA met on 27 January 2009 in Bonn, Germany, following the founding conference. Delegates discussed the next steps for IRENA and established a committee for the selection of the Interim Director-General and a committee for the selection of the interim headquarters. The Commission also established an administrative committee, chaired by Germany, to facilitate the effectiveness of the Commission's work, including through assisting in organizing regular sessions and contributing to the development of relevant documents.

**PREPCOM 2:** The second Preparatory Commission of IRENA met from 29-30 June 2009, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, to decide on the interim headquarters and Interim Director-

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General for IRENA. Abu Dhabi, UAE, was designated as the interim headquarters, and H el ene Pelosse (France) was appointed Interim Director-General. Delegates also decided that Bonn, Germany, would host IRENA's Innovation and Technology Centre, and Vienna, Austria, would host IRENA's liaison office for cooperation with other organizations active in the field of renewable energy. Delegates further addressed issues such as the initial work programme, financial regulations, staff regulations and the budget.

**PREPCOM 3:** The third Preparatory Commission of IRENA met on 17 January 2010, in Abu Dhabi. Delegates completed IRENA's 2010 budget and work programme, as well as other measures to make IRENA operational.

**PREPCOM 4:** The fourth Preparatory Commission of IRENA met from 24-25 October 2010, in Abu Dhabi. The Commission accepted the resignation of H el ene Pelosse as Interim Director-General, and appointed Adnan Amin (Kenya) to the position until the first session of the Assembly.

**PREPCOM 5:** The fifth Preparatory Commission of IRENA met on 3 April 2011, in Abu Dhabi. The Commission finalized preparations and transitional measures for IRENA's first Assembly, and proposed Adnan Amin as Director-General elect to the Assembly.

**FIRST ASSEMBLY:** The first session of the IRENA Assembly was held from 4-5 April 2011, in Abu Dhabi. The Assembly focused, among others, on the election of the Council; the work programme and budget for 2011; rules of procedure; transitional arrangements; staff and financial matters; and organization of the second session of the Assembly. The Assembly included a High-Level Segment attended by over 50 ministers.

## IRENA ASSEMBLY REPORT

On Saturday, 14 January 2012, the IRENA Assembly opened its second session. The Assembly elected Salvador Namburete, Minister of Energy, Mozambique, by acclamation as President. The Assembly then adopted the revised provisional agenda (A/2/L.2/Rev.1; A/2/L.2/Add.1/Rev.1); and a decision on the participation of observers (A/2/L.3).

Kazuyuki Hamada (Japan), Guy Lentz (Luxembourg), Lorena Lanza (Nicaragua), and Mona Al-Maadeed (Qatar) were elected as Vice-Presidents, and Milan Hovorka (Czech Republic) as rapporteur.

The Assembly then appointed the Credentials Committee, consisting of Belarus, Djibouti, Kenya, Mongolia, Poland, Spain, Nicaragua, Samoa and Mozambique.

### PLENARY SESSION

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR 2011:** On Saturday morning, IRENA Director-General Adnan Amin presented the Annual Report of the Director-General for 2011 (A/2/4) and said that the dramatic natural and economic events of 2011 revealed opportunities for adoption of renewable energy. He said in 2011 IRENA's management and support functions were improved, and described several intergovernmental meetings hosted by IRENA that increased IRENA's visibility on global and regional energy agendas. He

added that IRENA was granted observer status at the United Nations at the end of 2011. In response to a question from France, Amin noted that the final accounts will be ready for audit by the end of March, and on performance he commented that late contributions by a majority of members placed constraints on financial management. He acknowledged Nigeria's plea for fast-tracking renewable energy initiatives and urged the Assembly to consider this issue.

**REPORT FROM THE IRENA-AFRICA HIGH-LEVEL CONSULTATIVE FORUM:** Ogunlade Davidson, Minister of Energy and Water Resources, Sierra Leone, presented the outcome of the IRENA-Africa High-Level Consultative Forum, which was held from 8-9 July 2011, in Abu Dhabi, specifically on the Abu Dhabi Communiqu e on Renewable Energy for Accelerating Africa's Development. He explained that the operationalization of its elements calls for a focus on, *inter alia*: the creation of a platform for improving policy frameworks, capacity building and communication campaigns; fine-tuning a methodology on renewables readiness; better understanding prospects for the African power sector to participate in developing technologies more relevant to Africa; supporting the development of regional renewable energy action plans; and developing case studies on access to energy and jobs.

**REPORT FROM THE PACIFIC LEADERS MEETING:** Henry Puna, Prime Minister, Cook Islands, presented a report on the Pacific Leaders Meeting, which was held on 13 January 2012 in Abu Dhabi. He noted significant economic and social challenges of Pacific Island States, including energy supply and price volatility, climate change, and great potential for the expansion of currently underutilized renewable energy. He emphasized that particular attention should go to assessing countries' energy potentials and to developing innovative solutions to address technological and financing gaps. He underscored that the Abu Dhabi Communiqu e adopted by participants reflects the Pacific Island nations' support for IRENA in implementing activities in the region.

