

REN21 Mission and Concept

The Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21) is designed to complement the array of efforts now underway around the world to accelerate the appropriate use of renewable energy.

The network helps create an environment in which ideas and information are shared, and action to promote renewable energy is encouraged and given positive recognition. By working together, participants of REN21 will leverage their successes and strengthen their influence.

It is important from the outset to underscore that REN21 is a “global policy network”, not a partnership or an organization per se. In that sense, it is a set of evolving relationships oriented around a commitment to renewable energy. Actions associated with REN21 are originated by members, and accomplished by them. The Network helps create an environment in which ideas and information are shared, and action to promote renewable energy is encouraged and given positive recognition.

The network controls only its own composition, working methods, and agenda. It is not “authoritative” in a formal sense, but will be influential because of its participants, the important and timely issues it would address, and its ability to convene a broad array of influential and respected figures from politics, policy, business, academia, and NGOs.

Background

REN21 is a key follow-up action to the International Conference for Renewable Energies – Renewables 2004 – that took place in Bonn, Germany, in June, 2004. In paragraph 9, the conference’s Political Declaration calls for such a network to provide international leadership on renewable energy:

“Ministers and Government Representatives agree to work within a ‘global policy network’ together with representatives from parliaments, local and regional authorities, academia, the private sector, international institutions, international industry associations, consumers, civil society, women’s groups, and relevant partnerships worldwide.”

REN21 is intended to consolidate and extend the progress catalysed by Renewables 2004, by encouraging and intensifying the continued collaboration between governments, international organisations and stakeholders of the unique community created by Renewables 2004.

REN21 Mission Statement

REN21 -- providing international leadership for the rapid expansion of renewable energy in developing and industrial countries – based on the cooperation of stakeholders from the energy, development and environment sectors.

Goals and Actions of REN21

The overarching goal of REN21 is the promotion of policies that will increase the wise use of renewable energy worldwide. In order to achieve this objective, REN21 encourages action in three areas: Policy, Advocacy, and Exchange.

I. Policy - Framing Priority Issues

REN21 convenes and engages key leaders and stakeholders in national legislation and international processes. REN21 and its participants will encourage the inclusion of renewable energy matters in the deliberations of appropriate meetings and venues, and target relevant political processes, such as CSD 14 and 15, meetings of the G8, UNFCCC, and the MDG review by the UN General Assembly.

REN21 encourages political support for the strengthening of regulatory environments and market structures that lead to accelerating use of renewable energy in developed and developing countries and emerging economies, and to expanded access to public and private financing.

REN21 encourages countries to meet commitments to renewable energy (particularly in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and in the International Action Programme of the renewables 2004 conference) and helps document and report on progress.

II. Advocacy - Highlighting Benefits

REN21 advocates the deployment of renewable energy as a critical component of strategies to increase access to energy services and to alleviate poverty and achieve sustainable development in developing countries, and as a necessary component of environmentally and economically sound energy regimes in all countries, including industrialised countries.

By combining their experiences and expertise, by periodically hosting high profile international events and by producing authoritative and influential issue papers, REN21 participants improve the understanding of the value and essential contribution of renewable energy in achieving sustainable development, and promote attention to the opportunities associated with the expanded use of renewable energy.

III. Exchange - Promoting Knowledge Flow

REN21 promotes knowledge generation and information exchange by providing links among knowledge bases on renewable energy market and policy developments, and by working to ensure that gaps in the knowledge base are effectively filled by capable organisations and individuals.

By encouraging ongoing dialogues, joint work, and transparency among a diverse community of government ministries, international organisations, and stakeholder groups on priority issues regarding the role and expansion of renewable energy, REN21 is a catalyst for specific contributions, capacity building, and policy advice for consideration by relevant national and international bodies.

REN21 enables its participants to share experiences and best practices, to benefit from detailed and practical knowledge, and to engage in common analysis and review, as well as informal and frank debates.