



Press Release

DEWA organises inception meeting and training workshop to discuss establishing 'GCC Solar Photovoltaic Testing Centres Network'

- Event was organised in cooperation with EU-GCC Clean Energy Technology Network and IRENA

Dubai, UAE, 22 May 2017: Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), in cooperation with the EU-GCC Clean Energy Technology Network, and in association with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and other organisations from the European Union (EU) and Gulf Cooperation Council Countries (GCC), has organised an inception meeting and training workshop in Dubai to discuss establishing the 'GCC Solar Photovoltaic Testing Centres Network.' Participants also visited the solar testing facility at the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, which is the largest single-site solar project in the world.

The inception meeting discussed forming the GCC PV Testing Labs network, its aims, objectives, and organisation. Participants reviewed best practices on the methodology and procedures used to test solar photovoltaic modules. The workshop discussed ways to help photovoltaic testing centres in the GCC improve their capabilities to meet international standards and provide support to transform photovoltaic labs to strong market players that can support solar photovoltaic deployment in the region.

Participants in the two-day event included representatives from the Spanish National Renewable Energy Centre (CENER), European Standardisation Organisations (CEN/CENELEC), Gulf Standardization Organization (GSO), GCC Electrical Testing Laboratory, Masdar Institute, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, and local, regional, and European utilities and standardisation organisations.

"In this region, we're blessed with sunny days all year round. Therefore, taking advantage of this is a strategic necessity for the GCC countries. In addition to being a clean and inexhaustible natural source of energy, the costs of producing solar power have decreased in recent years, while photovoltaic technology has improved significantly, contributing to the

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increase of solar power in the energy mix in the region. At DEWA, we pay great attention to research and development to develop the next generation of photovoltaic solar panels. We collaborate with the biggest research institutions in the world and with stakeholders in the GCC and the EU, to develop innovative solutions and technologies to mitigate the effect of dust on photovoltaic equipment and enhance the efficiency and performance of photovoltaic panels. This supports the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to anticipate the future, and make Dubai a global hub for sustainability and green economy by developing renewable and clean energy projects,” said HE Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, MD & CEO of DEWA.

Al Tayer noted that the R&D centre at the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, features two solar testing facilities. The first specialises in testing photovoltaic solar panels, while the second focuses on Concentrated Solar Power (CSP). The centre is currently testing over 30 photovoltaic panel types from global manufacturers to check their performance, analyse them, and test their long-term reliability in the local climate. The tests will set a baseline for the development of specifications, tests and standards for photovoltaic equipment.

“Solar PV technologies face specific but common localised issues in the GCC region. The customised testing of the PV panels in such harsh extremities of weather will contribute to reducing the uncertainty in electricity generation leading to increased predictability and viability of solar PV projects. Establishing a mechanism in the region for cooperation between the PV testing centres and for targeted partnerships with well-established centres in the EU and elsewhere will help the region develop the needed skills and capacity to support the development of the solar market in the region. The EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network, funded by the European Union, can be a valuable partner in this process to facilitate know-how transfer and capacity building,” said Dr. Mustapha Taoumi, Energy Technology Expert at the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network.

“The GCC is decisively acting to harness its great resource potential for PV generation. We are observing record prices below 30 USD/MWh from PV auctions in the region. The next stage for a successful implementation is to ensure that these projects will deliver, in performance and durability,



as expected. For that, having sound quality assurance mechanisms in place is indispensable. This event focuses on establishing a cooperation network for PV testing labs in the region as a valuable step forward to achieve the region's ambitious plans for PV deployment," said Francisco Boshell, Analyst at IRENA.

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