

Strategy Group on Sustainable Energy



The meeting of the Strategy Group on Sustainable Energy on 28 June 2021 enabled the Working Groups to present their proposals for joint actions and set the direction of travel for the remainder of the project.

The Working Groups presented updates on the African School of Regulation (ASR), the Clean Cooking Manifesto, and finance and investment.

The meeting also enabled participants to reflect on what has been achieved and how to design the next phase of activity in the lead-up to the EU-Africa Summit early next year.

It was recalled that the intention of the Group is to take proposals that have already developed some momentum and help push them along, rather than starting from scratch.

This methodology has helped the Group move fast on the AFR and the Clean Cooking Manifesto, and some of the results will find their way into some major global policy debates very soon.

The Group has reached out to a range of platforms to test some of its ideas, and the next steps are to get these ideas in front of Heads of State.

Africa School of Regulation

The presenter stated that the ASR responds to the key concerns in the electricity sector regarding the inadequacy of the electricity system in Africa to power social and economic development.

The ASR's objectives are to teach energy regulation, establish capacity building capabilities, and initiate knowledge exchange. It will be targeted at regulators, policymakers, utility managers, and other stakeholders in this sector.

It is proposed that the ASR is modelled on the Florence School of Regulation and oriented towards the African context, as well as international best practices.

The first 2-year phase will be spent finding a champion institution to host the ASR - the University of Cape Town and the Pan African University have already volunteered to be hosts. Phase two will begin with the installation of the ASR in one or more African academic institutions, after which it will start acting independently.

A budget of €1.5 million for each of the first five years is envisaged, and the presenters put out an urgent call for financing during the meeting, as only one tenth of what is needed is currently available.

Clean cooking

The Clean Cooking Manifesto, which will be launched on 29 June, was presented, the aim of which is to achieve universal access to clean cooking by 2030.

Nearly 2.6 billion people still lack access to cooking field solutions, and Covid-19 threatens to further exacerbate inequalities. To date the level of commitment and investments in clean cooking has not matched the global magnitude of the challenge.

It was also mentioned that the US Government is now committing to the Clean Cooking Alliance and will try to integrate it within its NDCs – but more support is needed, and a concept paper on how countries can implement, measure, and fund this is currently being prepared.

The Alliance is currently developing the concept and budgets for embedding cooking delivery units within Africa. The speaker advocated for a predictable and stable policy environment for businesses operating in this area, the need for private sector involvement and smart subsidies, and made the link with the ASR regarding building markets and ensuring a stable policy environment.

Finance and Investment Working Group

The Finance and Investment Working Group is at an earlier stage than the other working groups and is discussing how to attract capital into the market. The Group is seeking feedback on its idea for a simple accreditation program for private capital as a means to scale up investment throughout Africa.