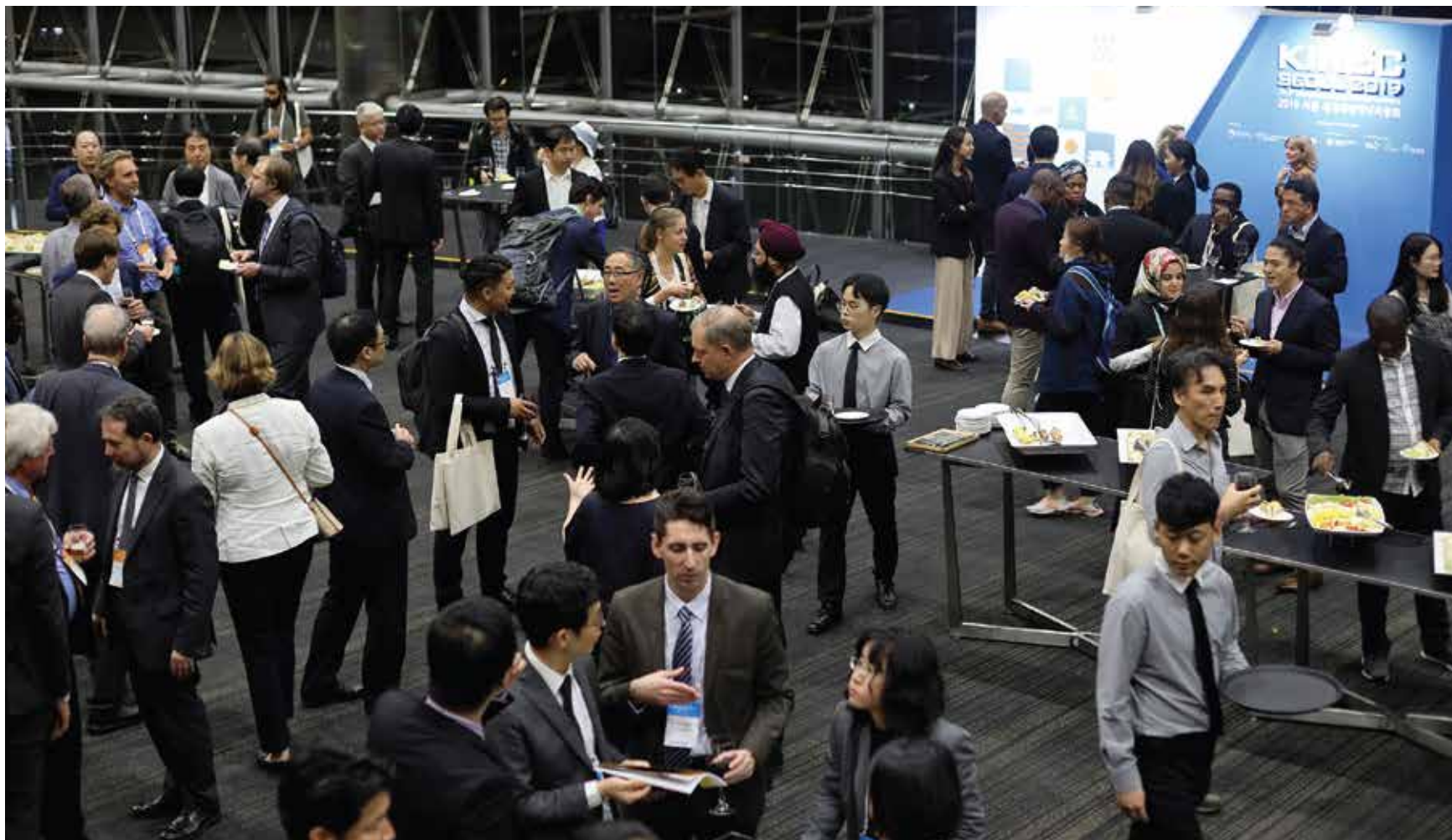




A SUCCESSFUL FIRST DAY IN SEOUL



The Korea International Renewable Energy Conference (KIREC) Seoul 2019, co-hosted by the Republic of Korea Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, the Seoul Metropolitan Government and REN21 (the Renewable Policy Network for the 21st Century), convened a series of side events, Tuesday, ahead of the opening day. Twenty-two events were hosted by an international community of stakeholders ranging from governments, intergovernmental organizations, civil society, industry, science and academia and convened by REN21.

KIREC Seoul 2019 is happening amidst growing interest in the energy transition by both national and local governments as well as public sector, corporations and civil society in South Korea.

