

IRENA - the global voice for renewable energy

IRENA was officially established in Bonn on 26 January 2009. The founding of IRENA is a milestone for world renewable energy supply and a clear sign that the global energy paradigm is changing due to the accelerating commitment from governments. As of today, 142 states and the European Union signed the Statute of the Agency; amongst them are 48 African, 37 European, 33 Asian, 15 American and 9 Australia/Oceania States.

Important Dates:

- Founding Conference – 27 January 2009, Bonne, Germany;
- Second Session – 29-30 June 2009, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt;
- Third Session – 17 January 2010, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates;

Structure:

- IRENA will consist of an Assembly, a Council, and a Secretariat.

Principles of work:

- international cooperation between Member States and related stakeholders;
- dedication to assisting its Members to harness their renewable energy potential;
- accessibility of all the Agency's services, bearing in mind the special needs of developing countries;
- active participation of all its Members in IRENA's decision making processes;
- striving for excellence in all the services produced by the organisation;
- efficiency and transparency in delivering the organisation's services; and
- adding value to what is already being done by existing organisations in the field of renewable energy.

Website: www.irena.org

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) is the new international body for promotion of renewable energy on a global level. An initiative by the German Federal Government, IRENA is a step forward in engaging all countries in the world for developing comprehensive solutions to the global energy challenges and recognising the political and economic benefit that the renewable energy provides. Renewable energy is seen as one of the key solutions to the world's energy future. However, besides its recognised benefits and the vast potential, the current use of renewable energy remains limited with unequal geographic distribution around the globe. Many obstacles stand on the way for boosting the use of renewable energy worldwide: the monopoly of the traditional fossil fuels in the energy supply, high costs of new technologies, lack of political support and subsidies for RE, insecure financing of renewable energy projects, and the prevailing low level of awareness for the climate change and mitigation effect of the use of RE. Recognising the huge potential of renewable energy, under German leadership and lobbying, more than 140 countries in the world have come together to establish an international organisation dedicated to facilitating the rapid development and deployment of renewable energy worldwide – The International Renewable Energy Agency.

The aim of IRENA is to promote a rapid transition towards the widespread and sustainable use of renewable energy, focusing exclusively on renewable energies, addressing both industrialised and developing countries. In its work IRENA will aim at fostering all types of renewable energy and considering various renewable energy policies at the local, regional, and national levels, in order to implement successful and enduring policy solutions. According to its status, IRENA will promote the widespread and increased adoption and sustainable use of all forms of renewable energy. Acting as the global voice for renewable energies, IRENA will facilitate access to all relevant renewable energy information, including technical data, economic data and renewable resource potential data, and share experiences on best practices and lessons learned regarding policy frameworks, capacity-building projects, available finance mechanisms and renewable energy related energy efficiency measures.

Macedonia's role in IRENA - more benefit than contribution

Macedonia is a founding member of IRENA and a signatory country at the Founding Conference in Bonn last year. Since then the Ministry of Economy (MoE) is actively participating in the work of IRENA. Renewable energy is among the priorities of the Government of Macedonia and the MoE, especially in the preparation of the national Energy Strategy and the Renewable Energy Strategy, where a great importance is given to the energy production from RES: hydropower plants, wind parks, solar and PV plants, efficient wood stoves, etc.

However, little has been done in Macedonia for boosting energy production from RES. The experience in the last several years shows clearly that the country needs vast support in developing Greenfield projects for RE. Herein, the role of IRENA will be of irreplaceable importance for: collection of renewable energy related information and knowledge, analyses and dissemination of current renewable energy practices, including policies and incentives, available technologies and examples of best operational practice; providing information and advice on the financing mechanisms available for renewable energy projects; stimulating and encouraging research (including on socio-economic issues), by fostering research networks to undertake joint research; development and deployment of technologies; providing relevant policy advice and assistance.

Whether our government will use the momentum and the opportunity to receive support from an international agency, whose member states are global leaders in renewable energy production depends on the government's efforts, diplomacy and dedication for: meeting the EU targets on RE, mitigating climate change, providing energy security and sustainable development.

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