

Boost in solar energy and electric vehicle sales gives hope for climate goals, report says

September 26 2023, by Sibi Arasu



A DC fast charging station manufactured by Sumitomo Electric works at Fully Charged Live, an electric vehicle, renewable and clean energy and urban mobility exhibition, in Vancouver, B.C., Sept. 8, 2023. The window to limit human-caused warming to a globally agreed goal is narrowing but still open because of the huge growth of solar energy and electric vehicles sales worldwide, a report said Tuesday, Sept. 26. Credit: Darryl Dyck /The Canadian Press via AP, File

The window to limit human-caused warming to a globally agreed goal is narrowing but still open because of the huge growth of solar energy and electric vehicles sales worldwide, a report said Tuesday.

For the last two years, the rate of the build up of solar energy and electric vehicle sales were in line with achieving emissions reductions targets that will help cap warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels, the Paris-based International Energy Agency said.

But [renewable power](#) needs to triple by 2030, the sale of EVs needs to rise much more sharply—70% of all vehicle sales as opposed to the current 13%—and [methane emissions](#) from the energy sector needs to fall by 75% if [global warming](#) is to be curbed to the the Paris Agreement goal. Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas that is up to 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide in the short term.

Investments in [climate action](#) also need to rise, from \$1.8 trillion in 2023 to \$4.5 trillion annually by the early 2030s, the report said.

"Global climate continues to change at a frightening speed," said Fatih Birol, executive director of the IEA at an online press event, but "there are legitimate reasons to be hopeful. The spectacular increase in [clean energy](#) is keeping the door still open."



A Tesla electric vehicle is charged at a Tesla charging station on May 25, 2023, in Nashville, Tenn. The window to limit human-caused warming to a globally agreed goal is narrowing but still open because of the huge growth of solar energy and electric vehicles sales worldwide, a report said Tuesday, Sept. 26. Credit: AP Photo/George Walker IV, File

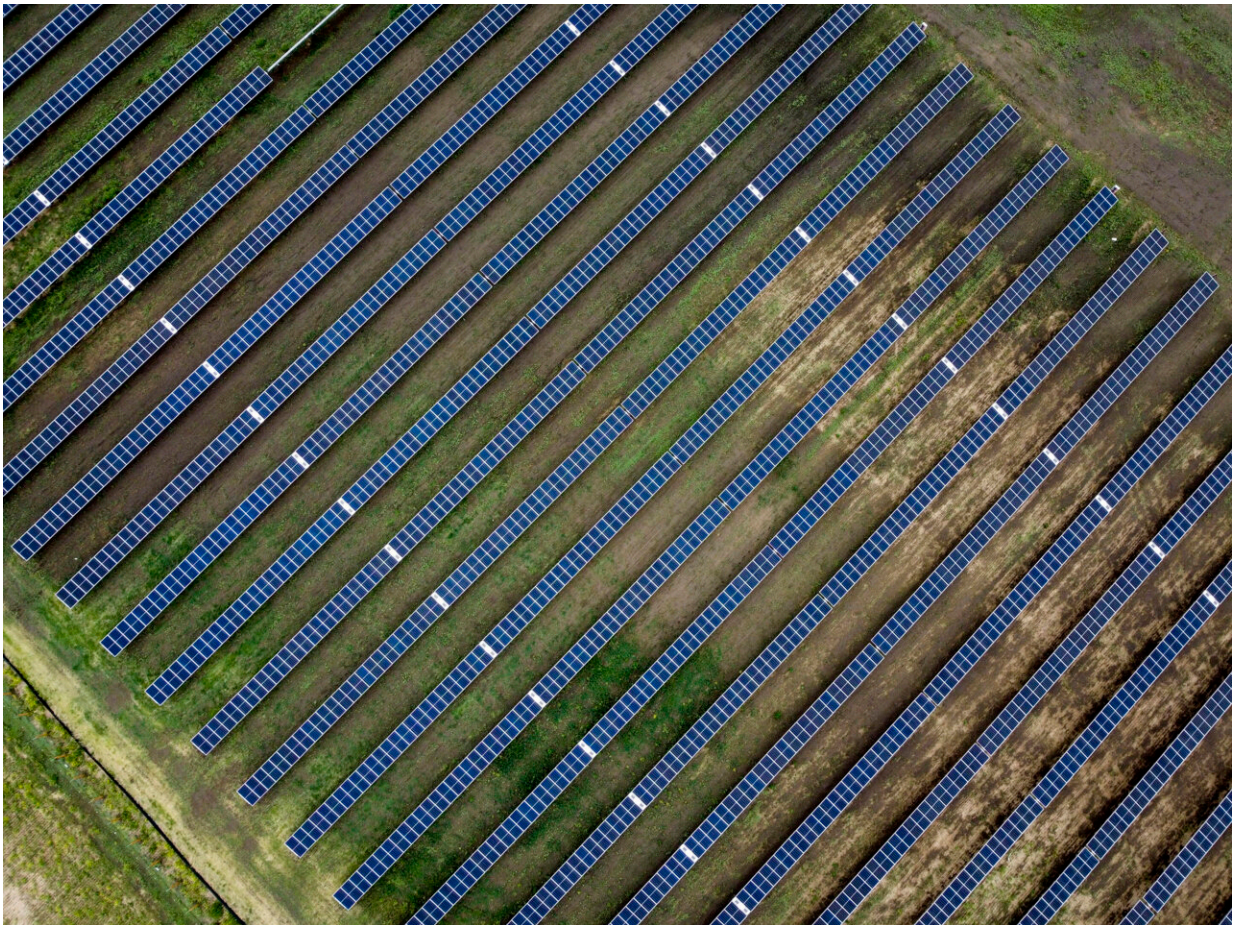
The report found that solar power capacity increased nearly 50% in the last two years and electric car sales increased by 240%.

