

**Online webinar on renewable energy, investment opportunities, and
clean technology cooperation between Egypt and New Zealand**
Wednesday the 13th of May 2026

The Egyptian Businessmen Association (EBA) participated in a high-level online webinar on renewable energy, investment opportunities, and clean technology cooperation between Egypt and New Zealand, bringing together ambassadors, government entities, and leading energy experts.

The webinar featured keynote speeches and interventions from:

- H.E. Louise Searle – New Zealand Ambassador to Egypt
- H.E. George Tadros – Egyptian Ambassador to New Zealand
- Ms. Jude Hadfield – Chair, NZ Middle East Business Council (NZMEBC)
- Ms. Ayah Hussein – General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI)
- Dr. Hala Ramadan - General Manager of Strategic Management, New and Renewable Energy Authority (NREA)
- Eng. Ehab Farouk – G.M. of Testing - New & Renewable Energy Authority (NREA)
- Mr. Mostafa Ibrahim – Chairman, Egyptian Australian Business Council / EBA
- Mr. Jason McDonald – Energy Consultant (New Zealand)
- Ms. Fiona Bycroft – CEO, Naut & McKay New Zealand
- Mr. James Dehlsen – SeaWell Systems / Offshore Renewable Energy Expert

Webinar highlights

Opening Remarks

- The webinar was opened by **Ms. Jude Hadfield, Chair of the NZ Middle East Business Council (NZMEBC)**, who welcomed all participants and highlighted the importance of strengthening cooperation between Egypt and New Zealand in the field of renewable energy and investment. She emphasized that the session aimed to foster dialogue between government representatives, business councils, and technical experts from both countries, particularly in areas of renewable energy transition, investment facilitation, and emerging clean technologies.
- **H.E. Louise Searle, New Zealand Ambassador to Egypt**, delivered her remarks by addressing the global energy transition in the context of rising geopolitical instability and energy security concerns. She noted that renewable energy has become a strategic necessity rather than only an environmental choice. She highlighted Egypt's

accelerated transition toward renewable energy, including its target of achieving 45% renewable electricity by 2028, alongside growing investments in solar, wind, battery storage, and grid modernization. She also outlined New Zealand's strong renewable energy profile, where more than 85% of electricity generation comes from renewable sources, and emphasized its leadership in geothermal energy and its ongoing focus on decarbonising transport and industrial heat. She concluded by stressing the strong potential for collaboration between Egypt and New Zealand in renewable energy technologies and investment partnerships.

- **H.E. George Tadros, Egyptian Ambassador to New Zealand**, presented an overview of Egypt's economic resilience and renewable energy strategy. He highlighted Egypt's strong macroeconomic performance, including GDP growth of 5.3%, significant increases in foreign direct investment reaching USD 9.3 billion in the first half of the fiscal year, as well as strong growth in tourism revenues and remittances. He emphasized Egypt's ambition to become a regional green energy hub, targeting 42% renewable electricity by 2035 with a longer-term ambition of 60%. He also detailed key renewable energy projects such as the Benban Solar Park with a capacity of 1.65 GW and the Zafarana wind complex with 580 MW capacity. He further highlighted policy reforms supporting the sector, including feed-in tariffs, power purchase agreements, grid unbundling, and private sector participation, as well as major green hydrogen investments exceeding USD 40 billion in the Suez Canal Economic Zone.

Investment Climate in Egypt

- **Ms. Ayah Hussein from the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI)** presented an overview of Egypt's investment climate. She highlighted Egypt's strategic geographic location connecting Africa, Asia, and Europe, and its strong performance in attracting foreign direct investment, which reached USD 12.2 billion in the most recent year. She noted Egypt's stable GDP growth of around 5.3%, strong export performance, and increasing number of newly established companies, reflecting a 21% growth rate. She also emphasized the expansion of 1,650 companies within Egypt due to strong return on investment opportunities.
- She further outlined Egypt's investment framework, which includes nine free zones offering tax and customs incentives, seven technology zones focused on innovation and ICT, and nineteen investment zones designed as sector-based clusters. She also highlighted the Suez Canal Economic Zone as a strategic hub for renewable energy and green hydrogen investments. Additionally, she explained the "Golden License"

system, which enables strategic projects to obtain full approvals within approximately 20 days, significantly accelerating the investment process. She emphasized that GAFI supports investors throughout the entire investment lifecycle, including project selection, licensing, and expansion.