**SPECIAL ADDRESS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE RIO+20 CONFERENCE:** Sha Zukang, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20), congratulated IRENA members for putting renewable energy at the center of international attention. He highlighted that renewables can address several challenges, including poverty reduction, climate change, energy security and economic development, and emphasized that IRENA should be at the forefront of the UN Secretary-General's Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (SE4ALL). He expressed hope that IRENA would: become an international platform for information exchange on renewable energy and increase capacity-building activities, especially in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). He emphasized that the upcoming Rio+20 Conference provides an opportunity to agree upon a roadmap for a green economy powered by renewable energy, noting 430 submissions on energy have already been received for the Rio+20 draft document.

**REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL:** Martin Hoffman (Australia), Chair of the IRENA Council, summarized the Council's work during its two meetings, which took place on 10-11 July and 13-14 November 2011, and focused on, *inter alia*: a process to establish a methodology for selecting Council members; administrative matters; the work programme and budget; and the medium-term strategy. He further noted the challenge for IRENA to balance high expectations with available resources, and that the success of the Agency will depend on its relations, and awareness of potential overlap, with other agencies.

**PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2012:** Director-General Amin presented the Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2012 (A/2/1), accompanied by the Explanatory Note and Matrix (A/2/1/Add.1), a draft decision (A/2/DC/L.1.), and the report on the Working Capital Fund (A/2/L.5). He noted recommendations from the Policy and Strategy Committee to expand regional work in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific Island region and described planned outputs for 2012, including: policy advising; advancing cross-cutting renewables technologies; and improving on the objectives of cost-effectiveness, transparency and accountability. He closed by explaining that the Working Capital Fund is to address short-term budgetary constraints.

In the ensuing discussion, many countries commended the efforts of IRENA during 2011 and also emphasized the need for IRENA to be results-driven, prioritize financial mechanisms, and keep budget increase requests moderate. The UK urged the Secretariat to: be based on agreed indicators of success; consider funding issues beyond 2015 when the host country will no longer be obliged to pay contributions; increase engagement with members in the development of the work programme; and link the work programme with the strategic vision of the Agency, including its five-year strategy. Italy recommended focusing on enlarging the base of contributors rather than increasing the dues of contributing members.

Responding to concerns raised by France and Spain on new members' contributions, Amin noted that any reduction of the proposed budget would mean a choice between staffing levels or planned activities. He then highlighted the encouraging number of ratifications to date and anticipation of many more in the coming year, which would broaden the funding base.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly adopted the work programme and budget. Highlights of the budget include: total resources of US\$28.4 million, of which US\$16 million comes from member contributions and US\$12.4 from voluntary contributions by UAE and Germany for operations, research, workshops, conferences and operational costs.

The programme of work and budget for 2012, *inter alia*: urges timely discharge of responsibilities and management of the Director-General's office; facilitation of audits and appropriate response to audit recommendations; coordination and management of the sub-programmes and activities and their evaluations; and maintaining a presence at renewable energy events. Sub-programme 1 on Knowledge Management and Technical Cooperation will, *inter alia*: further develop

renewable energy indicators, coordinate the development of the Global Solar and Wind Atlas, continue its renewable energy readiness assessments in developing countries, and further develop the knowledge-mapping and gap analysis. Sub-programme 2 on Policy Advisory Services and Capacity Building will, *inter alia*: strengthen countries' capacity to design long-term enabling renewable energy frameworks; enhance governments' understanding of critical gaps and needs for capacity building; and improve understanding of economic and financial conditions to leverage renewable energy investment. Sub-programme 3 on Innovation and Technology will, *inter alia*: assist governments in energy planning for more effective renewable energy technology and innovation strategies; and facilitate a better understanding of the potential for cost-reductions through technology development and market deployment to accelerate the uptake of renewables.

**INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION OF SUB-PROGRAMME 1—KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION:** Gauri Singh, Director, Knowledge Management and Technology Cooperation, IRENA, noted that in order to promote sustainable growth, the uptake of renewable energy must be increased. She highlighted the Global Atlas, an international initiative started by the Clean Energy Ministerial, noting feedback received at an end-user workshop held on 13 January 2012. She underlined work being conducted to promote synergies, including with the UN Secretary-General's SE4ALL initiative, renewable energy on islands and the IRENA Renewable Readiness Assessment project. The Assembly noted the report.

**INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION OF SUB-PROGRAMME 2—POLICY ADVISORY SERVICES AND CAPACITY BUILDING:** Hugo Lucas, Director, Policy Advisory Services and Capacity Building, IRENA, highlighted the need for tailored approaches for the successful uptake of renewable energy to accommodate country-specific realities. He then elaborated on activities completed in 2011, such as the first study on job creation in the context of energy access with renewables. He further highlighted plans for future engagement, including the IRENA Scholarship programme, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, and industry creation. Concluding, he noted the need to improve rural electrification strategies by employing the experience of the growing pool of renewable energy experts and entrepreneurs. The Assembly noted the report.

**INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION OF SUB-PROGRAMME 3—INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY:** Dolf Gielen, Director, IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre (IITC), reported on the activities of the IITC in Bonn, Germany, noting that the wide geographic spread of IRENA membership represents a significant challenge that calls for close cooperation at the regional level. He said that the IITC's 2012 activities will consist of two components: energy planning for renewable energy technology and innovation strategies, and cost reductions. Gielen then indicated that the focus on power generation in 2011 will shift to transportation in 2012. He

emphasized the goals of increased cooperation with members and the development of a software tool for members to submit project data. The Assembly noted the report.

**FEATURED SPEAKER JEREMY RIFKIN:** In his address to the plenary, Jeremy Rifkin, President, Foundation on Economic Trends, argued that the spike in oil prices and the economic crisis of 2008 heralded the end of the fossil-based economy, and then described the five pillars of the “Third Industrial Revolution:” development of renewable energy sources; buildings as key points of energy capture; hydrogen as an energy storage medium; the use of communication technologies to sell surplus energy to the grid; and a concomitant transformation in the transport system.

**PROCEDURES FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF A MECHANISM FOR COUNCIL COMPOSITION, ELECTION AND ROTATION:** The Chair of the Governance and Legal Committee (GLC), ‘Akau’ola (Tonga) introduced the draft decision on the appointment of facilitators on Council composition, election and rotation (A/2/DC/L.3). He briefed delegates on the GLC’s initial discussions about the composition of the Council, reflecting the need to ensure effective, fair and equitable geographic distribution, and potentially considering issues of location, active participation, financial contributions and renewable energy-related criteria.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly adopted the decision by consensus (A/2/DC/L.3), appointing Peru and Luxembourg as facilitators acting under the guidance of the President of the Assembly.

**PROPOSED RULES OF PROCEDURE OF SUBSIDIARY ORGANS:** The Secretariat introduced the proposal for the Rules of Procedure (A/2/DC/L.4) for subsidiary organs to be included in the Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and of the Council (A/1/DC/1), on matters including appointment of chairs of subsidiary bodies, terms of service, membership and conduct of business.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly adopted the decision (A/2/DC/L.4) by consensus, which requests the Secretariat include the proposed Rules of Procedure for subsidiary organs in the Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and of the Council, and review the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and of the Council prior to the fifth session of the Assembly with a view to consider amendments.

**PROCEDURES FOR SECONDMENT OF PERSONNEL:** The Secretariat introduced the Report of the Director-General on Procedures for Secondment of Personnel (A/2/9). She briefed delegates on the discussion in the Working Group on Legal Issues to resolve the matter of unequal status and treatment of seconded personnel from various agencies, advising of the Group’s recommendation that the concept of secondment be adjusted to a model used by other international organizations, whereby seconded personnel are treated as full staff members with a fixed term of appointment, governed by staff regulations, and paid from a fund with contributions from participating organizations.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly endorsed the report by consensus, and adopted the decision on Secondment of Staff to IRENA (A/2/DC/L.5), which states that personnel currently serving under secondment may continue until the end of arrangements already in place; approves the introduction of a mechanism that allows hiring of staff using voluntary contributions; authorizes the arrangement of secondment; encourages conclusion of loan arrangements; and requests the Director-General to report to the Assembly at its third session on the implementation of its decision.

**DRAFT AGREEMENT ON PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES:** GLC Chair ‘Akau’ola, reported that the committee had not been able to finalize text of the Draft Agreement on Privileges and Immunities (A/2/DC/L.6). Japan and France lamented the timing of the previous discussion, which precluded some members from participating. The UK requested countries with textual concerns to bring draft text to an informal meeting.

On Sunday evening, the Chair reported on the informal talks and noted that no final agreement on wording had been reached, but that they had agreed to submit the draft wording to the Assembly. Regarding the new draft text, Japan expressed concerns and requested time for further discussions. Germany and Director-General Amin urged delegates to come to an agreement to finalize IRENA’s institutional set-up, of which Privileges and Immunities is integral.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly decided to allow parties to consult further and present a final text at the third session of the Assembly.

**PROVISIONAL STAFF RULES:** The Secretariat introduced the Provisional Staff Rules (A/2/DC/L.11), reminding the Assembly that staff rules will be reviewed and amended by the Director-General as deemed necessary and submitted to the Council for approval by next year. The Assembly took note of the Provisional Staff Rules.

**PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL PROCEDURES:** The Secretariat introduced the Provisional Financial Procedures (A/2/DC/L.12) and said that the full text will be reported to the Council prior to the next Assembly and before becoming definitive. The Assembly took note of the Provisional Financial Procedures.

**DRAFT POLICY ON ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** The Secretariat introduced the Draft Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest (A/2/L.13; A/2/DC/L.7) endorsed by the Council, and recommended the Assembly adopt the draft policy.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly adopted the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest by consensus and requested the Director-General to revise the Code of Conduct annexed to the Staff Rules to ensure consistency.

**DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO THE STAFF REGULATIONS:** The Secretariat reported on the Draft Amendments to the Staff Regulations (A/2/DC/L.8/Rev.1). She noted the draft amendments cover staff rights and duties, gifts or favors, and declaration of conflict of interest.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly adopted the amended text to the Staff Regulations, which update and replace the original regulations (A/2/L.14).

