

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ouarzazate, 07/03/17

**Title:**

**New World Bank Program Explores Concentrated Solar Power Potential in Middle East & North Africa**

***Morocco's Noor-Ouarzazate Solar complex hosts the launch of the World Bank Middle East & North Africa Concentrated Solar Power Knowledge & Innovation Program***

Summary:

More than 100 senior energy officials from 7 MENA countries have gathered in Ouarzazate, Morocco for the first session of the **World Bank Middle East & North Africa Concentrated Solar Power Knowledge & Innovation Program** (MENA CSP KIP), a new program designed to support officials exploring the potential of Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) as a sustainable source for the region's rising demand for energy.

The World Bank and the Clean Technology Fund announced the launch of the MENA CSP KIP with an inaugural conference at Ouarzazate, the site of the world's largest CSP plant. The new program will help inform decisions on CSP investment projects in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), a region with some of the world's best solar energy resources. Alongside other clean energy options, CSP offers great potential for meeting global and national goals for clean, secure and affordable energy.

One of the primary advantages of CSP is that it can rely on thermal storage to continue generating power after the sun goes down. This makes CSP as reliable as the fossil fuel-driven plants it can replace. The program kicked off with a workshop on **Concentrated Solar Power Markets, System Value & Financing**.

The gathering in Ouarzazate —is the first of a series of conferences to be held through 2019. The program was launched in Morocco to draw on the lessons the country has learned with the launch of its ground breaking CSP program. Participants will explore lessons about development, technology and financing from Noor-Ouarzazate I, II and III, along with lessons from other CSP projects launched around the world.

Jonathan E. Sinton, Senior Energy Specialist of the World Bank Group said *"In this first conference, we will review the state of the CSP market today and the implications for projects currently under consideration. We will also discuss new thermal storage technologies that make CSP a dispatchable resource, capable of delivering electricity 24/7 to the power grid"*

The workshop will bring together officials of regional energy agencies and utilities from Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Palestine and Tunisia, along with representatives of leading international finance institutions, such as the African Development Bank ( AfDB), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Climate Technology Fund (CTF), European Bank for Reconstruction & Development (EBRD), International Finance Corporation (IFC), Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and the World Bank. Energy institutions and associations such as the International Energy Agency (IAE), International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), RREE, NREL and the European Solar Thermal Electricity Association (ESTELA) will also attend.

For regional officials, the workshop will be an opportunity to identify and prioritize the most urgent questions related to their specific CSP projects. *“This will help to ensure that future events and activities of this new, innovative World Bank program are tailored to meet specific regional needs”* continued Sinton.

The key activities to be rolled out in 2017 under the MENA CSP Knowledge and Innovation Program are fast track assistance facility (providing quick support on specific topics), web-based knowledge exchange platform and newsletters, in-depth technical support, face-to-face knowledge exchange and cooperation events / missions and capacity building and training. For more information about the MENA CSP KIP and to download a brochure, please visit: <https://goo.gl/2v6vIT>



*Opening by Marie-Françoise Marie-Nelly (World Bank)*



*CSP concessional financing panel. From left to right: Jonathan Walters (Castalia), Markus Faschina (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau), Zhihong Zhang (Clean Technology Fund), Ariane Brunel (European Bank of Reconstruction and Development), Dana Younger (International Financial Corporation), Fabrice Juquois (Agence Française de Développement), Erik Fernstrom (World Bank), Adama Moussa (African Development Bank)*

#### About the World Bank Group:

The World Bank Group is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The Bank Group provides a range of low-interest loans and grants to developing countries, along with policy advice, research and analysis, and technical assistance. The overarching mission of the Bank Group is to end extreme poverty by 2030 and promoting shared prosperity by fostering the income growth of the bottom 40% for every country.

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