



REN21
RENEWABLES NOW

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

REN21 is the global renewable energy policy network of actors from government, industry, NGOs and science and academia. At REN21, we work to create an enabling environment to advance the transition to renewables. We do this by building on a broad, cross-sectoral community and offering a platform for these stakeholders to engage and collaborate. Equipped with knowledge and tools, supported by a culture of dialogue and debate, and augmented by new ecosystems, this community of change strategically drives the deep transformations needed to make renewables the norm.

Our goal: enable decision-makers to make the shift to renewable energy happen – NOW.

MESSAGE FROM RANA ADIB

Executive Director

The transition to renewable energy signifies profound and necessary change. However, the necessary transformations cannot be achieved in isolation. It demands a holistic view across the entire energy system, recognising the shift in energy supply and demand and the economic and social value renewables can create.

The hidden value of renewables — economic development, job creation, resilience and social development — must be brought to the forefront. Achieving this requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders, drawing on diverse perspectives to inform and drive a collective approach. REN21 is helping lead this charge, with a unique methodology rooted in three core elements: the power of data, an unflinching examination of issues and the inclusion of diverse voices.

In leveraging these ingredients, REN21 offers a robust framework for identifying and overcoming the barriers to an energy transition with renewables. Through collaboration and shared commitment, we can redefine our energy landscape to one fully energised with renewables.

Join us and take a look at what REN21 and our network have been working to achieve in 2023. With over 100 members and a network of more than 4,000 experts, REN21 demonstrates the power of many and what we can accomplish together.

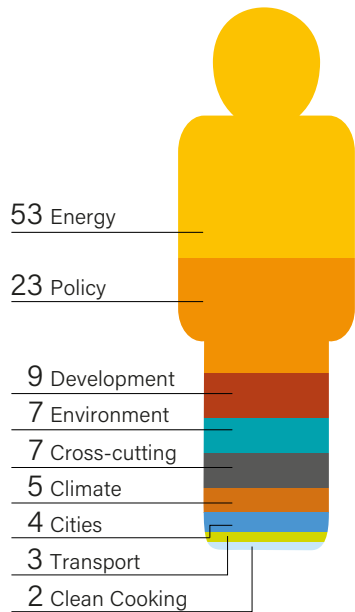


SNAPSHOT OF 2023

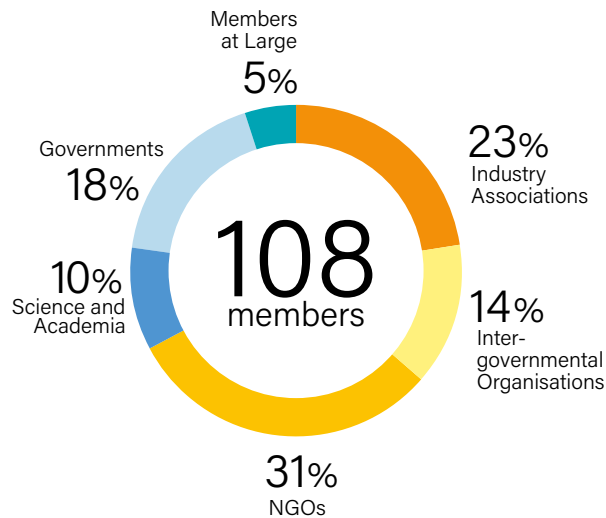


REN21 MEMBERS

Thematic distribution



Distribution per stakeholder group



Increase in membership, 2022-2023



1,200

news articles in 123 countries
and 36 different languages

A community of
>4,000
practitioners

>2,000
event participants

486

contributors to REN21
crowdsourced reports

326 (GSR) and 160 (RESR)

2,200
mentions on
social media

PARTICIPATION IN KEY GLOBAL EVENTS







INFORMING:

We understand that knowledge is power. But none of us holds all the knowledge needed to advance the energy transition. REN21 transforms individual knowledge into a powerful, collective asset to drive the global energy transition forward.