**DRAFT POLICY ON THE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS:** The Assembly considered the decision on the Draft Policy of the Public Disclosure of Documents (A/2/DC/L.9), with parties commending the efforts of the Secretariat in providing all meeting documents transparently.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly adopted the policy on the public disclosure of documents, and amendments to the policy, as contained in A/2/L.15.

**ABU DHABI FUND FOR DEVELOPMENT:** Director-General Amin presented the Draft Decision on the Initiation of the Funding Cycle for Projects Applying for Funding from the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (A/2/DC/L.10), which would provide US\$50 million per year over seven years for renewable energy projects in developing countries. In his report on the Fund's funding cycle (A/2/L.16), Amin recommended the establishment of an Advisory Committee consisting of seven members and up to seven alternates every three years. The US and Japan raised concerns over the process and frequency of Advisory Committee selection, which parties then discussed at length. President Namburete suggested an amendment to document A/2/DC/L.10, which was reflected in a revised draft indicating that the election of members of the Advisory Committee and alternates as listed in Annex 1 will apply to this funding cycle only, and will be reconsidered at the third Assembly.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly adopted the amended decision A/2/DC/L.10/Rev.1, adding a note to the decision supporting Japan's inclusion on the Advisory Committee during the next funding cycle.

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A FUND TO SUPPORT THE PARTICIPATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN IRENA MEETINGS:** The Secretariat introduced the report of the Director-General on the establishment of a Fund for Developing Country Representatives (FDCR) (A/2/L.17) to provide travel costs and allowances to LDCs and SIDS. The US called on more countries to contribute to the Fund to facilitate greater participation of developing country delegates at Assembly meetings and meetings of the Council.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly adopted the decision on the establishment of the FDCR (A/2/DC/L.11), with Guinea Bissau expressing appreciation of parties' generosity.

**REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE:** Faalavaau Perina Sila (Samoa), Chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the report of the Committee (A/2/L.6), noting that 68 members had submitted valid credentials. The Assembly took note of the report.

**APPOINTMENT OF AN EXTERNAL AUDITOR OF THE AGENCY:** The Chair of the Finance Committee, Conrod Hunte (Antigua and Barbuda) briefed delegates on the process undertaken for selecting an auditor (A/2/CRP/1). The US commended the Secretariat on the thoroughness and integrity of the review process and the UAE said the process had been fair and transparent.

**Final Decision:** The Assembly decided to appoint Norway as the External Auditor of the Agency for a period of two years (A/2/DC/L.12).

**REPORT FROM THE MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE ON PROPOSED MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY OF IRENA:** Mohamed El-Ashry, REN21, said the session's discussions confirmed a high level of interest in IRENA taking on the responsibility of publicizing the business case for renewable energies of all types. He emphasized the broad endorsement of the approach that was stipulated by the Director-General in the proposed medium-term strategy. The Assembly took note of the report.

**REPORT FROM THE MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE ON IRENA'S COOPERATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR:** Carlos Pascual, Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs, US, noted the participants had expressed support for the creation of an IRENA business council. He specifically emphasized the need for diversity in the council's private sector membership and a focus on the local level, where project investments are being made. The Assembly took note of the report.

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE THIRD SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY:** On Sunday afternoon, the Assembly agreed by consensus to hold the third session of the Assembly on 13-14 January 2013 in Abu Dhabi. The Assembly also designated by consensus Martin Lidegaard, Minister of Energy and Climate Change, Denmark, as President, and Grenada, Malaysia, Nigeria and Poland as Vice-Presidents of the Assembly at its third session.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** A number of French and Spanish speaking delegates voiced concerns over the issue of multilingualism.

#### **MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE ON PROPOSED MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY OF IRENA**

This session was held on Saturday afternoon, and chaired by Farooq Abdullah, Minister for New and Renewable Energy, India. The purpose of the session was to seek guidance from ministers on how IRENA can best achieve its promise and potential and guide any refinement of the proposed Medium-Term Strategic Framework for 2012-2015.

Mohamed El-Ashry, Chair, REN21, recommended IRENA pursue a strategy of: improving the efficiency of existing networks; advising on policy frameworks to promote adequate market conditions; encouraging decentralized energy; promoting use of public funds to leverage private sector; and identifying gaps and needs in technology development.

Jeremy Oppenheim, Director of London office, McKinsey & Company, observed that IRENA can fill gaps by offering: a global voice for renewable energy and technologies; renewable energy and technology advisory resources for developing countries; and improved networking for national and regional renewable energy actors. He said IRENA's success will not be measured by helping all countries make incremental changes, but by demonstrating transformational change within a select number of example countries.

Klaus Töpfer, former Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, said it is the responsibility of developed countries to design technologies that bring the price of renewable energy down and called for a technological and behavioral revolution in energy efficiency.

Chair Farooq Abdullah opened the discussion to the ministerial participants, asking them how to make IRENA of central importance to countries that want to develop renewable energy.

Mozambique urged that IRENA work particularly with countries exhibiting strong political will to begin a domestic renewables revolution. Tokelau challenged the world to match their target of 100% electricity from renewables by the end of 2012, and Japan called for countries to match technological and financial inputs with social support and to respect the power of natural forces by living in harmony with nature. Mali warned against IRENA underestimating limited resources and problem complexity in the face of its numerous objectives.

