

Morocco raises its renewable energy target to 52% by 2030 as it prepares to host COP 22. RES4MED's conference in Rabat underlined the importance of Italy as a strategic partner.

Over \$12 billion worth of investments in solar and wind projects by 2020 to fulfill national targets

As it prepares to host COP 22 in Marrakech in November 2016, Morocco is at the forefront of the global shift towards renewables. In February, Morocco caught the imagination of the world with the launch of the first phase of NOOR Ouarzazate solar complex and just six years after the launch of its solar and wind programmes, Morocco is turning its grand plans into a reality; a true testament to everyone involved in the industry in the Kingdom. The Moroccan experience, from target-setting to legislation to institutionalisation and governmental and international support can largely be considered a success story and a benchmark for emerging economies. RES4MED gathered the main stakeholders from across the board to discuss what has been achieved and how to build on it for the future.

The conference was commenced by welcoming words from Roberto Vigotti, Secretary General of RES4MED; Mustapha Bakoury, CEO of MASEN; his Excellency Roberto Natali, Ambassador of Italy in Morocco; Abdessamad Sekkal, President of Rabat-Salé-Kénitra Region; and Francesco Venturini, President of RES4MED and CEO of Enel Green Power. The words emphasised the importance of the Moroccan-Italian partnership especially in the field of renewable energy, highlighting the commitment of RES4MED and its members to the renewable energy market in Morocco.

The opening words alluded to the current context of the energy market in Morocco pointing to the current solar and wind programmes. The ongoing programmes in place to achieve the initial 42% target by 2020, see Morocco targeting 2 GW each of solar, wind and hydropower. Mustapha Bakkoury said that Morocco's action prioritises covering its energy needs today and by means of rapidly changing technologies, Morocco will play a more open role oriented towards Africa. In fact Morocco is on track to meet this target, proving that it provides a 'relatively stable haven for private investment' as stated by Oxford Business Group. Morocco has taken the stance of accelerating its green economy, looking to embed renewables in its growing and diversifying economy and proving that it can co-exist in an open market without the need for subsidies.

In the second segment of the conference, the implementation mechanisms were discussed in more depth, highlighting how agencies such as MASEN and SIE have worked together with the private and financial sector, contributing to the impressive progress of the market. The Moroccan model for the deployment of renewable energy has been based on competitive bidding processes through which private and international players have reached record low prices in both solar and wind. The most recent tender won by the Enel/Nareva/Siemens consortium averaged bids of just \$30/MWh for 850 MW of wind capacity, marking a truly remarkable moment for the wind technology and the Moroccan RE market.

Further, the discussion focused on how Morocco and Italy can work together for the promotion of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in Africa. There was very useful insight on the possibility of replicating the Moroccan model in sub-Saharan African markets as well as the key challenges and opportunities. The European experience in grid connection and the integration of renewables is very interesting and with Morocco taking the initiative at home, it also has a great opportunity of becoming a key player in developing a solid regional interconnection, already initiated with Mauritania.

In the third panel of the conference, the focus was on the role of the private sector in Morocco, with first-hand testimonials from Italian investors who are active in the market. Italy has been one of the key partners for Morocco through investment, knowledge and skills transfer and institutional support, establishing a key alliance with clear benefits for both sides. With ENEL emerging as winners in the Kingdom's biggest ever tender in terms of capacity, the Italian-Moroccan co-operation is set to become even more solid, delivering 850 MW of wind capacity, an established presence in the market with a view to installing further capacity and local jobs. Georgios Pergamalis, Head of Business Development Africa & Middle East at Enel and Giuseppe De Beni, Managing Director of Italgen spoke of their positive

experiences in the Moroccan market, particularly stressing on the importance of clarity of legislation and institutional support provided by the authorities.

The state of the renewable energy technology was discussed, demonstrating the great opportunity for Morocco to become an industrial and technological hub for renewables regionally and globally. Morocco has spent big efforts in developing the renewable energy industry, ensuring that green technologies are embedded in the economy and in fact contribute to its growth and diversification. Solar Breeder, Airlight and Megacell shared their experience and initiatives in Morocco again emphasising the significance of the Italian contribution to the Moroccan market.

Finally, the Italian experience in energy efficiency was presented, clearly showing how it is transposed to Morocco for an African regional destination. Paolo Gentili from PwC Italy presented some of the main initiatives they are working on in Morocco, leaving the floor to representatives from D'Appolonia, Avvenia and eFM to also share their ongoing projects in the Kingdom.

The RES4MED day was concluded by Morocco's Minister of Environment, Mrs. Hakima El Haite, who congratulated the RES4MED team and the ENEL Group for their pragmatic vision and their choice of Africa, the largest deposit of development and global economic growth. Madam Minister also welcomed and supported the establishment of the new RES4AFRICA.