

Electric grid kiribati

This follows an outcome of the 4th Pacific Energy Ministers Meeting in Samoa in 2019 where leaders urged PICTs to enact the necessary legislation to facilitate achieving the National Determined Contribution (NDC) targets.

"The endorsement of this Energy Act is a milestone for Kiribati as it provides a legal framework and supports regulations that could accelerate our energy transition to achieve our national energy targets set out in the Kiribati Integrated Energy Road Map (KIER) and in the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)", explained Agnes Nikoraa Naare, Acting Deputy Secretary for the Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (MISE) of Kiribati.

The Kiribati Energy Act of 2022 includes a section on Minimum Energy Performance Standards and Labelling (MEPSL) which legislates importers of electrical appliances such as air conditioners, refrigerators, and lighting. This is to ensure proper labelling with estimated energy consumption that must be within the minimum performance standards adopted by the country for each appliance. Besides giving consumers the option to choose more energy-efficient appliances, the MEPSL enables border control officers to stop inefficient and non-compliance products from entering the market.

"The MEPSL is one of the key components as stipulated under Part VIII of the Act and it is currently prioritized by the Government of Kiribati to implement. Through the assistance of NDC-hub, the Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy Efficiency (PCREEE) has supported Kiribati through the Ministry to ensure MEPSL has the necessary institutional, monitoring and evaluation structure in place as well as the technical expertise to administer and enforce the Energy Act 2022 effectively," Agnes Nikoraa Naare added.

Vishal Prasad of the Fiji Department of Energy said Fiji's MEPSL programme, which was piloted in 2003 has prevented Fiji from becoming a dumping ground for inefficient appliances. Based on calculations by Energy Efficient Strategies Ltd, the MEPSL program has saved consumers on average 9.3 million kWh in electricity which equates to approximately 1,992 tons of diesel fuel and mitigation of 2,456 tons of CO₂e in Green House Gas emissions.

Mose Tasesa of the Department of Energy in Samoa shared further insights into Samoa's MEPSL program. "In Samoa, an Energy Efficiency Monitoring Team (EEMT) is responsible for conducting quarterly shop audit inspections of retailers and companies. Through these inspections, the EEMT successfully disposed of 7 unregulated refrigerators and 10 unregulated air conditioning units".

Vanuatu started enforcing its MEPSL in 2017 and has identified staff turnovers and lack of funds for awareness programmes as among the key challenges. Vanuatu is also considering imposing tax incentives on the purchase of more energy-efficient appliances.

Amidst enthusiastic discussions and productive sessions, the Kiribati Sustainable Energy Association came into being. Over 20 energy experts and professionals elected Teiraoi Tetaba as the association's President. The birth of this association signifies a new era in fostering dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaborative efforts to bolster Kiribati's energy sector's sustainability and resilience.

The Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (PCREEE) played a pivotal role in supporting the establishment of the Kiribati Sustainable Energy Association. With the PCREEE's guidance, Kiribati now joins Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Tonga in the Pacific Region's Sustainable Energy Industry Association. This association aims to support sustainable energy startups, promote entrepreneurship, facilitate strong collaborations, and advocate a unified voice in shaping government policies in the energy sector.

The energy stakeholders also recognised the importance of ensuring safety and compliance with the NZ/AS 3000-2018 standards for electricity customers and properties. Over 10,000 residential and business buildings are required to undergo reinspection of their wiring. PCREEE, MISE, and TEC collaborated to train inspectors, electrical contractors, and solar contractors on proper wiring and inspection processes to ensure adherence to safety standards before connecting to the main grids.

With the support of PCREEE, MISE hopes to finalise the Electricity Code of Practices by August 2023. The Ministry will continue to work closely with the Kiribati Sustainable Energy Association to ensure compliance and the safety of electricity users. The Pacific Islands' ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse emissions by 2030 offer promising business opportunities in various renewable energy sectors. Kiribati and the newly formed association are poised to capitalise on these opportunities and contribute to a cleaner and greener future for the region.

The establishment of the Kiribati Sustainable Energy Association and the consultation on the Electricity Code of Practices mark a significant step towards sustainable energy development in Kiribati. With PCREEE's unwavering support, the nation is gearing up to embrace renewable energy initiatives, foster collaboration, and create a safer and more sustainable environment for its people. The success of these efforts not only sets a precedent for the Pacific Islands but also offers valuable lessons to the global community in advancing sustainable energy practices.

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