

## PRESS RELEASE

### Representatives from the Gulf Region Visit Solar Thermal Power Sites in Spain

an initiative of the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network and of the Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat General (GCC SG) in cooperation with CENER (The National Renewable Energy Centre of Spain)

Experts of energy authorities and R&D organisations from the Gulf region are visiting solar thermal power sites in Spain this week in the framework of a 5-day **study tour** on “**Solar thermal applications for the energy transition**”. This initiative is organised by the **EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network**, funded by the European Commission, in cooperation with CENER (The National Renewable Energy Centre of Spain), the Network partner in Spain. The study tour aims to promote the exchange of experiences and know-how between the EU and the GCC on clean energy technologies and applications.

*“If we want to be successful in our path towards sustainable energy we need everybody’s involvement. Exchange of expertise and best-practices in the framework of the EU-GCC partnership is vital to tap all the potential of clean energy technologies. Initiatives as this “Study tour on solar thermal applications for the energy transition” organised by the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network foster closer technical and political cooperation between the EU and GCC countries.”* said **Ana Egea-Herrero, Policy Officer at the Directorate General for Energy, European Commission** in her welcome address during the introductory workshop in Seville on 10 June.

The GCC region’s energy sector is experiencing rapid change, with a shift towards cleaner energy in the framework of the energy transition. Policy makers and utilities are increasingly aware of this potential, and high-profile renewable power initiatives have been launched along with ambitious plans.

*“Concentrated solar power (CSP) has recently emerged as a cost-effective enabler of the energy transition in the MENA region. Advancements in the cost structure of projects and smart combinations with solar PV, as seen in Dubai and Morocco, have turned CSP into a real alternative to fossil fuel based dispatchable power.”* noted Frank Wouters, **Director of the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network**. *“No Gulf country can do without CSP in the mix and Europe’s knowledge and experience make it a natural partner to the Gulf countries”* added Frank Wouters.

The GCC delegation consists of more than 15 delegates from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Qatar.

*“We are delighted to support the organisation of this study tour in Spain. This is a great opportunity for GCC delegates not only to learn about the status of commercial CSP plants in Europe and R&D projects and capabilities but also to look at the energy transition from an open perspective. This will enhance and boost the collaboration between GCC and EU countries in this area to meet the global challenges for sustainable development.”* said **Dr. Marcelino Sanchez, Director of the Solar Thermal Energy Department in CENER**.

The agenda consists of training workshops as well as visits to state-of-the-art industrial and research facilities in Seville, Almeria and Madrid, including Abengoa’s Solucar Platform, Torresol’s Gemasolar, CIEMAT’s Plataforma Solar de Almeria, IMDEA, Acciona. Workshops will focus on Dispatchability for the Energy Transition, on the EU GCC CSP Alliance Initiative and on the role of R&D for CSP Deployment among other topics.

**ENDS**

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***Photos from the first days of the study tour.***



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#### **Notes to Editors**

The EU– GCC Clean Energy Technology Network, funded by the European Commission, was established as a response to the common EU and GCC interest for strategic clean energy cooperation. The Network aims to act as catalyst and facilitate the development of clean energy partnerships including the related policy and technology aspects among various stakeholders in the EU and GCC countries. The Network is structured around collaboration in five working areas, with Climate Change as a cross-cutting topic: Renewable Energy Sources; Energy Efficiency & Demand Side Management; Clean Natural Gas & related Technologies; Electricity Interconnections & Market Integration; Carbon Capture & Storage. The Network is funded by the European Commission. Its head office is in Abu Dhabi/ UAE.

More information available at: [www.eugcc-cleanergy.net](http://www.eugcc-cleanergy.net) | [contact@eugcc-cleanergy.net](mailto:contact@eugcc-cleanergy.net)

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