



# SUNRISE ARABIA

CLEAN ENERGY CONFERENCE

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

## SUNRISE ARABIA CLEAN ENERGY CONFERENCE

January 31, 2024 - Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



Organized by: **pv magazine  
group**

سولارابيك  
SOLARABIC

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# INTRODUCTION

Combining long-term market expertise and forces together, pv magazine and Solarabic have shaped a brand-new event in the Saudi energy landscape – **SunRise Arabia Clean Energy Conference 2024**.

The new **annual event** is intended to identify the paths toward a sustainable, clean energy future in Saudi Arabia by **fostering dialogue and innovation in the field**.

In a world striving for energy sustainability, Saudi Arabia has emerged as a pioneering force, embracing the boundless potential of solar energy. This conference is a testament to the Kingdom's commitment to harnessing the power of the sun and transforming it into a driving force for economic growth, environmental stewardship, and technological advancement.

The premier 1-day event was held on 31 January 2024 at Hyatt Regency Riyadh Olaya, Saudi Arabia, and saw the **participation of both domestic and international players**, as well as that of government-run entities and agencies active in the development of renewable energies.

We **sincerely thank all our partners, speakers, and attendees** who contributed to the event's success. Their enthusiasm and dedication have undoubtedly propelled the conversation around solar energy to new heights.

Thank you for being a part of this journey!

SunRise Arabia Organizing Team

# CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

## **EMPOWER LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

We are committed to empowering local communities in the region.

## **FOSTER COLLABORATION**

We create a collaborative platform where government bodies, industry leaders, and innovators can exchange ideas, share best practices, and explore joint ventures that will accelerate the adoption of solar energy solutions.

## **KNOWLEDGE SHARING**

We encourage the sharing of knowledge and expertise among attendees. Our goal is to provide participants with practical insights and strategies to implement sustainable solar energy projects.

## **RAISE AWARENESS**

We aspire to increase awareness about the vast potential of solar energy in Saudi Arabia.

## **POLICY ADVOCACY**

We aim to facilitate discussions that support the development of a favorable regulatory environment for clean energy projects in Saudi Arabia.

## **INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY**

Our event will serve as a hub for researchers and industry leaders to present groundbreaking technologies that can revolutionize the energy.

# SUMMARY

**Saudi Arabia** is embracing its enormous potential to produce renewable energy and making moves to establish itself as an **industrial for solar, wind, green hydrogen, and other renewable energy technologies** for the Middle East region and beyond.

The Kingdom has taken significant steps in the past few years, developing several gigawatts of large-scale solar. It's clear that there is an appetite for more of this, while other opportunities, including commercial solar, off-grid power, and green hydrogen production, are also beginning to open up. But overall, the **market for renewables in Saudi Arabia is nascent** and must take the **right pathways to develop** its potential into a thriving local industry. And, as revealed at the inaugural SunRise Arabia conference, there are many pathways to choose from, each with its own unique challenges.

To be successful in Saudi Arabia, solar must compete with some of the lowest prices for electricity generated via fossil fuels. This will require the **right set of policies ensuring market access, timely permitting processes, and fair remuneration**. The Middle East's **harsh desert environments** present a further **challenge**, and further assurances will be needed to ensure that PV modules and other components are up to this challenge.

Saudi Arabia is also nurturing the ambition to establish a **domestic PV manufacturing industry** at least large enough to serve the Middle East region. This move, again, will require the proper set of incentives up and down the supply chain to be successful, as many other areas have shown.

Finally, the expected growth of solar energy will open up opportunities for other industry segments to flourish. **Energy storage** has received a shot in the arm from the flagship Neom project, and the Kingdom's widespread use of diesel generators could be an opportunity for solar + battery powered microgrids. The sheer amount of PV potential also creates an opportunity for Saudi Arabia to establish itself as a leader in the **emerging global green hydrogen economy**, and the conditions are also ripe for concentrated solar power to play a role in the future **renewable energy mix**, as it has done in neighboring countries.

