

Renewable energy powers ahead in 2020: report

May 11 2021



New wind turbine installation nearly doubled last year to 114 GW

Renewable energy grew at its fastest rate in two decades, driven primarily by gains in China and wind power, the International Energy Agency said in a report Tuesday.

Around 280 gigawatts (GW) of electricity production capacity was added last year, a 45-percent increase from the amount added in 2019, according to the IEA.

That was the biggest gain since 1999, and equivalent to total [power](#) production capacity in the 10 Southeast Asian nations in the ASEAN trade bloc.

"The increase in 2020 is set to become the 'new normal', with about 270 GW of renewable capacity on course to be added in 2021 and almost 280 GW in 2022" the IEA said, as nations step up their shift to [renewable energy](#) production to meet their obligations to reduce production of greenhouse gasses.

Renewable energy accounted for 90 percent of new electricity generation installed last year.

"Shifting power generation to [renewable sources](#) is a key pillar of global efforts to reach carbon neutrality," said the agency which advises developed nations on energy policies.

"But CO2 emissions are set to rise this year because of a parallel rise in coal use, underscoring the major policy changes and investments in clean energy needed to meet climate goals," it added.

The IEA noted that nations pushed forward with plans for renewable production at a record rate despite the Covid-19 pandemic temporarily reducing demand.

New wind turbine installation nearly doubled last year to 114 GW. While the IEA expects the [growth rate](#) to slow down a bit in the coming years, it expects they will still be 50 percent higher than during the 2017-2019 period.

Installation of new photovoltaic solar panels should also continue to break records, hitting 160 GW by 2022.

"Wind and solar power are giving us more reasons to be optimistic about our climate goals as they break record after record," said IEA chief Fatih Birol.

China's share of the new renewable energy production installed hit 50 percent last year as projects were rushed to completion ahead of subsidies being phased out, the agency said.

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