

RENEWABLE FUTURE

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Emissions reductions are at the core of the climate negotiations. The transition to a 100% renewable energy future must begin now.

IPCC confirms renewable energy can power the world

- According to the recent IPCC Special Report on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change, renewable energy can account for 80% of the world's energy supply by 2050.
- These 80% represent less than 2.5% of the world's available technical renewable technology potential.
- Therefore, a 100% renewable future is within reach, but requires political will and public investments.

Transformation to renewable energy is affordable and key to development

- The IPCC report concludes that renewables can accelerate access to sustainable and reliable energy, particularly for the 1.4 billion people without access to electricity and the additional 1.3 billion using traditional biomass. For poor countries increased access to affordable energy is key for human development.
- According to the report, investment needs would on average be less than 1% of world GDP. Considering the crucial importance of a renewable energy revolution for both mitigation, adaptation and development, this sum is a bargain.

A global system of feed in tariffs can enable the energy transformation

- IPCC sees feed-in tariffs* as one of the key tools for stimulating affordable renewable energy by guaranteeing long-term payments for energy generation.
- If applied across developing countries and paid for by a global fund, this would aggressively cut the costs for renewable energy, thus transforming our default choice away from fossil fuels while simultaneously addressing development in the global South.
- While funding should come through Annex I public finance, in line with common but differentiated responsibility, such an investment would make the transformation to zero-carbon societies much cheaper both in the north and the south – a true win-win situation.
- If enacted appropriately at a national level, a global system for feed-in tariffs and other targeted subsidies can promote public efforts and enable energy sovereignty among local communities through decentralised generation – a bottom-up energy revolution.
- Feed-in tariffs should be brought into the discussions of the Green Climate Fund Transitional Committee and the LCA negotiations.

* Public subsidies through guaranteed prices over a 10-15 year period, covering the gap between costly investments and lower selling price.

Ensure appropriate, sustainable technologies

If renewable energy is to deliver sustainable development and a zero-carbon future, technologies must be socially, economically and environmentally appropriate. This means certain technologies must not be considered sustainable.

Large-scale bioenergy is a major force of deforestation and habitat loss through land clearing and logging, food price hikes from land and resource diversion, and land-grabbing by profit-driven interests.

There is a strong need to address health impacts and ensure the long-term sustainability and accessibility of traditional biomass for heating and cooking by the rural poor, taking into account gender aspects.

Small hydro can provide decentralized community energy, but on a large scale it is responsible for the mass displacement of people and the destruction of habitats, as well as consequences for people and ecosystems further down stream.

Technologies such as nuclear power and carbon capture and storage (CCS) are clearly neither renewable nor sustainable. They should not be part of the energy mix as we move towards 100% renewables.