



Press Release

Official Launching of the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) during the week from 26 to 30 of July 2010, Praia, Cape Verde

ECREEE, Praia, 28 May 2010 . The ECOWAS Commission, UNIDO and the Government of Cape Verde announced plans for the official launching of the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) at a press conference yesterday. The official launching event will take place during the week from 26 to 30 July 2010 in Praia, Cape Verde.

Mr. Mahama Kappiah, the Executive Director of ECREEE, highlighted that the opening ceremony will bring together high-level energy policy makers from the ECOWAS region, the private sector, development partners and other stakeholders to mark the completion of the preparatory phase of the Centre and the commencement of the operational phase of the ECREEE. The official launching will be held back to back with a renewable energy workshop for West Africa and a related training programme.

The ECREEE secretariat is based in Cape Verde, Praia and was established in November 2009 by the ECOWAS Commission with support of the Austrian and Spanish Governments and technical assistance of UNIDO. The Centre is a specialized ECOWAS Agency which acts as an autonomous body but operates within the legal framework of ECOWAS.

ECREEE's key objective is to support the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency markets in West Africa by supporting various activities to mitigate existing barriers. ECREEE activities include policy development and quality assurance, capacity building, the design and implementation of tailored financing mechanisms and appraisal tools, awareness raising and the implementation of demonstration projects with potential for regional scaling-up.

At the press conference UNIDO, ECREEE and the Government of Cape Verde also announced the launching of a comprehensive GEF renewable energy project entitled "Promoting market based development of small to medium scale renewable energy systems in Cape Verde". The national level project is executed under the GEF Programmatic Approach in Access to Energy in West Africa and has an overall volume of 7.5 million USD (2 million USD are co-funded by GEF). ECREEE is an executing partner of the project. Mr. Abraão Lopes, Director of Energy at the Ministry of Energy, explained that the key objective of the project is to promote private sector engagement through the improvement of policy, legal and regulatory framework conditions. Mr. Akmel Akpa, Director of Regional and Field Operations of UNIDO, highlighted the general importance of renewable energy in addressing the energy crisis in West Africa and the crucial role of these technologies for socio-economic and industrial development.

Further information on ECREEE is available at the website www.ecreee.org in English, French or Portuguese.