DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT
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GERMAN ASSOCIATION

Clean Power from Deserts
Trans-Mediterranean
Renewable Energy Cooperation
An Initiative of The Club of Rome

Hamburg, March 27th 2008

Press release by TREC, the Trans-Mediterranean Renewable Energy Cooperation, network of scientists and engineers around the Mediterranean

Solar Mediterranean Union – Way to Energy and Climate Security?

The proposal for a Union for the Mediterranean is a great opportunity to develop the vast solar energy resources of the Sahara and the Arabian Peninsula for the whole of Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa (EU-MENA). Climate change can be stopped by clean and low cost energy from deserts. So says 'TREC', a Trans-Mediterranean network of scientists and engineers and the Club of Rome.

Solar radiation in deserts is by far the largest source of energy on earth – overabundant, inexhaustible, clean, and accessible around the globe. A Solar Mediterranean Union could bring deserts of MENA and technology from Europe together: a perfect match for sustainability.

"Less than 0.2% of Sahara's and Arabian Peninsula's surface is sufficient for generating 50% of EU-MENA electricity requirements" says Dr. Gerhard Knies, co-ordinator of the TREC network. "All technologies are already in existence. The planned Union for the Mediterranean could facilitate the necessary cooperation."

To get things moving as quickly as required in recent IPCC reports, TREC proposes to the emerging Union for the Mediterranean to run still in 2008 two EU-MENA-wide expert workshops for defining the following two projects:

- A vigorous programme to roll out Concentrating Solar Thermal Power Plants (CSP) in desert regions on a large scale.
- The design and installation of a high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) transmission grid interconnecting Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

The German Aerospace Center has investigated this DESERTEC Concept for the German government. These studies reveal that power from solar and wind resources in MENA deserts can provide low-cost, no-carbon, reliable and long-term secure power to the MENA region itself, and also to Europe. Clean power from deserts can be transmitted by HVDC with low-loss as far north as to the United Kingdom, Denmark and Poland. A mix of clean power from deserts and from European wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, wave and other renewable sources can meet, with only marginal fossil back-ups, all of EU-MENA power needs, without technical risks and without fuel supply problems.

Necessary technologies like CSP Plants, with integrated heat storage for solar power generation at night, wind turbines, and HVDC power transmission, are commercially available and ready for deployment. Costs of CSP technologies are already much cheaper than photovoltaics and can come down as a result of their large-scale deployment within about seven years to below fossil fuel costs. Sun-belt countries could develop an industry for CSP collectors.

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"Such a win-win cooperation between the European Union and its southern and eastern Mediterranean neighbours is reminiscent of the Union for Coal and Steel in Europe founded some 60 years ago, which led Europe into a prosperous and peaceful future", says Prince Hassan bin Talal from Jordan, former President of The Club of Rome.

A White Paper "The DESERTEC Concept – Clean Power from Deserts for Energy, Water and Climate Security" has been presented to the European Parliament and to the European-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly. The White Paper and a multilingual summary can be downloaded from www.DESERTEC.org

3,263 characters (incl. blanks)
503 words
50 lines

Information for Pressmen:

Further information and pictures:

Please have a look at www.DESERTEC.org/press.html
Further pictures: SCHOTT AG, https://www.schott-pictures.net/
Solar Millennium AG, presse@solarmillennium.de

Links to the studies: www.DESERTEC.org/weblinks.html

Further information about the proposed "Union for the Mediterranean" may be found at e.g.:

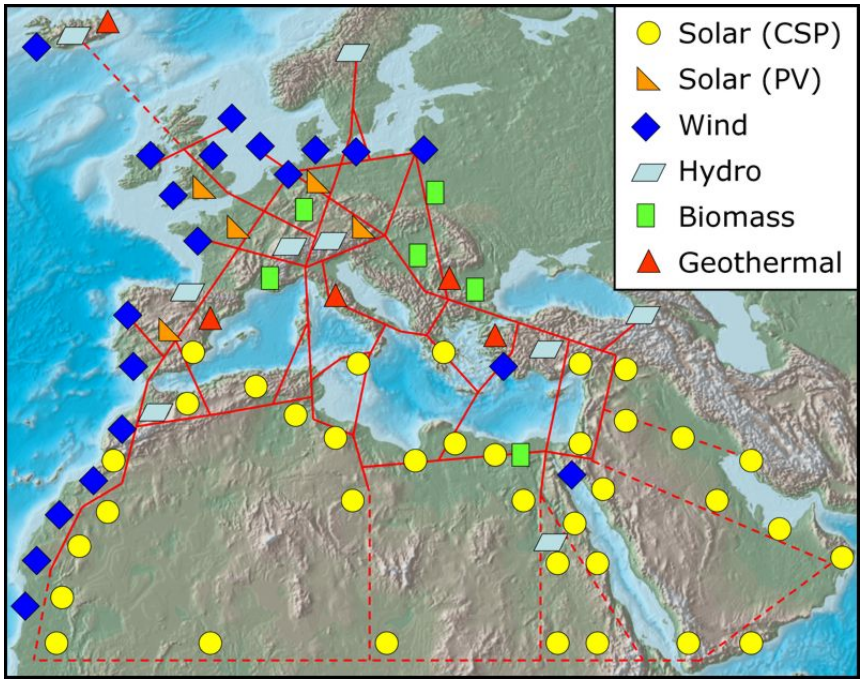
Reuters: *"EU leaders to endorse Mediterranean Union: draft"*
http://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSL1468253220080314?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews

Press about TREC/DESERTEC:

BBC, CNN, United Press International, The Observer, Dow Jones Europe, Nature Magazine, Guardian Unlimited, UK Parliament, Business Intelligence Middle East, Le Monde, China Daily, Radio Netherlands Worldwide, Reuters, Neue Züricher Zeitung, Wiener Zeitung, Deutschlandradio, Deutschlandfunk, Spektrum der Wissenschaft, Stern, Spiegel, Die Welt, Die Zeit, Handelsblatt, Brand Eins,…

See www.DESERTEC.org/news.html

All news about TREC/DESERTEC can be downloaded at:
www.DESERTEC.org/downloads/articles/trec_in_press.zip (ZIP, 20 MB)
To view the pages in this ZIP file, it is best to use Internet Explorer, not Firefox.



Picture "TREC-Map":
www.DESERTEC.org/press.html

EU-MENA-Supergrid
Sketch of possible infrastructure for a sustainable supply of power to **EU**rope, the **M**iddle **E**ast and **N**orth **A**frica (**EU-MENA**)

The DESERTEC Concept, which is based on detailed research conducted by the German Aerospace Center for the German government, efficiently combines clean power from deserts with all other renewable sources of energy in the EU-MENA region to achieve decarbonisation, security and low cost levels of power supply on relatively short timescales.

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