

Abu Dhabi, 14 October 2023

## Programme and Strategy Committee meeting

### INFORMATION NOTE

#### Update on IRENA's Support for Regions

This note has been prepared at the request of the Programme and Strategy Committee (PSC) in response to a call from its members to have additional details on the specific regional initiatives of the Agency. This information is intended to inform IRENA Members about the programmatic framework at a regional level to date and identifies a set of issues on which the PSC may wish to provide guidance during discussions on the Report of the Director-General – Proposed Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025 (C/26/3).

The information presented in this document reflects the direction for IRENA's work till 2027 as outlined in the Medium-term Strategy (MTS) 2023-2027, which highlights the changing global context in which the Agency operates, with emphasis on accelerating the global, renewables-based energy transition to fight climate change, enhance human welfare and drive an urgent and systemic shift. The MTS has also added a new strategic pillar on *Support for Regions and Countries* to guide and orient the Agency in its programmatic cycles.

Since inception, the Agency has been providing support at the regional level on a range of issues relating to renewable energy. Most of the regional frameworks were established by the Agency during the period 2014-18 in the form of regional action agendas and regional action plans. The early-day action plans targeted the power sector (both on-grid and off-grid) and on issues around introduction and early-stage development of renewables and the common issues that many of these regional actions covered were resource assessments; energy planning; grid integration of variable renewable energy; policy support mechanisms; capacity-building and information dissemination. Over years, the scope of regional frameworks has expanded to cover broader energy transition topics, from end-use sector decarbonization and green hydrogen to socio-economic impacts.

**Middle East and North Africa (MENA):** The Pan-Arab Clean Energy Initiative (PACE) was launched in 2014 to promote the integration of more significant shares of renewables into power systems in the Arab region. The genesis of PACE was the Pan-Arab Strategy for the Development of Renewable Energy, adopted by the League of Arab States in 2013. PACE, endorsed by the Arab Ministerial Council in September 2014 supported this strategy and IRENA partnered with the Arab League (LAS) and the Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE) to identify and implement a series of actions in MENA to increase renewable energy implementation.

**Sub-Saharan Africa:** The Clean Energy Corridor (CEC) initiative was first introduced within the Eastern African Power Pool (EAPP) and Southern Africa Power Pools (SAPP) through the Africa Clean Energy Corridor (ACEC) in 2014 with the implementation guided by the ACEC Ministerial Communiqué. In 2015, the West Africa Clean Energy Corridor (WACEC) was established with action-agenda endorsed by ECOWAS heads of states. In 2019, IRENA and the Economic

Community of Central African States (ECCAS) developed the Regional Renewable Energy Roadmap for Central Africa, which framed a concrete scope of collaboration with the region. The regional roadmap has been adopted at the ministerial level and endorsed by the Heads of State level in the region.

In 2023, IRENA together with Denmark, Germany and the United Arab Emirates launched the Accelerated Partnership for Africa (APRA), to support African countries that have high ambition for renewable energy deployment to transform their energy systems and advance green industrialization, aligned with climate and development priorities.

**Latin America:** The Abu Dhabi Communique on Accelerating Renewable Energy Uptake in Latin America, adopted by the countries of the region in 2015, established an operational framework for IRENA's engagement with the region. The Clean Energy Corridor of Central America (CECCA) was also developed in 2015, with the CECCA Strategy document formally endorsed by the SICA energy ministers in the same year.

**Central Asia:** In June 2017, the Astana Communique on Accelerating the Uptake of Renewables in Central Asia was endorsed within the framework of the Energy Ministerial on Meeting the Challenge of Sustainable Energy. The Central Asia regional programme was developed through a consultative process including at the Central Asia Consultation Meeting in Baku in 2016 and the Regional Workshop on Renewable Energy in Central Asia in Abu Dhabi in 2017.

**Southeast Europe:** IRENA established SEE Regional Initiative in 2017 for accelerating the uptake of renewables in Southeast Europe. The initiative was developed following regional consultations that were held in 2016.

**Southeast Asia:** IRENA signed an MoU with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat in 2018 to support the realization of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2016 – 2025 to facilitate scaling up of renewable energy in Southeast Asia. Under the MoU, IRENA holds a dialogue with member states through ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) -IRENA Ministerial Dialogue and the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Energy (SOME).

**Small Island Developing States (SIDS):** Bringing together 40 SIDS and 44 partners, the SIDS Lighthouses Initiative coordinated by IRENA provides the framework for action in supporting SIDS in their energy transition and climate action through renewables coupled with energy efficiency. The MOU between IRENA and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) defines a strong cooperation framework to work towards the acceleration and strengthening of the adaptive capacity and energy transition of Small Island States.

Furthermore, IRENA's regional engagement frameworks are guided through **Regional Energy Transition Outlooks (RETOs)** providing regional specific energy transition pathways aligned with the Paris Agreement objectives and **IRENA's Regional Energy Transition Investment Forums** to strengthen the ability of decision-makers to produce a strong enabling environment for energy transition investments and help the developers to prepare bankable projects and access finance. The regional frameworks are regularly updated through consultative discussions with regional stakeholders and Member States' feedback at IRENA governing bodies.