

## Press Release

### Sun not Oil

**Abu Dhabi pilot project for solar energy: Berlin institute brings photovoltaic skills to region's largest power distributor**

*Berlin, 22/06/10* - As preparation for the Solar Roof Program in Abu Dhabi, employees of the local power company ADDC (Abu Dhabi Distribution Company) undertook training in photovoltaics last week at the Berlin-based Renewables Academy (RENAC). The curriculum included topics such as system design, installation, maintenance, monitoring, and network integration. "The workshop was really helpful in skilling our engineers to meet the challenges of the Solar Roof Program, particularly because of its blended mix between theory and practical hands-on training.", said Jürgen Beigel, Senior Project Manager for Abu Dhabi's Solar Roof Program.

Electricity generation from solar energy and its subsequent feed into the public grid network is comparatively new to Abu Dhabi and ADDC. So as to encourage the growth of solar electricity in Abu Dhabi, a new incentive regime will be set up soon. In the run up to this new legislation, the government wants to gain initial experiences through the Solar Roof Program of Abu Dhabi, a 500 MW pilot project. ADDC has been commissioned with the implementation of this pilot project.

Although the region has very high levels of solar radiation, it also suffers from high humidity, and abundant dust and sand. In the pilot project different PV systems will be tested in order to determine the optimal plant size, selection of components and the installation angle under local conditions.

The ADDC engineers will monitor the installation and undertake the connection to the grid. RENAC has already trained many engineers and technicians from the Middle East region on planning optimally functioning solar thermal and PV systems under local conditions, together with their maintenance.

In addition to its 230 m<sup>2</sup> large training center in Berlin, RENAC provides a mobile training center for renewable energy training in theory and practice worldwide, which was used for this course. This allows students be well prepared in their home country to be ready for the growth of electricity and heat generation from sun and wind.

#### **Further Information:**

[www.renac.de](http://www.renac.de)

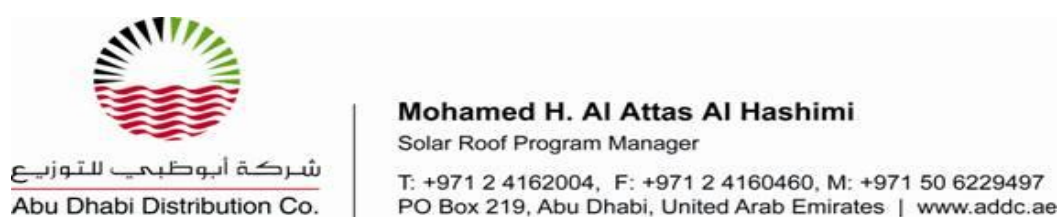
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The UAE are becoming more aware of environmental issues, but concrete actions are still lacking. As the regional daily newspaper Khaleej Times stated in an article last week: "UAE professionals thinking green, but not doing". RENAC has interviewed the Solar Roof Program Manager Mohamed Al Attas about Abu Dhabi's plans – as well as the first practical steps - in creating a more environmental friendly energy supply through the use of photovoltaics.

## Interview with Mohamed Al Attas, Solar Roof Program Manager of the Solar Roof Program of Abu Dhabi



### What is the objective of the Solar Roof Top Program? Who is the initiator?

The Solar Roof Program (SRP) is a government sponsored financial incentive program designed to make the use of solar photovoltaic (PV) on rooftops more affordable to Abu Dhabi consumers. It shall trigger the implementation, ownership and operation of PV installations by private individuals, companies and other entities. The program shall stimulate the growth of local industries, business, jobs and skills in the solar PV sector in Abu Dhabi. The overall balance of the program shows a positive economical result for Abu Dhabi.

SRP is based on a financial incentive scheme consisting of the following elements:

1. Rebate payment in the moment of investment.
2. A premium tariff (FiT = Feed in Tariff) paid per kWh produced and fed into the grid.
3. To ensure continuous technological development this FiT will decrease annually.

The program is designed for a 500 MW PV on roof tops within 20 years

### What is the task of ADDC within the program?

With the assistance and experience of Masdar, ADDC will set-up the structures, rules and regulations for the SRP. Later ADDC will host and run the SRP operations on a day by day basis with a dedicated team. ADDC will monitor the program, do the registrations, rebate and FiT payments, approve the

connection of the PV systems to the local grid and report to the AD Government about the success of the program.

**Which challenges do you see for Abu Dhabi concerning the implementation of electricity generation through photovoltaics? Does photovoltaic really have a chance in Abu Dhabi in consideration of the prize for oil?**

The solar roof program is a further step to reach the targets of UAE and Abu Dhabi. The long term targets of UAE are: 7% share of Renewable Energies in UAE 2020 (corresponds to 1,500 MW capacity of Renewable Energies ), gradually increasing revenues from Renewable Energy business. Furthermore, UAE aims to be leading by example and leading by adopting. Another important goal is to create local content regarding: know-how, skills and qualification, IP (intellectual property) and setting up industries.

Therefore we have to meet various challenges. Electricity in Abu Dhabi is cheap and subsidized. We have no pressing energy security issues and no need for fuel diversification. Regulations to support embedded/distributed Generation (DG) such as PV do not exist. A lack of consumer awareness and education on issues of energy efficiency and alternative energy is also prejudicial to the implementation of RE. In terms of meteorological conditions, we have a high solar irradiation, but also high humidity, dust and sandstorms. Abu Dhabi is concentrating now on attracting investments and creating jobs in the higher value-added upstream, R&D and manufacturing segments of the PV value chain.

**Has ADDC already experiences with the installation of PV plants or grid integration?**

Until now, the PV value chain to support PV deployment is not established (distributors, installers, etc.). Historically, PV deployment in Abu Dhabi has been limited to off-grid applications. MASDAR is undertaking numerous initiatives to address this concern (MASDAR PV in Germany) Performance testing of different PV technologies and suppliers is being conducted by MASDAR.

Recent experiences are based on a 10MW PV plant at Masdar City, an international PV Test Field and the Masdar PV car park. All these projects have been connected to ADDC Grid. Apart from these, Abu Dhabi has no PV history.

**Does the public in Abu Dhabi accept renewable energies as an alternative to fossil fuels? How is the public opinion during these days?**

Renewable Energy and sustainability issues are very popular in the day by day media in UAE. However there is still a gap between "Talking the talk and walking the walk". The SRP in AD will set the rules and regulations for Photovoltaic on the roofs of private individuals to get familiar with PV-technology on a hands-on basis. It will encourage many interested people to start up their own "mini-IPP" (independent power producer).

**Why did ADDC chose RENAC as a training provider?**

We conducted a diligent market survey and concluded that RENAC, located in one of the most mature PV market in the world, has the best experience base for doing such a training. So we found RENAC by a comprehensive market research.

**What know-how do the engineers have to acquire during the training?**

For ADDC's engineers it is of utmost importance to accomplish their professional skills in grid operation and connection with the particular issues of grid connected PV-systems.

**Thank you for the interview!**