But [carbon dioxide emissions](#) from the [energy sector](#)—which includes the production of coal, oil and gas—remain worryingly high, reaching a new record of 37 gigatons last year.

"Instead of starting to fall as envisaged in our 2021 report, demand for

fossil fuel has increased," the report said, pointing to Russia's invasion of Ukraine as well as lack of investments in supply chains for clean energy for the growth in dirty fuels.

Failure to increase ambition to slash emissions would create additional climate risks and make achieving the 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) goal dependent on a massive deployment of carbon removal technologies which are expensive and currently unproven at scale.



Solar panels are visible at the Michichi Solar project near Drumheller, Alberta, July 11, 2023. The window to limit human-caused warming to a globally agreed goal is narrowing but still open because of the huge growth of solar energy and electric vehicles sales worldwide, a report said Tuesday, Sept. 26. Credit: Jeff

McIntosh/The Canadian Press via AP



Even Berrios, left, and Nicholas Hartnett, owner of Pure Power Solar, install a solar panel on the roof of a home in Frankfort, Ky., July 17, 2023. The window to limit human-caused warming to a globally agreed goal is narrowing but still open because of the huge growth of solar energy and electric vehicles sales worldwide, a report said Tuesday, Sept. 26. Credit: AP Photo/Michael Conroy, File



Wind turbines work at sunset on a wind farm near Aschersleben, Germany, July 23, 2023. Limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) is becoming harder but a narrow window remains because clean energy infrastructure has grown around the world, a new report said Tuesday, Sept. 26. Credit: AP Photo/Matthias Schrader, File



A boy walks on a field near wind turbines near Sadla village in Surendranagar district of Gujarat state, India, March 20, 2023. Limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) is becoming harder but a narrow window remains because clean energy infrastructure has grown around the world, a new report said Tuesday, Sept. 26. Credit: AP Photo/Ajit Solanki, File

Nearly five gigatons of [carbon dioxide](#) would have to be removed from the atmosphere every year during the second half of this century if countries don't drastically reduce emissions to recommended levels, the IEA said.

"The actions we need to take now are increasingly massive, and there is no slack left in the plan," said Dave Jones, an energy analyst at London-based climate think tank Ember.

Tripling renewables by 2030 and making energy more efficient so it emits less CO₂ are goals that the hosts of the next [global climate](#) summit in Dubai in late November and December this year have also laid out for the upcoming talks.

"It is now in the hands of governments to deliver," Jones said.

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