

PRESS RELEASE

Abdul Latif Jameel Energy and Environmental Services: renewable energy is the answer to the region's growing demand for water desalination

- Abdul Latif Jameel Energy and Environmental Services reiterates the importance of sustainable solutions to meet clean water demand
- The Company to provide solutions to power regional desalination plants

Abu Dhabi, UAE – 19 January 2016

Abdul Latif Jameel Energy and Environmental Services today, at the World Future Energy Summit (WFES) 2016, reiterated the importance and benefits stemming from renewable energy to power water desalination plants in the region, while addressing the carbon footprint attributed to the desalination process.

Abdul Latif Jameel Energy and Environmental Services, which is looking to expand its renewable energy services into the water desalination sector, is the largest GCC-based solar photovoltaics (PV) developer and one of the leading solar PV developers in the world. The Company brings a depth of knowledge, operational excellence, and strong financial capability to the domains of sustainable energy creation, alternative resources management and energy efficiency.

Speaking at the World Future Energy Summit 2016 (WFES), taking place in Abu Dhabi, Roberto de Diego Arozamena, Chief Executive Officer, Abdul Latif Jameel Energy and Environmental Services, said, "While water desalination is critical to meeting the region's water demands, today's production is extremely energy-intensive, using valuable fossil fuel reserves. Coupled with the region's rapidly expanding population, it is vital for the region to adopt renewable energy to power desalination to meet rising water demand in a more sustainable way."

He added, "New technologies such as pre-treatment processes, nano-technology filtering processes and electrochemical desalination whilst helpful in making the desalination industry more energy efficient have not sufficiently moved the needle."

Today, the UAE and Saudi Arabia are two of the world's largest producers of desalinated water. Countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have relied heavily on desalinated water out of necessity. However, global freshwater shortages mean that other countries too are turning to desalination. According to the International Desalination Association, the demand for desalinated water is growing by about eight per cent every year.

Recent research conducted by the International Journal of Thermal and Environmental Engineering concluded that using renewable energy could help conserve as much as 17 per cent of fossil fuel electricity consumed for desalination in Saudi Arabia, and 16 per cent in the UAE by 2025.

PRESS RELEASE

Continuing, de Diego Arozamena said, “Some steps have been undertaken in the GCC to use renewable solar and wind resources to support the growing power demands from desalination, with the UAE commissioning its first desalination plant powered by renewable energy in November 2015. The pilot facility launched by Masdar is capable of producing 1,500 cubic meters of water per day, which is a promising first step.

“For Abdul Latif Jameel Energy and Environmental Services, water desalination and water purification is an important area of focus and we are looking at ways of building our capability to address this rising demand.”

In line with the guiding principles of Abdul Latif Jameel, Abdul Latif Jameel Energy and Environmental Services is working with the Abdul Latif Jameel World Water and Food Security Lab (J-WAFS) to coordinate and promote water and food research at MIT in Boston with a mission to alleviate climate change impact, food scarcity and water shortages globally.

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