Various side-events tapped into a wide range of renewable energy technologies and end-use sectors. Events ranged from the importance of enabling policy environments, accelerating investments, business, youth and citizen participation, and the benefits renewables provide for combating air pollution, facilitating access to energy, and creating sustainable cities. Full description of all the events can be found on the website: http://www.kirec2019.kr/sub03/side_event.html

Participants highlighted their work, goals, future plans. Interesting conversations occurred among attendees and continued outside each of the rooms after each session and continued over to the cocktail reception in the evening.

“The current ambition of the Korean government in terms of renewable energy is not enough to be able to host and invite this range of experts,” said Nikola Medimorec, senior researcher with the Partnership on Sustainable Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT). “KIREC is a very good opportunity for Korea, and Seoul in particular to learn about the role of renewables in transport.”



Gregory Brooks-English:

●● *The REN21-organized side-events at KIREC Seoul 2019 provided the opportunity for learning about the energy transition both globally and locally. I've learned so much from the expert panelists and I'm hoping to learn so much more in the coming days.* ●●



Wind energy, the starting point of the day, has made significant gains in many parts of the world but is still in its infancy in some countries, including South Korea, where it has large growth potential as illustrated by the World Wind Energy Association and the Korean Wind Energy Industry Association in their jointly held event. The International Windship Association talked about the overlooked potential use of wind energy in the shipping industry.

UNIDO and SLoCaT highlighted the opportunities of accelerating low carbon transport in cities, key to improving urban air quality and better health and wellbeing. UNIDO showcased the importance of coordinated roadmaps and policies, infrastructure and the role of digital technologies, and business models for deployment of low carbon infrastructure. SLoCaT talked about the importance of renewable electricity and electric mobility in urban contexts, as well as the first and last mile problem.

BMZ focused on energy access, localization and productive use of energy. The Department for Energy of the European Commission addressed the current trend of decentralized model where individuals and citizens can become renewables self-consumers or participate in renewable energy communities.

The Global 100% Renewable Energy Platform hosted a frank yet constructive dialogue on policies needed to drive transition to 100% renewables and actions that can facilitate this change. The University of Technology Sydney – Institute for Sustainable Futures presented the One Earth Climate Model for reaching 100% renewable energy by 2050, demonstrating that it really is possible. The International Hydropower Association and Climate Action Network talked about the role of pumped hydropower and a diversified set of storage solutions to balance the deployment and greater integration of variable renewable energy.

Green Climate Fund hosted a public consultation on their “Renewable Energy Investment Guidance” and discussed the measurable objectives of the GCF tool and best practices for creating enabling environments. This event served as the second of two consultation rounds by GCF.

An IRENA-led session addressed the potential social, economic and institutional impacts of a global energy transition based on renewables. Representatives from developed and developing countries discussed examples of how this transformation can be just, endorsed and supported by citizens, and not result in new inequalities or costs that affect disproportionately the poorest.

Two reports were launched over the course of the day. REN21 released its *2019 Asia and the Pacific Renewable Energy Status Report*. The launch event highlighted the importance of phasing out fossil fuel subsidies in the region to create a level

playing field for accelerating the uptake of renewables across the region. The full report can be accessed here: <https://www.ren21.net/asia>.

The Asian context was also discussed in an event hosted by the Renewable Energy Institute, which highlighted current energy policies in East Asia relevant to renewables and uncovered key elements for East Asian countries to realize high integration of renewables. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea provided an overview of the status of renewable energy development, existing national plans and policies in the Republic of Korea, and discussed barriers and opportunities for scaling up renewables in power, industry, buildings and transport sector.

The IEA presented its newly-released *Renewables 2019* covering 5-year market analysis and forecast on renewable energy and technologies, with a specific focus on distributed solar PV and its huge growth potential.

Civil society is crucial to advancing the renewable energy transition and to facilitate the uptake of renewables necessary to reach climate objectives, planning needs to happen now. This was the clear message of the event on collaborative approaches to infrastructure planning for the energy transition, hosted by the Renewables Grid Initiative, with a presentation by Greening the Grid India/USAID.



Samsø Energy Academy discussed community energy as a vehicle for local economic development and the importance of community and citizen engagement for the successful scaling up of renewable; perspectives that were complemented by Mali Folkcenter, and ISEP. Agrovoltatics spoke about optimizing the use of solar energy in agriculture while the Institute of Sustainable Policies talked about existing practices of mixed land use of PV and agriculture.

Differences in the carbon footprint of available electricity access solutions must be taken into consideration in the implementation of climate and sustainable development targets, as set out in NDCs and SDG 7. BMU, with a keynote speech of GIZ, highlighted how off-grid solutions constitute an important pillar on which LDCs can build inclusive and target-orientated NDCs and development policies alike. ARE and Mini-Grids Partnership discussed the importance of public private partnerships for scaling up mini grids in developing countries.

The draft KIREC Declaration is available for review. Go to the KIREC website <http://www.kirec2019.kr> to download the document. Comments are being accepted until Thursday 24 Oct at noon.

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