Germany emphasized that IRENA should build its analytical authority and increase its advisory capacity, while France called for a link between the annual budget and mid-term financial strategy, and development of long-term strategies. The International Energy Agency (IEA) said it would sign a Letter of Intent with IRENA to jointly develop, operate, maintain and expand a renewable energy database. Denmark urged IRENA to utilize the media to become more vocal on the benefits of renewables and dispel misconceptions about price.

Niger, Togo and the Sudan stressed the need for IRENA to provide impetus for the transfer of technologies, and the Union for the Mediterranean called for synergies with regional organizations in building mid-term roadmaps, identifying pilot projects and providing financial tools. Iraq urged IRENA to foster awareness, while Switzerland cautioned members against having unrealistic expectations. Kenya suggested IRENA guide private sector development in developing countries by supporting joint venture projects, while Sierra Leone encouraged IRENA to position itself as a market intermediary.

The US lamented that business models are lacking, not technologies, and said creating self-perpetuating linkages between businesses, financiers, and customers is imperative. South Africa said the national contexts of value chains need to be better understood. Spain said IRENA's main potential is its member states, and that IRENA must grow hand-in-hand with the private sector. Greece indicated that, according to its statute, IRENA should be focusing more on biofuels than it has thus far. Malaysia said countries need assistance in integrating renewables into domestic and regional energy markets.

#### **MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE ON IRENA'S COOPERATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

This session convened on Sunday morning and was chaired by Carlos Pascual, US Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs. The session aimed at defining how IRENA should work with the private sector to best promote increased renewables deployment.

Xabier Viteri, CEO of Iberdrola Renovables, Iberdrola S.A. Group, emphasized that while some renewables are not yet competitive, others are. He stressed that government support has been crucial for renewables development, yet that current financial constraints require close cooperation with the renewable industry to finance investment increases. He believed an IRENA business council could serve to introduce economic rationality in the policy debate as long as all industry stakeholders are included.

Jeremy Rifkin, President, Foundation on Economic Trends, said that the cost of traditional energy sources will continue to increase, and that an "energy internet" of communicating energy infrastructures is needed.

Christine Eibs Singer, Managing Director, E+Co, provided examples of the business development services to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that E+Co engages in globally, emphasizing that transparency of regulatory and subsidy frameworks is crucial to unleash local private capital. In that regard, she stressed that an IRENA business council should focus on convening businesses at all levels.

Michael Eckhart, Managing Director, Citigroup, strongly supported the formation of an IRENA business council, stressing that 80% of capital invested in renewables is in project finance, and 90% of that is private sector money. He stated that renewable energy is a policy driven, privately financed, business delivered sector, and as such, the purpose of IRENA must be to drive the financial flows through policy advising. He recommended a business council's mission should be to generate the business cases that IRENA can use to advise both policy makers and the private sector.

Chair Pascual then opened the floor to participants. Togo said it is important to learn from mistakes of the past in promoting SMEs, and supported the creation of a business council. Grenada noted that the price of carbon will be critical to engaging the private sector and said methods are needed for achieving price parity in small markets.

Germany reiterated that developing strong business cases is imperative, as is creating the impetus for domestic energy revolutions by bringing in new ideas and new thinkers. He said key to the success of Germany's renewable energy credit scheme was involving local banks, which were given knowledge and tools to loan to renewable energy businesses, that is otherwise often lacking.

The IEA said that organizing a policy dialogue between business and policy makers that focuses on the entire supply chain, not only deployment, is of utmost importance.

Many participants underscored the importance of a hospitable regulatory framework as a precondition for private sector involvement in renewable energy, including New Zealand and the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC), who identified the

need to remove fossil fuel subsidies. The UAE noted that the focus of an IRENA business council should be advising IRENA on technical and business opportunities.

Many developing country participants stressed financing as a major challenge, especially for SMEs and those in rural areas. Zambia urged focusing on identifying practices that work locally, while Tanzania added that rural populations are interested in energy for productive purposes.

Côte d'Ivoire and Sweden recommended IRENA cooperate with other organizations such as the World Bank.

A number of participants also provided practical advice on organizational aspects of a future business council. Denmark proposed to start from a small group of business representatives to identify the main issues and then work towards building a larger network. The UAE, Sweden and Germany suggested that to be effective a council must involve business leaders from across the supply and finance chains.

France and New Zealand added that no one technology should dominate IRENA's work. GWEC and Tanzania recommended IRENA focus on concrete, actionable projects. Greece cautioned against overlap with other organizations such as the World Business Council on Sustainable Development. Palau suggested the council be a depository body to which private sector can go to for country-specific information.

### **CLOSING PLENARY**

On Sunday evening, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addressed the Assembly and commended IRENA for its leadership in promoting renewable energy. He stated that the growing membership of IRENA is clear evidence that countries are supportive of a clean energy future. He then outlined the key objectives of his SE4All initiative and noted that IRENA's contribution will be invaluable, especially regarding improving policy frameworks to "unleash the power" of renewable energies.

