

Japan's Softbank announces solar power plan

May 25 2011



File photo shows people passing a branch of Japanese telecom company Softbank in Tokyo. Softbank is to work with local authorities in a drive towards renewable energy, its president said on Wednesday after announcing the construction of 10 large solar power plants.

Japanese telecom company Softbank is to work with local authorities in a drive towards renewable energy, its president said on Wednesday after announcing the construction of 10 large solar power plants.

Since Japan's March 11 earthquake and tsunami sparked a nuclear emergency, Softbank CEO and president Masayoshi Son, Japan's richest man, has been a high-profile advocate for a shift away from [atomic power](#) and toward renewables such as solar, wind and geothermal.

Son and local officials from across the country told a joint news conference they would launch a "Natural Energy Council" in early July to promote natural energy power generation.

"We want to set up the council, considering how we can create initial momentum toward expanding natural energy power generation in a concrete and swift manner," Son told reporters.

"I believe we can make a significant achievement by combining various kinds of natural energy sources appropriately in each region," Son said.

Son stopped short of unveiling further details of his [solar power](#) project, saying only that his company would begin dialogue with local officials on the council on the construction of [solar power plants](#).

Son has proposed building a string of solar energy facilities that would cost about eight billion yen (\$97 million), each as part of an "Eastern Japan Solar Belt" that would also help revitalise tsunami-hit areas.

Softbank, the sole supplier of Apple products in Japan, plans to put up about 10 percent of the funding, with local governments providing about 100 million yen for each facility and Softbank likely to borrow the remainder from banks, the Nikkei business daily reported.

The firm is expected to keep the solar power operations separate from its consolidated earnings since there is little connection with its main telecommunications business, the report said.

If the project moves forward, [Softbank](#) will likely adopt solar panels produced by Sharp Corp., with which it has dealings in mobile phones.

Debate has picked up in Japan on a shift toward clean and renewable energy sources since the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant was hit by a

monster tsunami causing radiation to leak into the air, soil and sea.

Prime Minister Naoto Kan has scrapped a national energy policy plan under which nuclear reactors would meet half of Japan's energy needs by 2030 and advocated making renewables "key pillars" of the [energy](#) mix.

At this week's Group of Eight summit in Deauville, France, he is set to outline a "Sunrise Plan" to install solar panels on all suitable buildings and homes in Japan by 2030, the Kyodo News agency has reported.

(c) 2011 AFP

Citation: Japan's Softbank announces solar power plan (2011, May 25) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-05-japan-softbank-solar-power.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.