

Warm countries launch Sun-energy alliance

December 1 2015, by Mari ette Le Roux



Construction takes place at Roha Dyechem solar plant in Bhadla, some 225 km north of Jodhpur, in the western Indian state of Rajasthan

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched in Paris an alliance of 121 sun-drenched countries, rich and poor, to dramatically boost the use of solar power.

The alliance issued a declaration vowing to mobilise more than \$1 trillion (940 billion euros) in investment by 2030 for the "massive deployment" of affordable solar power.

Modi, speaking on the sidelines of a 195-nation United Nations climate

summit in Paris, said the Sun could help move the world to a safer path.

"The vast majority of humanity is blessed with generous sunlight round the year. Yet many are also without any source of power," Modi, father of the International Solar Alliance, told world leaders Monday.

"We want to bring [solar energy](#) into our lives and homes by making it cheaper, more reliable and easier to connect to grid," Modi added.

"Today, when the energy sources of our industrial age have put our planet in peril, the world must turn to the Sun to power our future."

Modi has nevertheless argued that rich nations have no right to stop the poor from using fossil fuels such as coal and oil, which are blamed for warming the planet, to power their economic development.

"We still need conventional energy—we need to make it clean, not impose an end to its use," the Indian leader told the summit.

Solar paradox

But sharing a stage with French President Francois Hollande at the solar alliance launch, the Indian leader said Sun's energy was a way not only to bring electricity to more people in poor areas, but also to enable "growth with a lighter carbon footprint."



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France and India are members of the new group, which includes African, Asian, Middle eastern, American, European and island countries which lie between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn.

Hollande said the alliance would enable a transfer of funds and technology from rich members to poorer ones "to reduce inequalities and ensure development".

"We can no longer accept this paradox ... that countries with the biggest solar energy potential represent only a small part of global solar electricity production. These countries house the majority of the global population, and it is in these same countries that there is limited access

to electricity."

Analysts said the scheme was a sign of India's determination to harness the Sun's power.

"This partnership is another example of Prime Minister Modi continuing to show his strong commitment to expand renewable energy in India and will undoubtedly complement India's efforts to build 100 gigawatts of solar energy by 2022, said Rhys Gerholdt, climate spokesman at the World Resources Institute.

India will host the alliance secretariat and fund its operations for five years until 2021, said Modi.

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Citation: Warm countries launch Sun-energy alliance (2015, December 1) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-12-countries-sun-energy-alliance.html>

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