

Muscat, April 25, 2019

## **GCC and European Union experts discussing the Energy-Water Nexus at the first GCC-EU regional workshop hosted in Muscat**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

The Gulf countries have been facing rapid increases in their energy and water consumption brought on by high economic and population growth; changing lifestyles; industrial activity and harsh climatic conditions. Water sources in the Gulf, due to the lack of surface water, are either underground fossil aquifers or desalinated sea water. Policy makers in the EU and in the GCC are increasingly focused on the water scarcity and efficiency challenges and the water-energy nexus is gaining momentum. Therefore suitable and efficient technologies and policies should be identified and promoted either in regards to desalination technologies or the whole water-energy system including decoupling power generation from desalination.

*"The EU is keen to discuss and share with the GCC region technologies, experiences and best practices to address the challenges of the energy-water nexus. International cooperation and partnerships are a key success factor in meeting our common goals "* said H.E. Laetitia van Asch, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Sultanate of Oman during the opening ceremony of the two-day EU GCC workshop "Addressing the Energy-Water Nexus through integrated approaches & regional cooperation" that started yesterday in Muscat.

The event is organised by the EU-GCC Clean Energy Technology Network in partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Oman, the Oman Water Society and with the support of the Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat General. The event is held on the sidelines of the Oman Energy & Water Conference & Exhibition.

*"Generation of potable water consumes a lot of energy, this energy is ultimately made of natural gas. Natural gas prices are increasing globally, and the local demand on gas is increasing due to the high boom in the industry. Energy efficiency is an important factor that need to be considered while generating potable water, regardless the energy type used to produce water." said Eng. Zahir Al Sulaimani, Chairman of Oman Water Society during his opening address. "Also, we should not look only on energy used in desalination plants to produce potable water, but we have to look energy used to treat sewage water and to discharge waste water, this include all waste water in industrial areas and as as produced water that is associated with oil production. There should be policies to regulate the energy consumption to treat, or pump or dispose water. Energy management became an important topic, and we have to consider implementing energy management systems when we deal with large scale water projects. We are, in Oman Water Society very glad to work with EU-GCC Clean Energy Technology Network gathering the efforts to address the issues related to water and energy nexus." stressed Eng. Zahir.*

During the opening session, Ms Remedios Romeo, Head of Economic & Trade in the Embassy of Spain, currently holding the EU Presidency, referred to the ambitious EU targets and clean energy policies towards decarbonisation aiming at sustainable development and at tackling the climate change challenges. She invited the workshop experts from the two regions to exchanges views and discuss the benefits, opportunities and challenges of integrated approaches that address the water-energy nexus, taking into account institutional and policy frameworks, technologies, the evolving energy system as well as climate change considerations.

The workshop aims to discuss water and electricity security and affordability, addressing environmental concerns including greenhouse gas emissions; brine discharge and its broader impact on the salinity of the gulf as well as possibilities for regional cooperation and partnerships with the EU. The event gathered distinguished representatives from policy makers, authorities, international organisations including the League of Arab states and UN ESCWA, academia and research institutes, as well as industry and private sector companies.

*"Our objective is to build a common understanding of the water and energy nexus as a key driver for climate change mitigation and sustainable development. By bringing key stakeholders from the two regions, the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network supports effective cooperation and accelerates the clean energy transition agenda",* noted Dr Mustapha Taoumi, Energy Technology Expert of the EU GCC Clean Energy Technology Network at his opening address.

## **ENDS**

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## **Notes to Editors**

The **EU– GCC Clean Energy Technology Network**, funded by the European Commission, was established as a response to the common EU and GCC interest for strategic clean energy cooperation. The Network aims to act as catalyst and facilitate the development of clean energy partnerships including the related policy and technology aspects among various stakeholders in the EU and GCC countries. The Network is structured around collaboration in five working areas, with Climate Change as a cross-cutting topic: Renewable Energy Sources; Energy Efficiency & Demand Side Management; Clean Natural Gas & related Technologies; Electricity Interconnections & Market Integration; Carbon Capture, Utilisation & Storage. The Network is funded by the European Commission. Its head office is in Abu Dhabi/ UAE.

More information available at: [www.eugcc-cleanenergy.net](http://www.eugcc-cleanenergy.net) | [contact@eugcc-cleanenergy.net](mailto:contact@eugcc-cleanenergy.net)

About **Oman Water Society**: Oman Water Society (OWS) is non-profitable, non-governmental organization (NGO) established on 2010 and founded by professionals with interest in water issues, working in both, the Government and Private Sectors. Oman Water Society is a platform for professionals with interest in water to exchange experience and ideas, discuss researches topics related to water, discuss challenges, enhance their knowledge and expose themselves to the latest technology in the field.