

UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE – UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

30 NOVEMBER – 12 DECEMBER 2023

THE SOLAR HUB



MISSION ENERGY ACCESS FOR A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR ALL

Thematic Arena 3, TA3-190, Opportunity District, Expo City, Dubai

3 DECEMBER, 2023 | 17:00 PM – 18:30 PM

Background & Rationale

Despite efforts to enhance energy access, there were about 675 million people worldwide who had no access to electricity and about 2.3 billion people who had no access to clean cooking facilities. Furthermore, in the absence of additional efforts and measures, as many as 660 million people (mostly in the least-developed countries and in sub-Saharan Africa) will remain without access to electricity and 1.9 billion people will still be dependent on polluting fuels and technologies for cooking in 2030. This is a betrayal of the global commitment to ending energy poverty by 2030.

Access to clean energy, although it is a worthy end in itself, has several knock-on benefits across the development spectrum. The lack of access to clean energy adversely affects human health, the availability of decent work, access to education, gender equity and the ability to move out of poverty. Provision of clean household cooking energy has implications for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 1, 3, 4 and 5. Similarly, enhancing access to electricity contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8.

Access to clean and modern energy also enables countries and peoples to reduce — and to eliminate — greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, the revolution in modern and clean energy technologies, especially the performance gains and cost reductions in renewable energy and energy storage, can also substantially advance electricity access goals while also delivering gains in the form of avoided emissions. For example, of the 21,500 mini-grids that serve 48 million people worldwide, half are solar-photovoltaic-based; and of the almost 30,000 mini-grids that are planned, 99% will be solar photovoltaic. A recent study by the International Solar Alliance indicates that solar-photovoltaic- and battery-based mini-grids provide cheaper electricity than from the grid if the grid has to be extended by more than ten kilometres.

This alignment of development and climate benefits through access to energy highlights that action to enable universal access to clean and modern energy needs to be accelerated, so that it is achieved as soon as possible, and certainly by 2030. Much of the focus currently has been on mitigating the impacts of the shift away from fossil fuels. However, we cannot ignore the enormous number of people who continue to live without access to electricity or clean cooking energy and who played only a small part in warming our planet, even as the impacts of climate change affect them most severely.

A mission-mode approach on energy access, therefore, is urgently required now to accelerate our efforts to ensure universal energy access by 2030. To achieve this objective, this approach would need both to greatly enhance the development of innovative and affordable solutions for enabling access to clean and modern energy and its productive uses, and to drive the accelerated large-scale deployment of

these solutions. This, in turn, will require not just strengthening innovation relating to clean energy access but also other activities that support these clean-energy-access programmes. This will require paying attention to the interplay of the technology, finance, policy and socio-economic sectors. A successful mission would help to deliver a triple dividend of increasing energy access, enhancing social and economic benefits, and advancing climate goals.

An article in *Nature Energy*, co-authored by Ambuj D. Sagar, Ajay Mathur, Fatih Birol, Yacob Mulugetta, Damilola Ogunbiyi, Youba Sokona & Achim Steiner highlights the essence of access to clean energy to sustainable human development. The authors say “*We have a responsibility and an opportunity to meet the global goal of ending energy poverty by 2030*”, and have proposed the creation of a new Mission Energy Access programme to support this aim.

This session will engage with the authors who are from a broad spectrum of organization and expertise.

During the programme, the ISA will also release a report titled “***Unleashing Renewables in Advancing Economic, Social, and Environmental Equity***”, which brings together a holistic perspective on the Global Energy Transition (including that of the Global South).

Agenda

17:00 - 17:05 PM	<p>Welcome and Opening Remarks Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General, International Solar Alliance</p>
17:05 - 17:10 PM	<p>Release of ISA Report H.E. Shri R.K. Singh, Hon’ble Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy, Govt of India and President of the ISA Assembly</p>
17:10 - 17:20 PM	<p>Keynote Address H.E. Shri R.K. Singh, Hon’ble Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy, Govt of India and President of the ISA Assembly</p>
17:20 - 18:25 PM	<p>Panel Discussion and Audience Interaction Moderator Dr Gauri Singh, DDG, IRENA Panellists Ambuj D. Sagar, School of Public Policy, Indian Institute of Technology - Delhi Ajay Mathur, Director General, International Solar Alliance Achim Steiner, Administrator, United National Development Programme Fatih Birol, Executive Director, International Energy Agency Yacob Mulugetta, Professor of Energy and Development Policy, University College London Damilola Ogunbiyi, CEO, Sustainable Energy for All Youba Sokona, Honorary Professor, University College London Kate Hampton, CEO, CIFF</p>
18:25 - 18:30 PM	<p>Concluding Remarks Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General, International Solar Alliance</p>



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