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**PRESS RELEASE**

**ECOWAS AGREES ON GREEN ENERGY POLICIES AS A VOLUNTARY COMMITTMENT TO THE RIO+20 SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR ALL INITIATIVE**

***Dakar, Senegal, 25 to 28 June 2012****Further information is available at: http://www.ecreee.org*

The Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) works towards a voluntary commitment to the Sustainable Energy For All Initiative of the UN Secretary General presented at the Rio+20. In a regional workshop, held from 25 to 27 June 2012 in Dakar, Senegal, the Directors of the ECOWAS Ministries of Energy agreed on the main targets and pillars of a regional renewable energy and energy efficiency policy of ECOWAS. The policies aim at the following objectives:

* Around 30% of the electricity consumption in the ECOWAS region will be saved through demand and supply side efficiency improvements by 2030.
* The share of renewable energy (incl. large hydro) of the total installed electric generation capacity of ECOWAS will increase to 35% in 2020 and 48% to 2030.
* The share of new renewable energy such as wind, solar, small scale hydro and bioelectricity (excl. large hydro) will increase to around 10% in 2020 and 19% in 2030. These targets translate to an additional 2.425 MW renewable electricity capacity by 2020 and 7.606 MW by 2030.
* To provide universal access to energy services it is envisaged that around 75% of the rural population will be served through grid extension and around 25% by renewable energy powered by mini-grids and stand-alone systems in 2030.
* By 2020 the whole ECOWAS population will have access to improved cooking facilities either through improved stoves or fuel switching to other modern forms of energy such as LPG.
* The share of ethanol/biodiesel in transport fuels will increase to 5% in 2020 and 10% in 2030.
* By 2030 around 50% of all health centers, 25% of all hotels and agro-food industries with hot water requirements will be equipped with solar thermal systems.

Just heading back from the Rio+20 negotiations, Mr. Ebrima Njie, Commissioner for Infrastructure of ECOWAS, announced that it is envisaged that the two policy documents will be adopted during the High Level Energy Forum, which is scheduled to take place from 29 to 31 October 2012 in Accra, Ghana. The Forum is organized by the ECOWAS Commission through the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) in partnership with the Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (GFSE) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Mr. Njie explained further, that the expansion of transmission, gas and large hydro capacities in combination with intensified renewable energy and energy efficiency investments will solve the energy crisis of the region by 2030.

Mr. Mahama Kappiah, Executive Director of ECREEE, noted that ECOWAS is the second regional organization after the European Union to adopt regional green energy policies. "The targets are cost-effective, feasible and fully in line with the findings of the Global Energy Assessment (GEA) and the Sustainable Energy For All Initiative (SE4A) presented at the Rio+20". Mr. Kappiah emphasized the need for increased private and public investments in the green energy sector. "In 2011 the ECOWAS region could only attract a small fraction (around 0.03%) of the USD 250 billion globally invested in the renewable energy sector", explained Mr. Kappiah.

The renewable energy policy document of ECOWAS was developed with support of the Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme (RECP) working through the EUEI-PDF with funding from the European Union and technical advisory services of Innovation, Energy and Development (IED). The energy efficiency policy document was developed with the support of the ACP-EU Energy Facility, ADEME and UNDP and technical advisory services of the Austrian Energy Agency (AEA), Alternative for Energy, Renewable Energy and Environment (AERE), ENERGIA and ENDA.

*The ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) was established as specialized agency of ECOWAS in 2010 with support of the Austrian and Spanish Governments and technical assistance of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The Centre aims at the creation of a regional market for renewable energy and energy efficiency by mitigating existing barriers for these technologies.*

Further information for the media is available at: http://www.ecreee.org.

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