# FACTS & FIGURES



**129**

**registrants**



**112**

**attendees**



**25**

**speakers**



**11**

**countries**



**7**

**partners**



**83**

**companies**

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

- 9:30 Doors open, registrations
- 10:00 Welcoming remarks
- 10:15 Presentation: Jinko Solar Reliability
- 10:30 Presentation: Gulf Renewable Energy  
Lab - Importance and impact of PV testing
- 10:45 Session 1 - Panel discussion  
Market perspectives and opportunities in  
the Saudi PV market
- 12:00 Prayer time and Lunch
- 13:30 Presentation: Saudi Polytechnic Institute of  
Renewable Energy
- 13:45 Session 2 - Panel discussion  
Solar techs for the desert
- 15:00 Prayer time and Coffee Break
- 15:30 Session 3 - Panel discussion  
PV plant development and construction in  
Saudi Arabia, EPC innovations, and beyond
- 16:30 Session 4 - Panel discussion  
Linking to storage, hydrogen, CSP
- 17:30 Closing remarks

# PRESENTATIONS

Presentations at SunRise Arabia revealed some of the concrete steps Saudi Arabia is already taking to ensure the successful development of its renewable energy industry. **Kamalakaran Jayachandran**, Renewable energy engineer at the Gulf Renewable Energy Lab, talked of the **need for localized infrastructure to test PV modules** and ensure system reliability, whether for imported or locally manufactured components.

**Majid Refae**, Chairman of the recently established Saudi Polytechnic Institute of Renewable Energy, shared plans to work with various industry players in the region to establish **training programs to ensure that a skilled workforce is developed** to help the Kingdom realize its renewable energy ambitions.

Looking beyond Saudi Arabia's PV market, JinkoSolar's **Mustafa Al-Jayyousi** shared details of the Chinese PV manufacturing giant's expansion into the supply of batteries – reflecting the **growing importance of energy storage** and its inextricable links to continued growth in solar PV.



# PANEL DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

## **Session 1 - Market Perspectives and Opportunities in the Saudi PV Market**

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The program featured multiple panel discussions, bringing together key players from the Middle East's renewable energy industry.

The **first** focused on realizing **Saudi Arabia's PV potential and the upcoming opportunities and challenges** the market will face. The panel featured Nahidh El-Shaer, Country Director at SirajPower, Majid Refae, Chairman of the Saudi Polytechnic Institute of Renewable Energy, Marcus H. Schrauf, CEO of FAS Renewables, Hussain Bassi, Senior Consultant at Saline Water Conversion Corporation (SWCC), and was moderated by Essam Al-Ammar, Professor of Electrical Energy at King Saud University.

The discussion focused on the likely size of the market – expected to be installing **more than 20 GW per year** this side of 2030, and in particular, **challenges on the policy side** that still need to be resolved – the consensus was that while regulators are making progress, **more precise rules** on issues such as land acquisition, local content requirements, as well as a net-metering policy for smaller system owners to receive payment for power supplied to the grid, will be needed to meet the demand that's already ramping up in the private sector.

# PANEL DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

## Session 2 - Solar Techs for the Desert

The day's **second panel** discussion focused on solar technology and featured Abdullah Zalam, Manager – PV Technology at ACWA Power, Leon Chuang, Global Marketing Director for Risen Energy, Theo Xin, Head of Product & Technology MENA at Trina Solar, Yasser Zaidan, Sr. Sales Manager - Middle East, Jinko Solar, with Amin Al Yaquob, Managing Partner, Al Yaquob Advisory and pv magazine's Emiliano Bellini moderating.

This discussion focused on the **latest PV module technologies** and formats that allow for the highest energy yield. Saudi Arabia's ambitions for **domestic manufacturing** were also discussed, with the large Chinese players represented on the panel stating a definite interest in the region without any firm commitment. Here, as well, the need for the **right set of incentives** to support set up and guarantee demand will be key.

# PANEL DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS



## **Session 3 - PV Plant Development and Construction in Saudi Arabia, EPC Innovations, and Beyond**

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The **third panel** brought together experts from the power plant development and construction segment, including Saeed Baalhaddad, General Manager & Commercial Director at Gulf Renewable Energy Lab, Joseph Sadaka, General Manager at Safeer, Rami Hamati, Project Development Manager at EMERGE, Omar Attyat, Regional Sales Manager for LONGi, and Saif Bdeir, Managing Director, Haala Energy. Solarabic CEO Moneef Barakat moderated the discussion.

