

# REN21 renewable energy report shows healthy growth

July 28 2011, by Bob Yirka

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An annual report published by the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21) shows that despite a troublesome worldwide economy over the past year, international investment in renewable energy sources continues to be strong.

REN21, established in 2005 to bring together groups of people from many countries and backgrounds to create what has become known as the REN21 Global Status Report, uses a myriad of resources to combine and analyze data with the goal of providing a clear and concise review of the current state of worldwide [renewable energy](#) policy and use.

[The current report](#), shows that in a time period that saw a three month long oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, an earthquake and tsunami, and resulting [nuclear disaster](#) in Japan, a western fiscal crises felt most noticeably in Europe and the “Arab Spring” uprisings in the Middle East, investment and construction in the renewable energy sector has grown to such an extent that renewable resources accounted for 20% of global energy consumption, and by the end of 2010, renewables had comprised one quarter of global power capacity from all sources delivering nearly a fifth of the world’s power supply.

The report also showed that remarkably, over 50% of renewable energy resources are now located in developing countries, which technically still includes China, a country that despite international headlines concerning the number of new coal fired power plants going up every year, also led the world in deployment of new wind turbines and solar thermal

installations.

It should also be noted that in the report, only the following are considered to be renewable energy resources: wind, solar photovoltaic (PV), solar thermal, solar hot water heating, biomass, biofuels, geothermal, hydropower and ocean energy. Notably absent is nuclear power.

Some interesting statistics emerge, such as the fact that [renewable energy sources](#) accounted for almost 11% of domestic energy production in the United States, an increase of over five and a half percent from the previous year, even as many in Washington have sought to cut government investment in renewable resources. Also intriguing is that 118 countries had at least some type of renewable energy policy or goals by the early part of 2011, suggesting that renewable resources are likely to become the major source of energy worldwide in the coming years.

One of the hallmarks of the report is its optimistic nature. Instead of highlighting failures or countries that are behind in instituting renewable energy resources, the paper, initially written entirely by Eric Martinot, with input from many international contributors, of course, focuses on advances made and areas where there appears to be hope of change; to that end, REN21 has also started a new project it calls the [Renewable Interactive Map](#), which allows anyone interested to view graphically what is going on worldwide in the renewable energy field.

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