



Renewable Energy in the Americas



The Renewable Energy in the Americas Initiative (REIA) is pleased to send you the first edition of the REIA Newsletter. The newsletter will be published quarterly. It contains information on REIA activities and other renewable-energy and energy-efficiency developments in the Americas and globally. We hope that you enjoy this publication and find it useful. We welcome your contributions.



Background on REIA

The Renewable Energy in the Americas (REIA) Initiative was created in 1992 by a consortium of U.S., Latin American, and Caribbean interests to advance sustainable solutions--particularly renewable energy and energy efficiency--for meeting the growing energy needs of the hemisphere.

The objectives of the REIA Initiative are fourfold: (1) to identify and promote viable renewable-energy and energy-efficiency project opportunities in the LAC region; (2) to promote policy measures that will advance the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies; (3) to develop and assist in accessing innovative financing mechanisms suited to those technologies and appropriate to the social and economic needs of the demographically diverse end users; and (4) to provide technical assistance and training on matters related to sustainable energy development.

REIA was transferred to the Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment (USDE) of the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1998 in order to provide better service to the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The USDE/OAS plays an important role in the follow-up to, and preparations for the Summits of the Americas. This Summit process, which seeks to encourage sustainable development and environmental protection throughout LAC, offers further expansion of the scope of the REIA Initiative.

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Special thanks 
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REIA Activities

Solar Panels and Computers: Linking Renewable Energy with Telecommunications in Rural Areas

REIA is collaborating with the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) of the OAS in the creation of a public-private partnership that will bring modern electricity and telecommunication services to isolated rural communities in the LAC region. The Initiative is motivated by the fact that there is a significant unserved rural population, whose economic development is limited by the absence of this basic infrastructure. Advanced wireless technologies offer commercial solutions for infrastructure development without building new telephone and electricity grids. This Initiative will involve appropriate "technology packages" consisting of energy generation and storage systems, electricity balance of systems (wiring, switches etc.), and a telecommunications system (satellite telephone and computer with Internet connection). To accompany the technology, a "training package" will be prepared that will include both system training (operation and maintenance) and basic computer training.

The Initiative will concentrate on applying appropriate energy (for example, solar photovoltaics) and telecommunication systems for community services



that represent the highest value in terms of both, quality of life and the potential for cost recovery/income generation. It will focus primarily on providing key public buildings in rural communities -- whether it is a school, health clinic, municipal government building or even a church -- with electricity and adding critical services such as telecommunications and computer systems. Emphasis will be placed on creating telecenters for rural communities, which offer multiple benefits (i.e. education, lighting, telephone communications, Internet links, etc). National governments have increasingly recognized the need to improve rural infrastructure. This fact,

coupled with increasing availability of reliable wireless technologies is resulting in larger investments in rural areas out of the federal resources. It can be expected that this convergence will stimulate considerable investment on the part of the national governments in previously neglected rural communities.

For more information on these activities contact the REIA Technical Secretariat.

Crafting Renewable Energy Policies in Guatemala

In 1996, Guatemala ratified the *General Electricity Law*, which significantly reformed the electric power market. It gives private companies access to the power grid, distributors, and wholesale customers. The law also provides for a general unbundling of generation, transmission, and distribution. As a result of this legislation, many of the state's electricity assets have been privatized, e.g. the distribution company that covers three departments, including Guatemala City (EEGSA), and distribution assets of the National Electrification Institute (INDE). A shortcoming of this law is its failure to promote renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies. The REIA Initiative is working with the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM) of the Government of Guatemala to address this

problem. The MEM and REIA are progressing towards the establishment of a well-articulated and comprehensive strategy for sustainable growth in the renewable-energy sector. REIA is also assisting the MEM with a central component of this strategy, a *Law of Incentives for Renewable Energy Project Development*, and preparing it for adoption. This legislation is currently being developed and it is hoped will be adopted by the Government of Guatemala in the near future. To complement the legislation, REIA and the MEM are also drafting the necessary regulations for the law.

For more information on these activities, please contact the REIA Technical Secretariat.

Sustainable Energy Islands Initiative

The Caribbean Island Nations produce only a tiny fraction of global greenhouse gas emissions. However, many because of their location barely above sea level, are among the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change such as sea level rise and extreme weather conditions. Most island nations are 100% dependent on fossil fuels, yet these same countries are especially suited to utilize combinations of modern renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency technologies. The OAS, together with a consortium of organizations including Winrock International, The Climate Institute, Counterpart International and the Forum for Energy and Development (FED), are working with Caribbean Nations to facilitate a transition to sustainable energy technologies. This transition will result in more cost-effective electricity, while demonstrating to the rest of the world their commitment to addressing the challenge of climate change.

