



UN High-level Dialogue on Energy 2021:

Accelerating progress towards universal energy access and net-zero emissions

Side Event at the 11th IRENA Assembly

13 January 2021, 18:30 – 20:00 (Abu Dhabi Time)/9:30 – 11:00 (NY Time)

The Secretary-General of the United Nations will convene a High-level Dialogue on Energy at the Summit-level, during the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2021. Marking the first inclusive global gathering on energy under the auspices of the General Assembly since 1981, the Dialogue presents a historic opportunity for all stakeholders to come together and accelerate progress towards decarbonised energy systems with universal energy access.

Energy is key to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Universal access to clean, affordable and modern energy services is indispensable for reaching many SDGs and leaving no one behind, and energy transitions need to accelerate to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. The ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of reliable energy access for health care services. Rapid progress in the implementation of SDG7 is called for, but, unfortunately, on the current trajectory, the world is falling short of achieving SDG7.

In this context, the goal of the High-level Dialogue on Energy is to raise ambition and accelerate action towards the achievement of the SDG7 and the Paris Agreement on climate change, around five Themes: i) energy access; ii) energy transitions; iii) energy action to advance other SDGs; iv) capacity building and data; and v) finance and investment. Main outcomes will include a forward-looking summary presenting a global plan of action to achieve SDG 7 by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050, and a series of “Energy Compacts” that present multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments with tracking frameworks, supported by UN-Energy.

In order to draw on a broad range of expertise and perspectives during the preparations for the Dialogue, a multi-stakeholder Technical Working Group will be established under each Theme to advance in-depth discussions. Each Technical Working Group will produce a thematic report containing substantive recommendations towards an action oriented SDG7 implementation roadmap to 2030 in support of other SDGs and carbon neutrality by 2050. The Technical Working Groups will also help mobilize Energy Compacts to scale up action.

This side-event will present the overview of the High-level Dialogue on Energy 2021, and highlight the work ahead, with a focus on the planned activities of the Technical Working Groups. This side event is convened by UN-Energy, whose Co-Chairs serve as the Co-Chairs of the High-level Dialogue on Energy. As a UN-Energy partner, IRENA will host this event in the margins of the 11th session of the IRENA Assembly. Planned speakers will include UN leadership for the High-level Dialogue, the Director-General of IRENA and other high-level representatives.

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