Sultan Al Jaber, Special Envoy for Energy and Climate Change, UAE, stated that while 2011 was the year IRENA had to prove it was on the right track, 2012 will be about turning this momentum into concrete action.

IRENA Director-General Adnan Amin lauded the "momentous" progress made at the second Assembly, including the 20% increase in the budget at a time of global austerity. He applauded delegates' efforts to finalize IRENA's institutional set-up and said it must now move forward with a strategic approach to scale up renewable energy globally.

Assembly President Salvador Namburete thanked the Council and members for their trust in providing him the opportunity to steer the meeting, as well as the Vice-Presidents for their support and advice.

Director-General Amin concluded the meeting by thanking the members and participants for their perseverance and many voluntary contributions and declared the meeting a success. He said with the adoption of a new work programme and the establishment of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, IRENA has been launched onto the global stage and now has the potential to generate real change in the renewable energy sector.

President Namburete closed the session at 7:43 pm.

### **A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING**

The second session of the IRENA Assembly saw the world's youngest international organization take root, and marked a significant step forward for the Agency institutionally, financially and substantively. Delegates took decisions on formal organizational rules and structures, adopted a large budgetary increase, and gave important guidance regarding the way forward over the next year and through 2015. Over the course of the meeting, it became clear that IRENA should aim to become the global "go-to" body for national policy advising on renewable energy for human development.

The reports of work completed and work planned delivered at the meeting were illustrative of IRENA's work towards effectively proving itself on the international stage. The meeting also saw the Agency receive clear instructions to begin producing concrete results. This brief analysis examines IRENA's shift from merely "talking the talk" of progress on renewable energy deployment, to its plan to begin "walking the walk" of meaningful, effective policy advising to increase global renewable energy uptake.

#### **"TALKING THE TALK"**

Over the eight months IRENA had in the "year" since its first Assembly, the Agency presented itself in a number of international fora and began substantive work. IRENA was represented at many important international meetings and gained UN observer status. Director-General Adnan Amin was invited to participate in the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Group for the Sustainable Energy for All initiative (SE4ALL). Additionally, IRENA opened its Innovation and Technology Centre in Bonn to work on cost reduction potentials and policies; announced that a Letter of Intent would be signed with the International Energy Agency to collaborate on a joint renewables database; and began cooperation with, and analysis of, Pacific Islands and African members and partners.

These activities culminated in a flurry of high-level international renewable energy meetings and events that surrounded the second IRENA Assembly, including a two-day meeting of the High-Level Group on SE4ALL, a High-Level Meeting of Pacific Island Ministers and Heads of State, and the World Future Energy Summit, which attracted numerous dignitaries and leaders of international organizations, many of whom also appeared at the IRENA Assembly. In order for these efforts and events to be meaningful and effective however, they cannot represent the grand finale of IRENA's first year of work but rather must be seen as the beginning of its second. As one developed country delegate noted, expectations of the Secretariat this year are for delivery and the emphasis should be on concrete activities and outcomes. This, he added, will be key to establishing IRENA's reputation internationally.

#### **"WALKING THE WALK"**

With its intuitional setup well on its way to completion (save a decision on privileges and immunities), clear messages from delegates on the way forward, and a fresh injection of US\$28.4 million for 2012, IRENA is now politically instructed and financially enabled to move aggressively forward so it can

provide clear, pragmatic, and context-specific policy advice on enabling expanded and accelerated deployment of renewable energy. This is no small task for an Agency with a Secretariat of 60 and a rapidly expanding membership of 84 countries and the European Union (out of 149 signatories).

According to IRENA's mandate, these activities and outcomes are to focus on one thing: deployment. Many delegates at the Ministerial Roundtable on IRENA's Cooperation with the Private Sector stressed that to influence deployment, the Agency must establish meaningful links to, and cooperate with, the businesses financing and implementing renewable energy projects. It was made clear that these connections will be difficult to establish before IRENA can prove that it has something concrete to offer businesses. Determining what this will be, and how to convince the private sector of the need for such collaboration, will be an important aspect of IRENA's work in the coming year.

In late 2011, a significant, and pragmatic, step towards achieving increased deployment of renewables in developing countries was initiated with the start of IRENA's Renewables Readiness Assessment (RRA) project, which aims to give countries a tool to self-assess their domestic preparedness to attract, finance, install, operate and maintain increasing amounts of renewable energy. It is a key project that member states hope can foster tangible policy changes to encourage increased renewables uptake. Some delegates, however, expressed concern that while the do-it-yourself nature of the RRA project may ensure national ownership, the level of detail, completeness and overall rigor of the resulting assessments will likely vary widely and, as such, the RRAs may be a risky approach for an institution that has been urged to focus on providing actionable, context-specific advisory services.