The Global Sustainable Energy Islands Initiative (GSEII) was launched at the Global Climate Change Conference



(COP6) meeting in The Hague November 2000. This initiative is the result of St. Lucia's announcement at COP5 in Bonn 1999 of its intention to become the first country to dramatically transform the way in which electricity is generated and consumed. At COP6, Prime Minister the Hon. Kenny Anthony of St. Lucia presented the progress

made by St. Lucia to become the first Sustainable Energy Demonstration Country and challenged other nations to follow. In order to replicate the St. Lucian model among other small island states. The consortium is currently working with the Government of Grenada in this endeavor, and seeks to identify and work with additional small island states over the next three to five years, and assist them in transforming their energy systems to a sustainable energy base.

For additional information regarding this initiative, please contact the REIA Technical Secretariat.

Non-LAC Renewable Energy Activities

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) 21st Century Renewable Energy Development Initiative

The APEC 21st Century Renewable Energy Development Initiative was launched in May 2000 at the 4th APEC Energy Ministers meeting in San Diego, where it was endorsed by all the Energy Ministers. The purpose of the Initiative is to advance the use of renewable energy for sustainable economic development and growth in the APEC region. OAS members of APEC include Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru, and the United States.

Under this Initiative, the APEC Energy Working Group undertakes a series of collaborative efforts that specifically address the renewable-energy-based needs and issues of individual APEC member economies. Projects developed under the Initiative effort will take into consideration renewable-energy infrastructure, development needs, training requirements, needs for analytical tools and methods, policy formulation, financing, joint-venture

development, and the removal of trade barriers.

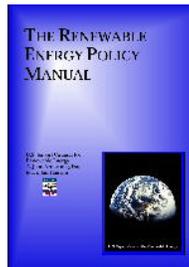
The Initiative was developed within the APEC Experts Group on New and Renewable Energy Technologies (EGNRET). It is made up of a series of collaborative efforts among 21 member economies of APEC to promote the use of renewable energy in the APEC region. The first activity of the Initiative was the development of a *Survey of APEC Member Economies' Renewable-Energy-Based Priority Needs and Issues Relating to Sustainable Development*. In March 2001, the APEC Private Sector Renewable Energy Forum was held. It is the "next step" of the Initiative with recognition of the importance of the private sector to the success of promoting the use of renewable energy in the region.

Source: <http://www.amz.com/apec2/HomePage/EGNRET/21century/index.html>

RE and EE Resources

Renewable Energy Policy Manual

REIA is pleased to make available the electronic version of the *Renewable Energy Policy Manual*, developed by the former U.S. Export Council for Renewable Energy. It is available at http://www.oas.org/reia/english/RE_policy_manual.htm. This *Manual* seeks to identify those issues that are the most relevant to countries that are seeking to attract private capital to their electricity sector, and in particular to the renewable energy subsector. In some cases, the



relevance of an issue will depend upon the structure of a country's national electric system. In other cases, the issues and recommendations may have more universal application. Where the issues are specifically related to system structure, an attempt has been made to identify the structure that is being discussed and to indicate the applicability of the discussion to countries that incorporate that particular structure.

Remote Area Power Supply Project in Peru

The remote area power systems (RAPS) project entitled "Renewable Energy for Peruvian Amazon Region" (RESPAR) is a private sector research, development and deployment, RD&D project seeking to create and facilitate a market opportunity for remote rural electrification. The systems use hybrid modules to prove that a private operator can, with some incentives, provide sustainable energy to isolated communities. A collaborative effort between the International Lead Zinc Research Organization, the Solar Energy Research and Education Foundation and the Ministry of Energy and Mines, Directorate of Project Execution, and several other organizations, the project will begin installation of the systems this summer in two communities in the Loreto region of Peru. Training is being provided in the efficient use of energy and in how to establish and operate a mini utility by the community. Integration of productive uses for the energy that will provide employment, increased revenues and sustainable products including

processing of agricultural products will be critical to improving the standard of living, providing better health, education and communication for the remote communities in the Amazon Basin. It is hoped that the replication phase of the project will include the other countries in the Amazon region. A collaborative effort to spread this information and progress about hybrids is underway.

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