CONVENING:

We believe in the power of many. REN21 works to **bring together governments, industry, NGOs, science and academia to disrupt current thinking and create new approaches to achieving the energy transition with renewables.**



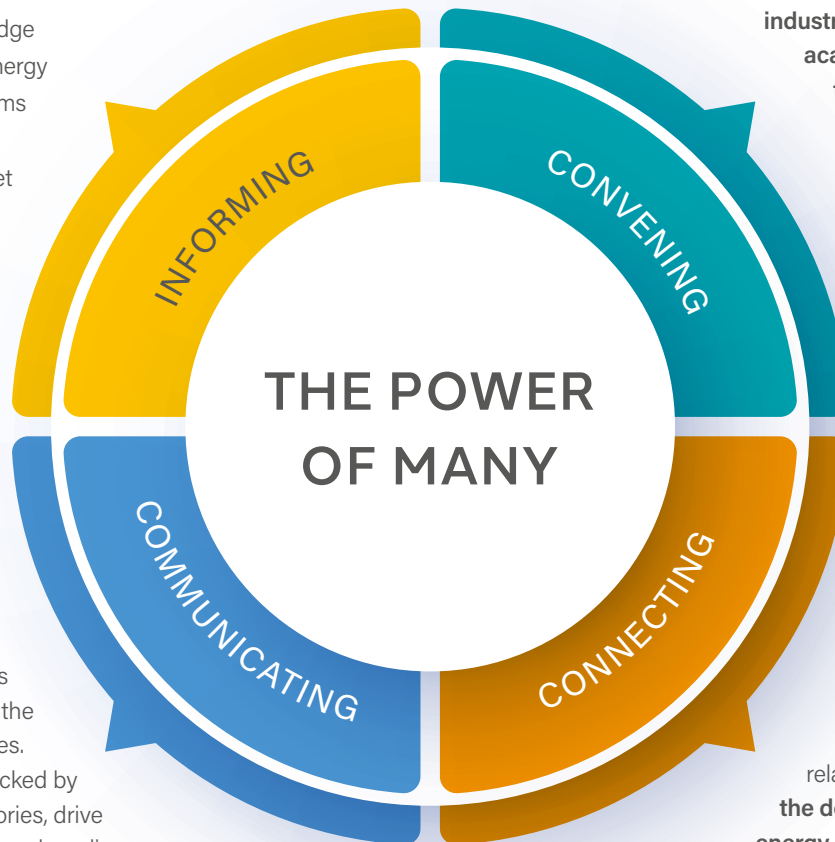
COMMUNICATING

We see communication as a powerful tool to convey the urgent need for renewables. Compelling narratives, backed by solid data and success stories, drive us. Our digital campaigns and media presence **amplify our communities' key messages to resonate with a wide audience – from policymakers and industry leaders to the general public.**



CONNECTING:

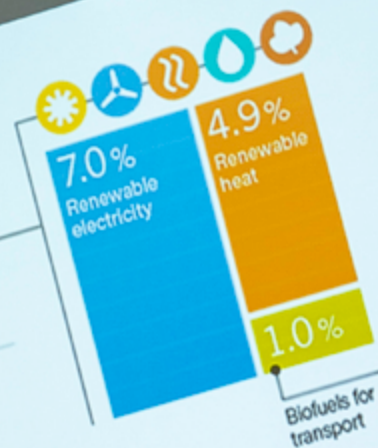
We believe our true strength lies in fostering relationships and **connecting the dots within the renewable energy ecosystems and beyond.**



THE WORLD IS BURNING MORE FOSSIL FUELS THAN EVER

Total Final Energy Consumption by Source, 2012 and 2022

Exajoules (EJ)



Source: IEA, REN21

BUILDING ON THE FACTS

Once again, the *Renewables Global Status Report* (GSR) demonstrated the value of renewables as resilient, reliable, stable and affordable energy sources, and how they successfully responded to the compounding crises now battering the world.

