

## The Africa Renewable Energy Initiative

The Africa Renewable Energy initiative (AREI) was launched at the COP21 in Paris, endorsed by 54 African Heads of State, and has two main goals:

1. to help achieve sustainable development, enhanced well-being, and sound economic development by ensuring universal access to sufficient amounts of clean, appropriate and affordable energy.
2. to help African countries leapfrog to renewable energy systems that support their low-carbon development strategies while enhancing economic and energy security.

AREI is set to add at least 300 GW renewable energy (i. e., adding more than double current energy generation on the continent) by 2030, and an initial 10 GW by 2020 (a doubling of current rates). It explicitly outlines a transformation towards people-centred, equitably distributed renewable energy with vastly expanded ownership structures enabling households, communities, cooperatives, farmers, small- and medium scale enterprises, municipalities as well as larger companies to become both producers and consumers of electricity.

Among the nine essential work areas in its ambitious Action Plan, AREI emphasizes the need for coordination and mapping of existing initiatives, capacity-building, and provision of bold, programmatic country-wide incentives and regulations, including guarantees for long-term investment security such as tariff- and off-take guarantees (feed-in tariffs).

AREI also highlights the importance of civil society participation and multi-stakeholder involvement, as well as social and environmental safeguards and precautionary technology assessments.

The initiative is unique in its ambitious goals, its developing country leadership, and its simultaneous grounding in both energy access and climate change mitigation.

AREI has evolved within the climate negotiations in Lima in 2014 where the Africa Group of Negotiators called for a global partnership on renewable energy. It has already helped inspire a more collaborative-oriented mode in the negotiations as well as the emergence of other similar initiatives on other continents and by country groupings as for example the Least Developed Countries. These complementary and mutually supported initiatives may come together to form the beginning of a global programme/ partnership.

AREI also speaks to the concrete provision for substantial means of implementation, including public finance, for developing countries. In connection with the AREI launch at COP21 in Paris, G7, Sweden and the European Union issued a joint statement of support, pledging US\$ 10 billion for the first phase of the initiative, until 2020.

AREI is now becoming operationalized with the formation of a fully representative African Governing Board, a trust fund and an implementing agency.

Further information is available at [www.arei.org](http://www.arei.org)