Renewable Energy and Geothermal Development in Egypt

- **Dr. Hala Ramadan General Manager of Strategic Management, New and Renewable Energy Authority (NREA)**
- presented Egypt's renewable energy strategy and institutional framework. She explained that NREA operates under the Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy and was established in 1986 as the national focal point for renewable energy development. She stated that Egypt's total installed capacity is approximately 60 GW, with peak load reaching 34 GW, while renewable energy capacity from hydro, wind, and solar stands at around 8.2 GW.
- She highlighted that Egypt has allocated approximately 43,000 square kilometers of land for renewable energy development and has revised its national strategy to target 45% renewable electricity by 2028. She also noted that around 21 GW of renewable energy projects are currently under development, with a mix of solar and wind projects expected to be completed before 2028. She explained that policy reforms, including competitive bidding systems, feed-in tariffs, net metering, and improved grid access, are enabling greater private sector participation, which she identified as essential for future growth.
- **Eng. Ehab Farouk - G.M. of Testing - New & Renewable Energy Authority (NREA)**
- presented the authority's work in energy efficiency and geothermal energy development. He explained that NREA operates a national energy efficiency testing and certification center that aims to reduce electricity consumption by approximately 15% through appliance labelling and efficiency standards. The center includes laboratories for testing refrigerators, air conditioners, washing machines, dishwashers, and solar energy systems, all accredited under ISO/IEC standards.
- He further discussed Egypt's early-stage geothermal energy development, noting that potential sites include the Gulf of Suez, Western Desert, Nile Valley, and Red Sea coastal areas. He highlighted that hot springs such as Hammam Moussa indicate geothermal potential, with estimated subsurface temperatures reaching up to 140°C in some areas. However, he noted that geothermal development remains at an exploratory stage due to high drilling costs and the need for detailed feasibility

studies. He explained that Egypt is working with petroleum sector entities to develop a geothermal resource atlas and assess viability for future projects.

Energy and Environmental Policy Input

- **Mr. Hussein Lotfy – Chairman of Environment Committee at the Egyptian Businessmen Association (EBA)** added further insights on renewable energy and environmental policy. He highlighted the importance of solar water heating systems and energy efficiency as complementary components of Egypt's renewable energy transition. He also noted geothermal potential in the Sinai region, particularly around Ain Sokhna and Hammam Pharaon, and emphasized that Egypt now has a regulatory framework for carbon credit issuance and trading. He explained that this framework is aligned with international standards, including EU CBAM requirements, and can support financing of low-carbon projects.

New Zealand Energy Transition Overview

- **Mr. Jason McDonald, energy consultant**, presented an overview of New Zealand's energy transition. He explained that New Zealand has largely decarbonised its electricity sector, with remaining challenges focused on decarbonising transport, industrial heat, and process heat. He noted that New Zealand has a growing renewable energy pipeline and a highly competitive, market-driven electricity system. He emphasized New Zealand's strong global position in geothermal energy, ranking among the top five countries worldwide, and highlighted ongoing innovation in energy software, grid optimization, and flexible demand management systems. He also noted that New Zealand's energy sector is increasingly characterized by private sector innovation and exportable energy technology solutions.

Marine Electrification and Electric Propulsion

- **Ms. Fiona Bycroft, CEO of Naut and McKay New Zealand**, presented developments in marine electrification and electric propulsion systems. She explained that McKay is a major renewable energy engineering company involved in a large share of New Zealand's solar farm developments, while Naut was established as a spin-off focused on standardized electric propulsion systems for marine vessels.
- She highlighted that Naut currently operates 12 vessels globally, including hybrid and fully electric systems. She presented case studies including a 19-meter electric ferry operating in Wellington Harbour, an 8-meter trailerable electric vessel with flexible charging options, and electric catamarans operating in Samoa with solar-

assisted charging systems. She explained that these vessels are used in passenger transport, tourism, aquaculture, and defense applications, with advantages including lower emissions, reduced acoustic signatures, and improved efficiency.

Offshore Renewable Energy and Desalination Systems

- **Mr. James Dehlsen** presented his work on integrated offshore renewable energy and desalination systems. He explained that his technology combines offshore wind, wave, and marine current energy with modular desalination systems designed to produce freshwater at sea. These systems operate as container-scale units connected to shore via pipelines and power cables, delivering treated water directly to distribution networks.
- He stated that the system offers approximately 20% higher efficiency compared to conventional desalination technologies and can reduce costs by up to 40% compared to traditional water supply systems in New Zealand. He explained that each unit can produce around 30 cubic meters of water per hour, equivalent to supplying approximately 3,000 people. He emphasized that the system is suitable for drinking water, industrial use, agriculture, and coastal community supply, particularly in drought-prone regions and coastal economies such as Egypt.

Q&A Session

- During the Q&A session, participants discussed several technical and strategic issues. Questions were raised regarding the potential for geothermal energy to be used not only for electricity generation but also for direct heating and industrial applications, with Egypt confirming that early-stage studies are being conducted for such uses. Discussions also addressed the potential for electric vessels to support grid systems through bidirectional charging in the future, which is currently under development.
- Further questions focused on the scalability and readiness of electric marine propulsion systems, with confirmation that these systems are already operational in multiple countries. The African New Zealand Business Chamber also raised interest in expansion into African markets, to which Naut responded that it aims to become a global company within five years and is open to earlier expansion opportunities. Additional technical clarification was provided on desalination capacity, confirming production levels of approximately 30 cubic meters per hour per unit.

Closing Remarks

Ms. Jude Hadfield delivered the closing remarks, thanking all speakers, ambassadors, and participants for their contributions. She emphasized the importance of continued collaboration

between Egypt and New Zealand in renewable energy, green investment, and innovation. She confirmed that follow-up information from the session would be circulated via email and expressed hope for continued engagement and future joint sessions between the two countries.