Through the lens of the COVID-19 recovery, increasing geopolitical tensions and the global energy crisis, data in the *Renewables Global Status Report* collection clearly showed that the adoption of renewables can reduce dependence on fossil fuels and protect energy consumers from price volatility and supply shocks. In parallel, when compared to rising fossil fuel prices, the declining costs of renewables and increased international investment for the energy transition provided opportunities for accelerated renewables uptake in all sectors. The report stressed that **without fully building on the economic opportunities that renewables provide, we are missing the chance to build resilient and inclusive societies.**

For the first time, the GSR series broke down the complexities of the renewable sector into separate modules. **These reports looked at one aspect of the renewable energy system: supply, demand, systems and infrastructure, and renewables for economic and social value creation.** A Global Overview module wrapped up the collection. As always, this remained a crowd-sourced, peer reviewed report: Fifteen authors and over 370 individuals contributed to the 2023 edition. **Collectively, these five modules provide an excellent read for those who want to better understand how to anchor renewables in our economies and societies. Together. Now.**



STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE

The renewable energy landscape has transformed considerably in the last decade. Still, mainstreaming renewables requires widespread societal support, political acceptance and integration across sectors. To achieve this, collaboration must extend beyond traditional stakeholders. This is where REN21's strategic intelligence came in during 2023. REN21 used an AI-based tool to help pinpoint relevant conversations, influencers and decision-makers, particularly in the non-energy sectors.

The tool enabled the REN21 Secretariat team to track emerging discussions by analysing a wide range of data and identifying key influential voices within and beyond the energy sector. This allowed for strategic engagement with individuals and organisations supporting renewables, while continuously monitoring and steering conversations to achieve meaningful results.

The results of this strategic intelligence work informed the direction of REN21's knowledge and data activities, guiding the approach and content of our communication efforts. This AI tool also revealed how the energy discourse is changing – for example, the increasing conflation of *renewable* energy and *clean* energy. Strategic Intelligence briefs produced before and after COP28 mapped out regional narratives around renewables, fossil fuels and other priority topics and compared them.

