PRESS RELEASE

Leading Players at COP26 Call for Immediate Actions to Accelerate Renewable Energy Jobs

London, UK 1 November 2021 – more than 130 renewable energy leaders, under the auspices of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Coalition for Action, launched a call to action today, encouraging all governments at national, regional, and local levels to ensure access to high-quality, sustainable jobs during the energy transition.

Limiting the earth’s temperature rise to 1.5°C by 2050 requires a full decarbonisation of the energy sector. As such, the clean energy transition must progress rapidly. But to build a climate-resilient future, the energy transition must advance in a just and inclusive manner, leaving nobody behind.

As countries convene in Glasgow to re-align strategies and renew ambitions at the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), there is an opportunity to increase momentum of the global energy transition – and a transition grounded in renewable energy has been proven to generate widespread socio-economic benefits, including jobs.

“There is huge potential for sustainable, quality employment in the renewable energy sector. This includes the transition towards direct wind propulsion in the shipping sector that will generate hundreds of thousands of direct and indirect jobs adding to those in the zero-emissions fuel sector – it is vital that we have a just and inclusive energy transition - we call that a Win-Win-Wind situation,” states Gavin Allwright, Secretary General of the International Windship Association.

A new report by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) finds that the renewable energy sector offered employment to 12 million people in 2020 – a steady increase since 2012 at 7.3 million. Renewable energy jobs are also more inclusive, showing better gender balance with 32 per cent women employed in the sector, compared to 22 per cent in the fossil fuels sector. These records provide a very promising insight into a clean energy future.

With the clock ticking, members of Coalition for Action urge governments to consider the following five recommended actions in their decision-making to accelerate a just and inclusive energy transition, at COP26 this week:

1. Comprehensive structural and just transition policies are critical to secure the benefits and manage labour market misalignments that result from the energy transition.
2. Concrete and resilient finance mechanisms are required for countries to equitably transition away from fossil fuels.
3. Job and enterprise creation in the renewable energy sector must be complemented with labour and socio-economic policies in the energy sector.
4. Long-term partnerships between industry, labour unions and governments are essential to ensure job security and social protection, especially in areas particularly impacted by the energy transition (e.g., coal mining regions).
5. Data-driven actions and solutions are needed to support targeted policies that encourage job creation, capacity building and reskilling to empower those disproportionately impacted, such as women, youth and minorities.
For a more detailed view of the IRENA Coalition for Action’s Call to Action for COP26, please click here.

About the Coalition
The IRENA Coalition for Action brings together leading renewable energy players from around the world with the common goal of advancing the uptake of renewable energy. The Coalition facilitates global dialogues between public and private sectors to develop actions to increase the share of renewables in the global energy mix and accelerate the global energy transition.
www.irena.org/coalition