

German Foreign Office supports DESERTEC Foundation with Dialogue in Morocco and Tunisia



Heidelberg, 19 July 2013. Are large-scale solar and wind power plants compatible with the interests and needs of people in North Africa? Will the local population be able to participate in and to benefit from industrial-scale projects? The *DESERTEC Foundation* is very convinced they will.

DESERTEC places issues like water scarcity and energy poverty in the centre of its vision. Since there is, however, a multitude of different actors involved in the realisation of the vision, all of them pursuing their own aims, the *DESERTEC Foundation* has resolved to develop criteria for large-scale power plant projects. These criteria are intended to take the claims and expectations into consideration of people from all parts of civil society as well as justified interests from the industry involved in the realisation of such projects. "We are well aware of the fact that we cannot design those criteria in a theoretical approach by desktop work but rather by joining into an honest dialogue with people from the respective regions. Our aim in conducting this dialogue is to combine legitimate interests of investors and companies with important demands for a reasonable regional development", says Wolfgang Dörner, Head of Projects at the DESERTEC Foundation.

The first step is to identify representatives of civil society who are expected to provide a reasonable contribution to this dialogue. It is individuals who engage in non-governmental and non-profit organisations for social issues, sustainable development and the environment who are needed. Also local and municipal interest groups and people within the immediate vicinity of large-scale power plants are within the focus of this project. *DESERTEC Dialogue* is financed by the German Foreign Office with means of the German government originating from Germany's Energy and Climate Fund. First events will be held in Morocco and Tunisia in autumn.

DESERTEC Dialogue is one of several projects aiming to advance knowledge transfer and civil society exchange between Europe and North Africa. "As an organisation once founded on the activities of people from the Mediterranean region and Europe, the DESERTEC Foundation stands in a good tradition of collaboration between Europe and North Africa", says Thimo Gropp, Director of the DESERTEC Foundation. Gropp knows only too well about the importance attributed to both, an affordable provision of energy from renewable resources and the prospective of newly created training opportunities and jobs in the region. "These are the urgent necessities we wish to address with our project".

DESERTEC Foundation

The DESERTEC Foundation is a civil society initiative to shape a sustainable future. Until today it has built up a large community of supporters and a network of partners, which is active around the globe. It grew out of a network of scientists, politicians and economists, who developed the DESERTEC Concept, a comprehensive solution to combat global warming, to ensure reliable energy supply, and to support regional development. Core of the concept is the idea of a renewable energy grid, integrating all forms of renewable energies, located and used where they are at their most abundant. Arid regions and desert regions hold enormous potentials, which are mostly untapped but perfectly complement the energy mix by permanent available renewable base load energy. The aim of the Foundation is to advance the fast implementation of the DESERTEC Concept especially by providing information, enabling knowledge transfer and scientific cooperation. Furthermore, it accompanies sustainable projects that are exemplary piloting. It has developed first criteria to evaluate such

projects. The DESERTEC Foundation is a non-profit foundation based in Berlin. Active worldwide, it supports with its work the development of concentrating solar thermal power plants above all with the aim of quickly developing large renewable energy capacity to meet growing world energy demand and thereby giving people around the world access to a modern and CO2-free energy supply.

For further information please refer to:

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Images are available at the following link: www.desertec.org/en/press/pictures/