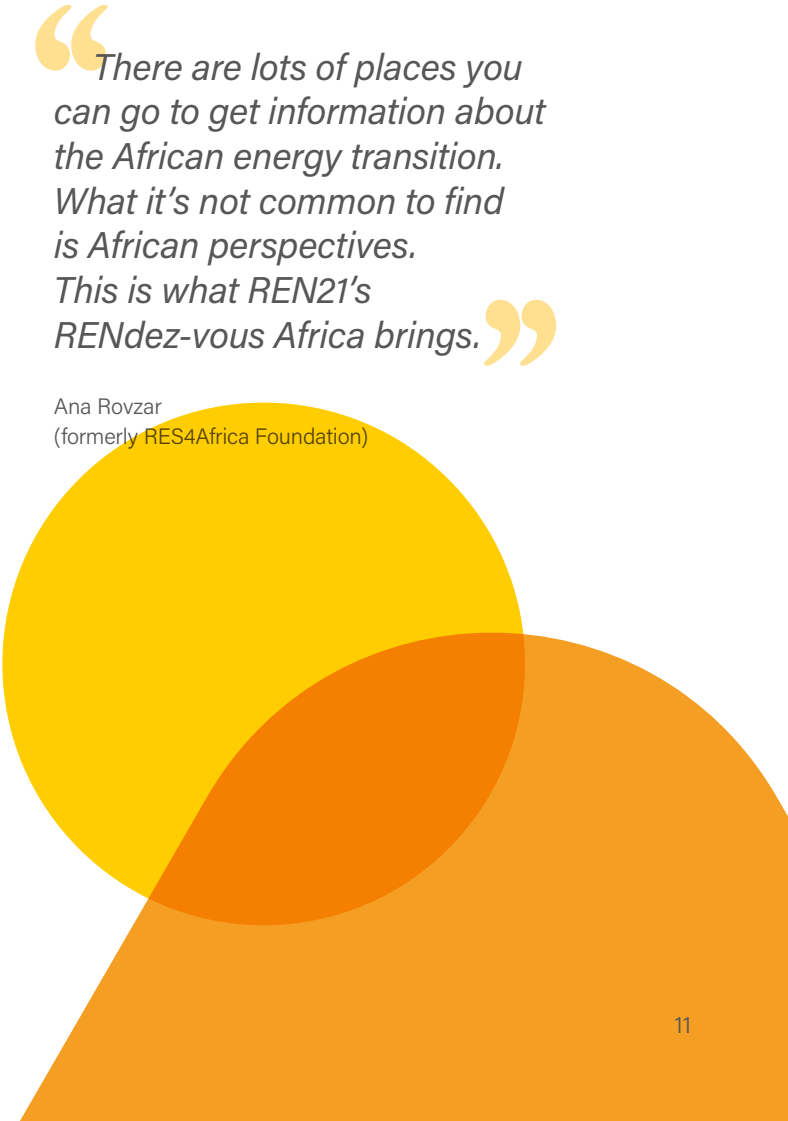


AFRICA FOCUS

Africa was the focus of regional strategic intelligence efforts. Renewables help Africa meet its energy access needs. They can also fuel economic and industrial development. While there is a lot of discussion around Africa's energy needs, the conversation is increasingly getting stuck in the political sphere and rapidly becoming polarised.

To counteract these pressures, REN21 developed and shared strategic intelligence with key African players who occupy influential and decision-making roles. For example, information from this work was used to frame high-level conversations such as the African European Energy Partnership High-level Special Dialogue.

Intelligence has also guided the content and direction of the online **RENdez-vous Africa** dialogues, which bring together diverse actors, and encourage fresh ideas and collaborations across different sectors to develop new insights. **Topics covered included the role of renewables in economic development, food security as well as energising the continent's healthcare systems and local economic development.** We held three workshops with REN21's Africa-focused community members to share strategic intelligence on emerging topics and connect different players over common goals.



“There are lots of places you can go to get information about the African energy transition. What it's not common to find is African perspectives. This is what REN21's RENdez-vous Africa brings.”

Ana Rovzar
(formerly RES4Africa Foundation)

PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE

What happens when you bring 1,200 government, industry, civil society, research and academia representatives together in Madrid, Spain? You get the Spanish International Renewable Energy Conference (SPIREC). Held 20-23 February, **participants from 110 countries shared insights and inspired discussions around anchoring renewables at the heart of economy and society across five crosscutting, interlinked tracks.**

Combining high-level panels with participatory sessions, discussions looked at the foundations necessary to build a stable new economy and "energy order" around renewables with people at the centre. Meeting the increasing energy demand in energy-consuming sectors and exploring the industrial developments needed to ramp up renewables gave participants a chance to look at the renewable energy transition from a non-energy perspective. Other delegates unravelled how to ensure local and equitable value creation, and outlined the "norms" that need to be changed for the energy transition with renewables to be successful. **Panels across both days looked at ways to inspire and build trust to make the energy transition work for all actors.** A track on innovations sparked animated debates about the structural transformation in thought processes, business models, and creative solutions needed for the rapid scale-up of renewables.

Inputs from all these discussions formed the basis of the SPIREC Declaration. This document acknowledges both the disruption caused by the polycrisis – of inflation, energy security

and climate change – and the ripe opportunities for change.

Inputs from this Declaration fed into an SDG7 Policy Brief for the UN High-Level Political Forum, anchoring the SPIREC discussions in the global space.

REBOOT THE WORLD!

"What you cannot imagine, you cannot wish for", declared REN21 the first day of SPIREC. Using the ingenious capacity of AI to tap into people's imagination, **REN21 began developing #REbootTheWorld at SPIREC, where people could create images of how they see renewables transforming their communities.** The goal was to change our vision of renewables from static images of technology into visions of opportunity. The overall message of REboot the World is that **fossil fuels are the past and renewables are the present and future.**

REN21 continued to develop the campaign at the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue and later at the International Transport Forum. Images ranged from practical applications to futuristic scenes, collectively illustrating the current and forward-looking integration of renewables in our communities. REN21's Africa-focused community members also engaged online to visualise where renewables are fuelling economic development, job creation and access to services. Feedback collected over the year will be used for the #REbootTheWorld campaign that will launch in 2024. Watch this space!



SPIREC | ESPAÑA
2023

RENEWABLES FOR PEOPLE





BUILDING BRIDGES

Synergies between renewables and other sectors are transformative and essential to improve lives. To achieve a sustainable energy future, **the renewable energy sector must join forces with sectors beyond the energy sphere such as cities, transport, climate, buildings, agriculture, and industry.** Transitioning to renewables in all energy-consuming sectors will make the phase out of fossil fuels possible.

