

Energising our future: Taking the renewable energy conversation to Asia

REN21's 8th International Renewable Energy Conference (IREC) starts today in the Republic of Korea. Named after the host country, KIREC Seoul 2019 is a three-day policy conference (23-25 October) that will move the momentum forward by gathering different perspectives to generate dialogue on how to accelerate renewable energy uptake.

Responsible for 45% of global CO₂ emissions and home to over 50% of the world's population, Asia is significant not only to address the climate emergency but also to reach the sustainable development goals. This conference will send a strong signal to COP25 about the central role of renewables and energy efficiency in decarbonising the energy sector.

Cities are driving renewable energy uptake as they are a natural entry point for innovative policies. Over 27 of the world's 50 largest cities are in Asia, which sets the stage for implementing more ambitious national policies across the region. KIREC Seoul 2019 highlights the central role of cities in the energy transition. It is no coincidence that this event was co-organised by a national and municipal government, becoming the first IREC to do so.

The conference will be an opportunity for regional players to showcase their experiences, present success stories and discuss the challenges that the region faces. Conference topics are grouped into five different tracks -- Policy and Market Design, Cities, Finance and Technology, Innovation, and Social Dimensions -- for 30 diverse and enriching sessions.

"How we live, work and consume goods and services affects the quality of our lives. The use of renewable energy can facilitate the broader larger goals of clean air, healthy environment and energy for all," states REN21 Executive Secretary, Rana Adib. According to the *2019 Asia and the Pacific Renewable Energy Status Report*, launched yesterday during the KIREC Side Events, the region itself consumes 49% of the world's energy.

The energy transformation is unstoppable. Former UN Secretary General and Chair of Korea's National Council on Climate and Air Quality, Ban Ki-moon, outlined; "All evidence points to the same conclusion; green growth supported by clean renewable energy is the only viable option for a sustainable future."

Using its world-wide community of experts, REN21 is bringing speakers and participants together from a wide range of backgrounds, ranging from government, inter-governmental organisations, industry, civil society, research and academia.

KIREC Seoul 2019 builds on the success and outcomes of previous IRECs and marks the eighth conference in this global series. The IREC is a high-level policy conference series hosted by a national government.

Previous hosts include: Bonn, Germany (2004), Beijing, China (2005), Washington, USA (2008), Delhi, India (2010), Abu Dhabi, UAE (2013), Cape Town, South Africa (2015) and Mexico City, Mexico (2017).