



THE POWER OF DISCUSSION

Wednesday began with a full agenda. South Korea's Trade, Industry and Energy Minister Sung Yun-mo kicked off the day's activities with a passionate speech about the country's efforts toward the energy transition, noting that the opening of KIREC fell on the 2nd anniversary of the Moon Jae-in administration's declaration on a nuclear phase-out policy. Seoul Metropolitan Mayor Park Won-soon speech built on this theme of rethinking the energy system by sharing Seoul city's vision to become a "solar city" by 2022.



Arthouros Zervos, Chair of REN21 outlined the huge potential for renewable energy and energy efficiency in the region. He also emphasized the importance of the role of the youth, who are leading the charge in the energy transition through their activism around the climate emergency. "The energy transition means ensuring that everyone has access to clean, affordable energy services needed for a productive healthy life," he said.

Former U.N. Secretary-General and Chair of Korea's National Council on Climate and Air Quality, Ban Ki-moon highlighted Korea's efforts to counter air pollution through the energy transition. As he eloquently stated "nature does not forgive," words that we would do well to heed as we meet and discuss over the next three days. The clock is ticking and it is humanity, not nature, that will lose.



Kim Do-hyun, a young climate activist, added her inspirational words, clearly indicating to the Korean policymakers in the room that the South Korean youths want their country to commit to the energy transition.

PANELS: HIGH-LEVEL AND PLENARY



The high-level Panel discussion centered around the theme of renewable energy as "the conventional fuel of tomorrow." Ministerial-level panelists from China, Germany, Mongolia, Cambodia and South Korea shared each country's renewable policies and activities to promote the energy transition. The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) complemented these remarks with details as to how each organisation is supporting the ambitions of national governments.

Among the various statements was China's aim for grid parity where the unit price for renewable energy fuel becomes the same as that of fossil fuel. China's aspirations paired nicely with the ambition of German to increase the share of renewable energy to 50% in the coming decade. The importance of setting a clear price for carbon dioxide emissions was stressed as important as renewable energy policies could fail without it. The potential of renewable energy in the United Arab Emirates paired with the country's enormous fossil fuel reserves provided an interesting example of how to pursue implementing renewable energy policies. As underlined by Francesco La Camera, the Director General of IRENA "There's no reason for not investing in renewables; we need the market design to allow it. Political will has to be there."

The Facts: Asia is home to over 50% of the world's population, collectively consumes 39% of the world's energy supply and is responsible for 45% of all greenhouse gas emissions.

PARALLEL SESSIONS

Parallel sessions divided across 5 tracks tapped into a wide range of issues including policy and market design and how to create a local value chain. Cities' role in advancing the renewable energy sector and energy transition, innovative solutions to promote energy transition, and ways to make the energy transition more gender-inclusive were also discussed.

Panelists at the session "Systematically Advancing Renewable Energy Globally and in End-use Sectors" said that, while a low level of public and social acceptance are major barriers, encouraging consumer choice and empowerment with technology neutrality are key to promoting renewable energy. "Silos" within governments and between different levels of governance and stakeholder groups need to be overcome.

Kim Eui-seung from the Seoul Metropolitan Government shared the city's goal of being a "Solar City" by moving from an energy-consuming city to an energy-producing one by 2022 in the session: Cities: Their Role in Advancing the Renewable Energy Sector Transformation. Here panelists noted that city-level action focuses more on the demand-side, while a national government focuses more on a need to collaborate on the generation side. Discussion points included the need for cities to enact changes in the building sector and industry. Other points included the importance of cooperation between nations and cities, especially on the energy generation side.

Creating a solid local value chain is also important to support the energy transition at local levels, noted the panelists at the "Local Value Creation: Opportunities in Developing the Renewable Energy Sector." Policies need to focus on reducing the gap between small local companies and large companies that take a majority of shares in the industry. The panel also emphasized that governments' will and policy



predictability are key to supporting small businesses, with policies that provide incentives, for example.

Panelists at the "Role of Innovation to Advance Energy Transition" pointed out that it is a myth that renewable energy is unreliable or unpredictable, stressing the need to insist on the word "variable". Innovation is key for sector coupling, as electrification alone can only take us so far in decarbonization. While investors want to reduce the risk and governments can help address this with policies, mixing public and private initiatives is crucial for such innovation.

The fifth parallel session, "How Can We Make the Energy Transformation Truly Inclusive?," highlighted the importance of gender inclusiveness. Discussant noted that while it is important to include all people in decision-making to decentralize the process, the fact that women do a disproportionate amount of housework prevents such decentralization.

"Women are key in providing energy for their families but when it comes to decision-making they are not included. Including more women in the energy transition has the potential to accelerate it," said Irene Giner-Reichl with the Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition.



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Parallel Sessions start at 10:30 on Thursday. The day will close with a high-level panel developed in cooperation with the International Mayors' Forum. Don't forget to comment on the conference Declaration. Comments must be submitted by noon today. The draft is available on the KIREC Seoul 2019 website <http://www.kirec2019.kr>