In 2023, REN21 continued building common ground across various regions and sectors, strengthening its work on nexus topics such as renewables and sustainability, renewables for development, energy diplomacy, and renewables and transport.

SUSTAINABILITY

Shifting away from fossil fuels to renewables is a necessity that comes with many benefits: Renewables spur economic growth, generate employment, provide energy access and empower communities. Yet, like any infrastructure, renewables can also negatively affect the environment and local communities if good practices are not put in place.

Despite renewables' proven benefits over fossil fuels, concerns about their overall sustainability linger. Widespread misinformation continues to drive scepticism about the reliability of an energy system based on renewables – raising

doubts about the industry's capacity to deploy the necessary infrastructure and secure essential materials – despite ample evidence of renewables' transformative potential.

To address these concerns, REN21 dove into the role renewables play in economic development and climate change mitigation, and was able to offer a safe space for the difficult discussions to happen. **Using our innovative, multi-stakeholder consultation methods, the team gathered insights from over 130 experts from diverse disciplines – including climate, environment, human rights, labour, and finance – about the benefits and potential impacts of renewable energy deployment.** The team also assessed the evolution of policies, regulations, and standards, as well as technological advancements. A rigorous, open peer review process rounded out the work during 2023, concluding with the launch of the *Renewable Energy Sustainability Report* in early 2024.

A clear conclusion came from this work: **while an extensive multi-stakeholder collaboration that bridges divergent opinions can be lengthy and tough, it is the best way to go.** It's crucial to have these difficult conversations to identify common ground, build trust and foster cross-sector collaboration, as avoiding these discussions poses significant risks. That's the beauty of an effective, inclusive consultation process.

BUILDING BRIDGES

ENERGY DIPLOMACY

Collaboration between the renewable energy and climate communities is essential for strategic climate action and global energy security. In 2023, REN21 built on past momentum, continuing to push renewable energy onto the global agenda through energy diplomacy, dialogues and strategic communications. Our efforts reinforced the foundation we've established over time, focusing on creating inclusive spaces that foster a just and equitable energy transition.

We ensured that developing countries' voices were heard, placing their perspectives at the forefront of global debates on renewables. This approach enabled us to drive meaningful conversations throughout 2023.

For example, we propelled global momentum for tripling renewable energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency by 2030. At two critical gatherings – the Renewables Deployment Strategy Convening in Seoul and the Global Clean Energy Network in Istanbul – over 150 representatives from the renewable and climate sectors participated. These events highlighted the importance of a multistakeholder approach and advanced knowledge-sharing ahead of COP28.

COP28 was a unifying platform for the renewable energy community to push boundaries. In the lead up to the climate talks, REN21 organised the Global RENdezvous online series, engaging over 300 participants globally in collective action towards renewable energy and efficiency targets.

Continuing our commitment to inclusive dialogue, REN21 held a closed-door meeting with governments from Argentina, Bangladesh, Botswana, and others, focusing on the proposed pledge to triple renewable capacity and double energy efficiency. Three critical points emerged: the need for direct financial assistance, the importance of energy access and security, and the necessity of technical support.

At COP28, we also hosted a press conference with representatives from Uruguay and Botswana, who underscored the leadership of developing countries in the energy transition and their expectations for global renewable and efficiency targets.

COP28UAE

IRENA, the Global Renewables Alliance (GRA) and REN21 co-convened the "Global Renewables Hub" at COP28. The Hub provided the opportunity for various communities – energy, climate and transport among others – to convene and look at the central role of renewable energy in mitigation, adaptation and resilience activities.



BUILDING BRIDGES

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

As detailed in the *Renewables in Energy Demand* module (GSR 2023), although the transport sector is responsible for 30% of all energy consumption, just under 4% of this is covered by renewables. Building on these insights, REN21's efforts to foster the transition to renewables in transport focused on two fronts:

1) providing the data and evidence to help raise awareness on the importance of renewables for transport players, 2) looking at the future of renewables in sustainable transport, and 3) promoting collaboration between renewable energy and transport to drive decarbonisation efforts collectively.