### ***TO "UN" OR NOT TO "UN," IS THAT THE QUESTION?***

In the eyes of most, IRENA is strategically placed outside the remit of, while retaining the highest level of access to, the UN. Many noted at both the first and second IRENA Assemblies that this will allow the organization to be more streamlined, effective and avoid being bogged down by burdensome bureaucracy and onerous decision-making processes, among other problems. But this doesn't mean that IRENA is devoid of negotiating challenges. In fact, the non-availability of a French translation of the draft policy proved so divisive that it precluded delegates from agreeing to a decision on privileges and immunities this year. Many delegates were surprised at the level of difficulty on what one delegate called "this housekeeping issue." Whether this inability to agree was representative of a normal phase in IRENA's institutional growing pains or a sign of things to come was a hot topic as delegates glanced at their watches and fiddled with their Blackberries on Sunday night while waiting for a resolution on the issue that would never arrive.

### ***SHIFTING GEARS?***

As IRENA looks ahead to its second year of formal work, there is no doubt that there is much to look forward to. Renewables have arrived on the international business and policy scenes in a way that not many had expected possible when the

idea to create IRENA was first discussed. As a result, one of the most significant challenges facing IRENA in the months ahead is the massive demand for the much needed, and wide-ranging services its members have asked IRENA's relatively small Secretariat to coordinate and oversee, including: the continuation of work on regional renewable energy profiles and knowledge databases; enhancing private sector cooperation; starting development of Global Solar and Wind Atlases as well as a knowledge and gap-mapping exercise; and beginning the possibly herculean task of providing national governments with tailored advice on improving capacities to design long-term enabling renewable energy frameworks. While a number of ministers pointed out in the ministerial roundtables that IRENA must be careful not to take on too much, too fast, the Agency is at the same time being pushed by other members to act as quickly as possible to mitigate climate change and relieve energy poverty in support of the Millennium Development Goals. In may be then, that in the land of "Ferrari World" where IRENA is headquartered, the Agency will be forced to drive with one foot on the accelerator and one on the brake.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

### **Linking Open Data to Accelerate Low-Carbon**

**Development:** This workshop will seek to assist public organizations in taking necessary steps to open up their data sets and provide them in a machine-readable and standardized format, and maximize interconnection between knowledge brokers and providers. The workshop is organized by the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP). **date:** 18 January 2012 **location:** Masdar Institute, Masdar City, Abu Dhabi, UAE **contact:** Florian Bauer, REEEP International Secretariat **phone:** +43-1-26026-3714 **fax:** +43-1-21346-3714 **email:** florian.bauer@reeep.org **www:** <http://www.reeep.org/index.php>

### **Initial Discussions on the Zero Draft of UNCSO Outcome**

**Document:** The initial discussions on the "zero draft" of the Outcome Document for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSO, or Rio+20) will take place from 25-27 January 2012, and will be based on a compilation of the input received by the UNCSO Secretariat from member states and other stakeholders. **dates:** 25-27 January 2012 **location:** United Nations Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCSO Secretariat **email:** uncsd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/>

**World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2012:** The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2012 will convene under the theme "The Great Transformation: Shaping New Models" in late January 2012. **dates:** 25-29 January 2012 **location:** Davos, Switzerland **phone:** +41-22-869-1212 **fax:** +41-22-786-2744 **email:** [contact@weforum.org](mailto:contact@weforum.org) **www:** <http://www.weforum.org/events/world-economic-forum-annual-meeting-2012>

**Transforming Transportation:** The ninth annual "Transforming Transportation" event will take place at the World Bank in late January 2012, and will focus on big ideas to scale up sustainable transport best practices in cities worldwide. **dates:** 26-27 January 2012 **location:** World Bank, Washington, DC, USA **contact:** EMBARQ, World Resources Institute



**phone:** +1-202-729-7600 **fax:** +1-202-729-7610 **email:** embarq@wri.org **www:** <http://www.embarq.org/en/transforming-transportation-2012>

**Global Energy Baseline - Second Sustainable Infrastructure Financing Summit:** The annual Global Energy Baseline conference brings together global leaders in industry, government and business to create a dialogue on the future of low-carbon sustainable infrastructure, including sustainable energy supply, renewable energy, demand side management and energy efficiency. **dates:** 21-22 February 2012 **location:** Basel, Switzerland **contact:** Global Energy Baseline **phone:** +41-61-205-1080 **email:** [info@globalenergybaseline.com](mailto:info@globalenergybaseline.com) **www:** <http://globalenergybaseline.com/>

**Dialogue on Energy and Climate Change Governance:** This seventh meeting in a series of dialogues organized by the Organization of American States (OAS) will seek to generate recommendations for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development on improving the normative framework for energy sustainability and climate change mitigation. **date:** 28 February 2012 **location:** OAS headquarters, Washington, DC, USA **contact:** Mark Lambrides. OAS **phone:** +1-202-458-6261 **fax:** +1-202-458-3560 **email:** [MLambrides@oas.org](mailto:MLambrides@oas.org) **www:** <http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/rio+20/default.asp>

**CIF SREP Pilot Countries Meeting:** The Climate Investment Funds (CIF) Scaling Up Renewable Energy Program (SREP) will hold a meeting of its pilot countries, to evaluate progress and discuss tasks ahead. **dates:** 7-10 March 2012 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Zhihong Zhang **phone:** +1-202-458-1801 **email:** [zzhang2@worldbank.org](mailto:zzhang2@worldbank.org) **www:** <http://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/cif/content/srep-pilot-country-meetings>

