What is International Solar Alliance (ISA)?

ISA is an intergovernmental Treaty-based Organisation registered under Article 102 of the United Nations charter. The ISA was launched by Mr. Narendra Modi, Honourable Prime Minister of India and Mr. François Hollande, Honourable Former President of France in the presence of Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, the Former Secretary General of the United Nations on the 30th November, 2015 through adoption of the Paris Declaration on the side events of COP21 Paris.

The ISA was launched to be an action-oriented organization which will address energy needs and energy security issues of member countries in a greener and cleaner manner by massive deployment of solar energy at an affordable cost. The ISA members shall take coordinated actions for realizing Economies of scale in solar at an affordable price. Addressing the difficulties in the solar sector to fulfill the unmet demands of the sector through demand aggregation and also by making it an attractive proposition for the supply. In its manner, members will be contributing towards reduction in Green House Gas (GHG) emissions.

What are the objectives of ISA?

The ISA’s major objectives include: mobilising more than US $100 billion investments in solar by 2030, building a common e-knowledge platform, establishing network of Centres of Excellence, facilitating transfer of technology, capacity building and developing and helping implement projects and programmes to turn the solar sector into a massive market.

What are the benefits of joining the ISA?

Prospective ISA countries willing to join the ISA can sign the ISA Framework Agreement, and then submit the formal Instrument of Ratification in accordance with their constitutional provisions. The Instrument of Ratification can be submitted either through the Indian Embassy/High Commission situated in their country or directly to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India in New Delhi, which is the depository for the Instrument of Ratification as per the ISA Framework Agreement.

What are the financial implications of joining the ISA?

There is no mandatory membership fee for joining the ISA. However, for carrying out activities ISA welcomes voluntary contributions by its members. Partner countries, UN, its agencies and other countries and organizations. In addition, voluntary contribution from the private sector is also welcome. Along with the above, ISA plans to generate revenue from specific activities that are approved by the Assembly.

Are there any partner organisations of the ISA?

ISA corporate partners include: CLP, IREDA, NTPC, PGCIL, REC, SECI, Softbank, India Trade Promotion Organization, Coal India Limited & PTC.

Currently ISA has five programmes. The initial programmes, ‘Scaling Solar Applications for Agriculture Use’ and ‘Affordable Finance at Scale’ launched on 22nd April 2016 in New York on the side lines of the signing of the Paris Agreement have made significant progress. The third programme of ISA ‘Scaling Solar Mini Grids’ was launched in a side event of the 52nd Annual Meeting of the African Development Bank (AfDB), with the objective to cater the energy needs of ISA member states in isolated areas with unreliable or no grids, and in island member states having abundant potential to trap solar energy.

How can countries participate in the ISA programmes?

A National Focal Point is nominated by a member country, and he/she is based in member country’s capital. The ISA functions through the network of these National Focal Points (NFPs). They act as an interface between the ISA Secretariat and the member country. A prospective member country desirous of participating in the ISA programme(s) designate Country Representative for each of the programme, who in consultation with their NFP can decide the level and scale of the programme. Financial resources required for the implementation of a specific Programme are assessed and mobilized by countries participating themselves in the Programme, with support and assistance of the Secretariat. A Programme proposal is formally endorsed by members willing to join, through a joint declaration. All decisions regarding the implementation of the programme are also taken by members participating in the Programme.

How many countries have signed and ratified the ISA Framework Agreement so far?

The ISA Framework Agreement was opened for signature during COP22 on 15th November 2016 at Marrakesh, Morocco. The ISA F&A entered into force on 16th December, 2017. With this, ISA became a de jure treaty based international intergovernmental organization headquartered in India. Till now 75 countries have signed and ratified the ISA Framework Agreement.