At global fora, we witnessed increased acknowledgment of renewables as an important part of transport conversations. The International Transport Forum, the Transport and Climate Change Week, Transforming Transport for Asia and COP28 provided a platform for REN21 to break silos through dialogue and, by bringing together energy and transport voices, identify blind spots. This work lead up to the first transport and energy ministerial at COP28, however, more effort is needed to engage both sectors in jointly driving sustainable transport.

Working closely with our member, SLOCAT, the multistakeholder partnership leading on sustainable, low-carbon transport, we co-developed the **Call to Action for Fossil-Fuel-Free Land Transport. This encourages global players to double the share of energy-efficient and fossil-free forms of land transport by 2030.** Launched in the lead-up to COP28, over 70 organisations signed on before the year's end, including the governments of Chile and Colombia.

The widespread support shows a growing global recognition that we need to replace fossil fuels with renewables and energy-efficient forms of transport. But there is still progress to be made. REN21 will continue to shape synergies with the transport and other demand sectors as part of its portfolio, knowing that renewables suppliers need to more attuned to the needs of their clients.

Are questions more important than answers? That is what the *Global Futures Report: Renewables for Sustainable Transport* began exploring in 2023 by gathering divergent perspectives on the role of renewables in transport. We then developed a framework to debate and discuss possible futures of renewables in the transport sector, identifying current points of view, blind spots, opportunities, guiding questions, and ways to overcome barriers. The report became available in 2024.



Member Spotlight: UIC

REN21 welcomed the International Union of Railways (UIC) as an official member, complementing the network with our first rail-focused member.

ENGAGING CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE TRANSITION

REN21 continued its involvement in the Paris Agreement Compatible Scenarios for Energy Infrastructure (PAC) project. The project provides **a platform to increase civil society involvement in energy system planning**. Phase I saw the development of a European scenario. Phase II took this scenario and looked at the implications from the national level. REN21 brought its convening skills to the project. We hosted an in-person workshop and used role-playing to deliberately create tension points to illustrate how to use disparate perspectives to find a common starting point. Citizens and communities can be directly affected by energy infrastructure, like power grids, but the technical nature of the grid means that citizens are often not consulted. Engagement is important as citizen mobilisation can slow or halt needed build-out.

REN21 will continue to support the PAC work by furthering knowledge and experiences on successful civil society involvement. A campaign to create awareness of the importance of citizen engagement in energy planning: “Power to Change” began its development in 2023; it was launched in 2024.



SFOC
Solutions for Our Climate

Member Spotlight: SFOC

Solutions for our Climate (SFOC), a Korea-based research and campaign organisation that uses energy diplomacy to make the shift from fossil fuels to renewables, became a REN21 member in 2023.

MEMBERS 2023

By the year's end, **13 new members** joined REN21, further diversifying the network's reach across regions with the governments of Georgia, Morocco, and Zimbabwe, the subnational government of Rio Negro in Argentina and sectors beyond energy (rail, district heating/cooling, storage). We ended the year strong with 108 members.

GOVERNMENTS

Australia
Austria
Brazil
Denmark
Dominican Republic
Georgia
Germany
India
Republic of Korea
Mexico
Morocco
Norway
Panama
Río Negro Province, Argentina
South Africa
South Australia State, Australia
Spain
United Arab Emirates
United States
Zimbabwe

PRESIDENT

Arthouros Zervos

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rana Adib

SCIENCE AND ACADEMIA

AEE – Institute for Sustainable Technologies (AEE-INTEC)
Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW)
Fundación Bariloche (FB)
International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)
International Solar Energy Society (ISES)
National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)
National Research University
Higher School of Economics Russia (HSE)
South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI)
The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
University of Technology – Institute for Sustainable Futures (UTS)
World Resources Institute (WRI)

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Michael Eckhart
Rabia Ferroukhi
David Hales
Kirsty Hamilton
Peter Rae

INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre (APERC)
Asian Development Bank (ADB)
ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE)
Electric Power Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States (Executive Committee) (EPC)
European Commission (EC)
Global Environment Facility (GEF)
International Energy Agency (IEA)
International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)
Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)
Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE)
Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
World Bank (WB)

