



The *El Hierro Declaration*

ENERGY AT THE CROSSROAD 100% renewable energy empowering local communities

On the path towards sustainable energy, some islands and regions have shown that a renewable future is possible. These are the new renewable energy lighthouses emerging all over the world.

At the beginning of the UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All, renewable energy has become the only way forward. Renewable energy is now highly efficient, and stands close to the needs of the citizen. Renewable energy is the foundation of green society; it can mitigate climate change and improve the environment.

Renewables represent a global opportunity to drive green economies and to improve access to renewable water, clean transport and healthy housing.

Even today, not everybody has access to energy, with four billion people having limited access, and 1.3 billion with no access at all.

100% renewable energy is possible

Participants in the 2014 RENISLA Global Forum, meeting in the island of El Hierro, UNESCO's biosphere reserve, Canary Islands, Spain, on 25th and 26th June 2014,

Being aware that energy, and the right for energy, lies at the heart of all human, social, economic and environmental

endeavours, and that it is also the main challenge for sustainable development.

Recognising as well that the transition to sustainable energy presents one of the greatest investment opportunities -and challenges- of the 21st century.

Taking into account that development is not possible without energy, and sustainable development cannot be achieved without renewable energy.

Appreciating that renewable energy has already reached technological maturity and economic competitiveness.

Considering the need to develop a new energy culture based on sustainability, efficiency and equity.

Agree:

1.

The time has come for an urgent shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

2.

There has been an impressive technological progress allowing for the mainstreaming of renewable energy. 100% renewable energy solutions are now widely available, efficient and sustainable.

3.

Transition to 100% renewable energy require full engagement of the institutional framework and governments.

4.

This shift in the energy culture requires a grassroots approach, where citizens and local communities come first.

5.

The new 100% RE model must also involve knowledge institutions, entrepreneurs, industry and managers at local, regional, national and international level.

6.

Islands and isolated energy regions have now the chance to turn problems into opportunities by implementing 100% RES solutions.

7.

A call for action is made to institutions in order to urgently define a road map, which must include strategic objectives and a programme of work.

Call for action

The Governing Bodies of UNESCO, particularly its Executive Board, the International Coordinating Council (ICC) of the MAB Programme and the World Heritage Committee need to reinforce the role of the Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage sites as models of excellence and field observatories on the sustainable use of renewable energy sources, to mitigate climate change and for enhancing and applying the climate change knowledge in the transition towards 100% renewable energy future, using the RENFORUS initiative (Renewable Energy Futures for UNESCO Sites) in this process.

UNESCO and IRENA, through the Global Renewable Energy Island Network (GREIN), could share and disseminate the approach of El Hierro with Gorona del Viento, as a model for the transition of islands to 100% RE, and a best practice that can be replicated elsewhere.

It is necessary to establish communication channels with the main international actors like IRENA, SE4All, REN21, the European Commission and others, to ensure the dissemination and replication of success stories.

Is proposed to initiate a broader RENISLA dissemination campaign in cooperation with relevant institutions and networks that are actively working towards a 100% renewable future, like Renewables 100 Policy Institute, WWF, IDE and others.