This time, much of the talk was on **developing the Kingdom's nascent commercial and industrial PV segment**. This estimated 40 GW market saw its first awakenings in 2023 – here, PV could already be competitive with diesel generator costs and help companies achieve emissions reduction goals.

With the number of modules developers and EPC suppliers are expected to import to the Kingdom in the coming years, all agreed that establishing a **local base for testing and quality assurance**, taking into account the **harsh conditions** many of these modules will be installed in, will be essential to realize these huge growth expectations.



# PANEL DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

## **Session 4 - Linking to Storage, Hydrogen, CSP**

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Finally, the **fourth panel** focused on the other technologies that should be enabled by a dynamic PV sector. This panel featured Mengyuan Li, Vice President, Product Management Center at LONGi, Waleed AlHallaj, Head of Business Development for MENA at Amarenco, Raed Bkayrat, Chief Development Officer for Alternative Energy Projects, and Mustafa Ahmed Al-Hakeem, Hydrogen expert. Emiliano Bellini again took the stage as moderator alongside Krzysztof Ignaciuk, Head of MENA at Apricum – The Cleantech Advisory.

The panel began with **energy storage**, where the consensus is that Saudi Arabia's very **low energy prices present a challenge** to battery technologies, but ultimately, demand will come as the kingdom builds more solar and looks to get more renewable energy onto its grids. For **green hydrogen** as well, high prices remain a challenge – worldwide, as well as in Saudi Arabia. For emissions-free electrolyzers to reach the \$1.50/kg price threshold that should trigger widespread demand is still a major challenge. If this can be achieved, Saudi Arabia should be well-positioned to be a major global player.

# NETWORKING

On the eve before the conference, **January 30**, all participants gathered for an informal **Get-together Reception**, generously sponsored by LONGi.

It was a fantastic opportunity for networking in a relaxed and interactive atmosphere, fostering connections among conference attendees in a more casual and enjoyable setting.



# PARTICIPANTS FEEDBACK

“ Events like this highlight the collective dedication towards building a sustainable future. The exchange of ideas and the collaborative spirit in the discussions showcased the commitment of the community towards positive change. A heartfelt thank you to the organizers for bringing together such a dynamic group of professionals.

*Rami Hamati, Projects Development Manager, Emerge*

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“ It was my pleasure to participate in SunRise Arabia Clean Energy Conference, thanks Solarabic and pv magazine for invitation and great organizing along with well selected topics, thanks to panelists and moderators for a fantastic discussion.

*Abdullah Zalam, PV Technology Manager, ACWA Power*

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“ Many thanks to Solarabic and pv magazine for arranging this event and looking forward toward exporting the knowledge from Saudi Arabia to the world as we will produce and supply the world with clean energy.

*Mustafa AlHakeem, Hydrogen expert*

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“ Thanks for the great SunRise Arabia Clean Energy Conference.

*Majid Rafae, Chairman, Saudi Polytechnic Institute of Renewable Energy*

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# CONCLUSIONS



Though a latecomer to renewable energy, **Saudi Arabia** has moved quickly to establish an **attractive proposition for solar and other sources of clean energy** and set itself the target of developing into an industry leader and **renewable energy hub for the Middle East and beyond**.

The inaugural SunRise Arabia Clean Energy Conference began to reveal the **vast opportunities** this move will open up for domestic and international industry players and iterated some of the biggest challenges standing in the way of these ambitious goals. However it plays out, seeing the Kingdom begin to take real advantage of its enormous PV potential is sure to be exciting, and we hope to see you in Riyadh again before long.

We look forward to seeing you all at our next event!  
Stay tuned for more.

SunRise Arabia Organizing Team



# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

## LEAD PARTNER



## PLATINUM PARTNERS



## GOLD PARTNER



## KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS



# CONTACTS & MORE

## Contacts

### **pv magazine group GmbH & Co. KG**

Kurfürstendamm 64 | 10707 Berlin, Germany.

www.pv-magazine.com

### **Solarabic DMCC**

Unit No: 2310, Preatoni Tower, JLT, Dubai, UAE

P.O. Box: 487516

www.solarabic.com

www.sunrise-arabia.com

LinkedIn

Twitter

#SunRiseArabia

### **For questions and suggestions:**

mallak.alrai@solarabic.com, +966 59 551 6032

diana.rybacenko@pv-magazine.com, +49 (0)157 59788478