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

Africa Minigrid Developers Association (AMDA)
Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE)
American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE)
Asia Pacific Urban Energy Association (APUEA)
Associação Lusófona de Energias Renováveis (ALER)
Chinese Renewable Energy Industries Association (CREIA)
Clean Energy Council (CEC)
Euroheat & Power (EHP)
European Heat Pump Association (EHPA)
European Renewable Energies Federation (EREF)
Global Off-Grid Lighting Association (GOGLA)
Global Solar Council (GSC)
Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC)
Green Hydrogen Organisation (GH₂)
Indian Renewable Energy Federation (IREF)
International Geothermal Association (IGA)
International Hydropower Association (IHA)
International Union of Railways / Union Internationale des Chemins de Fer (UIC)
Long Duration Energy Storage Council (LDES)
Portuguese Renewable Energy Association (APREN)
RE100 / Climate Group (RE100)
RES4Africa Foundation (RES4Africa)
Solar Heat Europe (SHE)
SolarPower Europe (SPE)
Union Internationale des Transports Publics (UITP)
World Bioenergy Association (WBA)
World Biogas Association
World Wind Energy Association (WWEA)

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

350.org
African Association for Rural Electrification (Club-ER)
Asociación Ivy CDP
Clean Cooking Alliance (CCA)
Climate Action Network International (CAN-I)
Coalition de Ciudades Capitales de las Americas (CC35)
Collaborative Labeling and Appliance Standards Program (CLASP)
Energy Cities
European Youth Energy Network (EYEN)
Fundación Renovables (FER)
Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (GFSE)
Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET)
Green Economy Coalition (GEC)
Greenpeace International
ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
Institute for Sustainable Energy Policies (ISEP)
International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)
International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
Jeune Volontaires pour l'Environnement (JVE)
Mali Folkecenter (MFC)
Power for All
Power Shift Africa
Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP)
Renewable Energy Institute (REI)
Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI)
SLOCAT Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLOCAT)
Solar Cookers International (SCI)
Solutions for Our Climate (SFOC)
Sustainable Energy Africa (SEA)
Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL)
The Global 100% Renewable Energy Platform (Global 100%RE)
World Council for Renewable Energy (WCRE)
World Future Council (WFC)
World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)



REN21 SECRETARIAT

TEAM

REN21 is a global community, and that is reflected in our members and staff. Our Secretariat represents all continents aside from Antarctica, raising the question about getting a penguin mascot (!).

We have a unique governance structure and collaborative culture. We drive the renewable energy movement from global to local – making change happen now.

FUNDING

REN21 is mostly funded by core and programmatic funding and complemented with project funding and voluntary donations.

Core funding and voluntary contributions were provided by: Australia (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water), Germany (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), Clean Energy Council, European Renewable Energies Federation, Organizacion Latinoamericana de Energia, and The UAE Permanent Mission to the International Renewable Energy Agency.

Programmatic and project funding came from:

Austria (Federal Ministry for Climate Action, the Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology), Clean Energy Council, European Climate Foundation, European Commission, Germany: BMUV (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection), BMWK (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action) and BMZ (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) and Spain (Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge).

ACCOUNTS 2022

All values in Euro (€)	2022	Total
Non-taxable income		
Membership fees	0.00	
Grants	2,304,487.93	
Other income	46,566.86	
Income from Currency translation	252.52	
		2,351,307.31
Non-taxable expenses		
In-house consultants (within the REN21 Secretariat)	658,138.88	
Wages and salaries	1,085,411.32	
Travel expenses	71,235.61	
Consulting	1,852.89	
Advertising and print costs	169,129.66	
Rent	107,078.15	
Legal and tax consulting fees	6,600.00	
Office supplies and telephone	3,171.70	
Contributions and insurance	7,297.68	
Incidental monetary transaction costs	2,877.70	
Other expenses	98,696.86	
		2,211,490.45
Profit/loss		139,816.86
Fund management		
Tax free income		0.02
Loss carried forward prior year		-137,045.72
Profit/loss carried forward		2,771.16

PICTURE CREDITS

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REN21 team members

DESIGN

weeks.de Werbeagentur GmbH, Munich

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