

The Akosombo Declaration

An e-Parliament Recommendation for a West African Renewable Energy Community

Eighteen West African parliamentarians gathered on September 20th - 21st 2008 in Akosombo, Ghana for an international parliamentary hearing on Climate Change and Energy Access organised by the e-Parliament. After expert presentations and discussions, they agreed that:

1. The West Africa region is rich in renewable energy resources, especially solar and wind energy. The areas in the vicinity of the Sahara have the potential to produce enough solar and wind energy to serve the rest of the sub-region. Satellite data provided by the UNEP program SWERA (Solar and Wind Energy Resource Assessment) show that this potential of the northern ECOWAS region is in large excess of current and projected demands of all ECOWAS countries.
2. In view of the growing energy demand in the ECOWAS region and the growing scarcity and mounting costs of fossil fuels, solar and wind energy potentials in the north of the ECOWAS region have become of crucial interest in the quest for a source of secure, clean, inexhaustible, affordable and cost-effective electricity supply for the entire region. This provides an attractive opportunity for a sustainable energy future for West Africa.
3. The West African Power Pool (WAPP) and the common ECOWAS energy protocol could be instrumental in making these resources accessible to the more densely populated southern ECOWAS countries. Here the low-loss high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission technology is of particular interest.
4. Suitable renewable energy technologies, such as concentrating solar thermal power (CSP) and wind power are mature and proven technologies. An increasing number of the required technical components could be produced in the region, and could contribute to regional industrial development and intraregional cooperation.

A FEASIBILITY STUDY

The option for a future secure and clean energy supply to the ECOWAS countries is at hand, but there are a number of issues to be clarified before this concept can be recommended to our governments for implementation. Questions relevant to technical, economic, financial and political feasibility and to the best locations for solar and wind resources need to be investigated in a coherent and comprehensive study by appropriate experts.

Taking the above into consideration, the assembled parliamentarians agreed to recommend that the potential benefits and the expected costs and challenges of the proposed concept of a West African Renewable Energy Community be investigated in a feasibility study. In view of increasing global and regional energy and climate challenges the parliamentarians propose that ECOWAS commissions this investigation as a matter of highest priority.

For more information, please visit www.e-parl.net

List of Signatories

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