

COP28 host UAE pledges to triple renewables

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The Al Dhafra Solar Photovoltaic Independent Power Producer project, in the United Arab Emirates' capital Abu Dhabi, seen on January 31, 2023.

The oil-rich United Arab Emirates said it would triple renewable energy production as part of a raft of environmental initiatives announced on

Monday, months before it hosts UN climate talks.

The UAE, one of the world's biggest exporters of emissions-producing [crude oil](#), also unveiled national strategies on hydrogen and electric cars.

Few details were revealed about the new policies, announced five months before the COP28 talks in Dubai where nearly 200 nations will wrestle with how to tackle [global warming](#) and its impacts.

Ministers approved an "updated national energy strategy" that aims to "triple the contribution of renewable energy over the next seven years", Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Dubai's ruler, said after a cabinet meeting.

Up to 200 billion dirhams (\$54 billion) will be invested over the same period to meet growing electricity demand, he said in a statement.

Another initiative "aims to consolidate the country's position as a producer and exporter of low-emission hydrogen over the next eight years" by developing supply chains and infrastructure, and setting up a research and development center, Sheikh Mohammed said.

The UAE, a desert nation of about 10 million people, most of them expatriates, will also build a national network of charging stations as part of a "national policy for electric vehicles".

Chinese-based WeRide will receive the country's first national license for self-driving cars, the statement added.

The UAE's hosting of the November-December COP negotiations has been criticized by climate activists who question whether one of the world's biggest oil producers should have such a key role in the fight against global warming.

The Gulf monarchy argues that oil remains indispensable to the [global economy](#) and is pushing the merits of carbon capture—the process of removing [carbon dioxide](#), the main greenhouse gas, as fuel is burned, or from the air.

In 2021, ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, the UAE said it was targeting net zero domestic carbon emissions by 2050—a calculation that does not include pollution from exported oil.

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