**IPCC WGIII AR5 Second Expert Meeting on Scenarios:** Scenarios have a key role in the WGIII contribution to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change fifth Assessment Report as an integrative element. Authors from all relevant chapters will meet to coordinate and integrate the scenario activities across chapters. **dates:** 17-18 March 2012 **location:** Wellington, New Zealand **contact:** IPCC Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-730-8208 **fax:** +41-22-730-8025 **email:** [IPCC-Sec@wmo.int](mailto:IPCC-Sec@wmo.int) **www:** <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

**Planet Under Pressure: New Knowledge Towards Solutions:** This conference will focus on solutions to the global sustainability challenge. The conference will discuss solutions to move societies on to a sustainable pathway and provide scientific leadership towards the UNCS. **dates:** 26-29 March 2012 **location:** London, United Kingdom **contact:** Jenny Wang **phone:** +86-10-8520-8796 **email:** [Jen.wang@elsevier.com](mailto:Jen.wang@elsevier.com) **www:** <http://www.planetunderpressure2012.net>

**First Round of "Informal-informal" Negotiations on the zero draft of the outcome document for the UNCS:** This meeting will continue negotiations on the outcome document for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. **dates:** 19-23 March 2012 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCS Secretariat **email:** [uncsd2012@un.org](mailto:uncsd2012@un.org) **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/>

**Third Intersessional Meeting for UNCS:** The third intersessional meeting for the UNCS will be convened in March 2012. **dates:** 26-27 March 2012 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCS Secretariat **email:** [uncsd2012@un.org](mailto:uncsd2012@un.org) **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/>

**Joint Japan-IRENA workshop for promoting renewable energy in the Pacific Island region:** This workshop aims to further strengthen cooperation between IRENA and Pacific Island countries in the field of renewable energy. It will take place in conjunction with the 6th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM6) in Okinawa, Japan, from 25-26 May 2012. **dates:** late May 2012 **location:** Okinawa, Japan **contact:** Ms. Kotono Hara, Economic Security Division, Economic Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs **phone:** +81-3-5501-8339 **email:** [kotono.hara-2@mofa.go.jp](mailto:kotono.hara-2@mofa.go.jp) **www:** <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/palm/palm6/index.html>

**Third PrepCom for UNCS:** The third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the UNCS will take place in Brazil just prior to the conference. **dates:** 13-15 June 2012 **location:** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil **contact:** UNCS Secretariat **email:** [uncsd2012@un.org](mailto:uncsd2012@un.org) **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/>

**UN Conference on Sustainable Development:** The UNCS will mark the 20th anniversary of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit), which convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. **dates:** 20-22 June 2012 **location:** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil **contact:** UNCS Secretariat **email:** [uncsd2012@un.org](mailto:uncsd2012@un.org) **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/>

**UNFCCC COP18:** The 18th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 18) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the eighth Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP 8), among other associated meetings, are scheduled to take place in Doha, Qatar. **dates:** 26 November - 7 December 2012 **location:** Doha, Qatar **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** [secretariat@unfccc.int](mailto:secretariat@unfccc.int) **www:** <http://unfccc.int>

**Third Session of the IRENA Assembly:** The third session of the IRENA Assembly is scheduled to take place in January 2013. **dates:** 13-14 January 2013 **location:** Abu Dhabi, UAE **contact:** Adnan Amin, Director-General **phone:** +971-2-4179001 **email:** [secretariat@irena.org](mailto:secretariat@irena.org) **www:** <http://www.irena.org>

## GLOSSARY

GLC	Governance and Legal Committee
GWEC	Global Wind Energy Council
IEA	International Energy Agency
IITC	IRENA Innovation and Technology Centre
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
LDC	Least Developed Countries
REN21	Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century
SE4ALL	Sustainable Energy for All
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
UAE	United Arab Emirates



## International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Services (IISD RS) Knowledge Management Resources

IISD RS, publisher of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, also maintains online knowledgebases that are updated daily with information regarding meetings, publications and other activities related to international sustainable development policy and its implementation.

Each knowledgebase project consists of several integrated resources, to help the sustainable development policy and practice communities assess trends and activities at the international level. These resources are:

- Daily news reports researched and written by our own experts and organized in a **freely accessible, searchable on-line knowledgebase**;
- A **comprehensive calendar of upcoming events** related to international sustainable development policy, which can be downloaded to your own online calendar;
- And a **community listserve**, which exclusively delivers email updates of the most recent additions to our knowledgebases, as well as announcements by listserve members regarding their organizations' sustainable development activities.

Each knowledgebase focuses on a specific environmental challenge or region, as noted below:



**Sustainable Development Policy & Practice**  
<http://uncsd.iisd.org/>



**Climate Change Policy & Practice**  
<http://climate-l.iisd.org/>



**SIDS Policy & Practice**  
<http://sids-l.iisd.org/>



**Biodiversity Policy & Practice**  
<http://biodiversity-l.iisd.org/>



**Latin America & Caribbean Regional Coverage**  
<http://larc.iisd.org/>



**African Regional Coverage**  
<http://africasd.iisd.org/>