

# The UAE: A Leader and Partner for Climate Action

In a region with extreme heat and scarce natural water sources, the UAE is taking **aggressive action** to meet the global climate challenge and believes **low-carbon investments will support economic diversification, growth and job creation**. The first Middle Eastern nation to sign the Paris Agreement and home to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the UAE is committed to **global partnership** and domestic policy for a low-carbon future. The UAE has brought the cost of solar power below that of natural gas, enabling a rapid transition to renewable energy, and operates one of the world's largest carbon capture systems, to reduce the carbon impact of heavy industry and energy exports. The UAE was also the first MENA country to commit to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

**Cooperation with the United States is also central to the UAE's climate plan.** At the White House Leaders Summit on Climate in April 2021, the UAE joined with the US to announce the **Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate**. As a significant global investor in sustainable energy, the UAE is building solar and wind projects across the US, collaborating with the US to establish "Mission Innovation," a partnership to double clean energy R&D within 5 years, and working **together with the US** on implementation of the \$50 million UAE-Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund, which is building solar power plants in 16 countries.

## The UAE's Climate Leadership



UAE-US cooperation is driving climate action. On a visit to Masdar City in Abu Dhabi in 2016, then US Vice President Joe Biden discussed renewable energy solutions with the UAE's current Special Envoy for Climate HE Dr. Sultan Al Jaber.



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- The UAE has **pioneered renewable energy in the heart of the hydrocarbon industry**. Resulting from over 15 years of R&D and policy work, solar is now available at 1.35 cents per kilowatt hour, the lowest rate in the world and the cheapest daytime power source compared to all other options in the Middle East. The UAE has three of the world's largest solar plants and is rapidly building more.
- **The UAE has pledged to achieve net zero emissions by 2050**. This builds on the UAE's second UNFCCC Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submitted in December 2020, which made it the first country in the region to commit to an economy-wide reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.  
**Rapid deployment of renewable energy projects is helping to reduce the UAE's carbon footprint.**  
Operating three of the world's largest and lowest-cost solar plants – along with the expansion of civilian nuclear generating capacity – is contributing to the UAE's energy diversification.
- **The UAE is working to lower the carbon impact of hydrocarbons**. Recognizing that the world will continue to rely on oil and gas for now, the UAE is a leader in carbon capture, and is reducing the carbon intensity of its production operations.

## UAE-US Bilateral Initiatives



- The UAE and US, with support from other international partners, launched the **Agricultural Innovation Mission for Climate** to accelerate agricultural innovation and assist subsistence farmers suffering from climate change effects.
- Special Envoy Kerry **traveled to the UAE** in April 2021, where he discussed UAE-US climate cooperation with his Emirati counterparts. While in the UAE, he attended the first **Regional Climate Dialogue** in Abu Dhabi alongside 11 nations from the Middle East.
- **The UAE's Masdar has made investments in 10 US solar and wind projects** in Nebraska, Texas, California, and New Mexico.
- **The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** partnered with the UAE to develop the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology, today part of Khalifa University.

## International Engagement



- **To date, the UAE has invested in renewable energy ventures with a total value of approximately \$16.8 billion across the globe**, from the UK to India to Uzbekistan. The UAE provides \$1 billion of aid for renewables to more than 40 countries, with a special focus on island and least-developed nations.
- In January 2021, **the UAE launched the Abu Dhabi Hydrogen Alliance**, which will advance low-carbon green and blue hydrogen in emerging international markets and help build a substantial hydrogen economy in the UAE.
- **IRENA opened its headquarters in the Abu Dhabi in 2009**, marking the first time an international organization with global membership was headquartered in the Middle East.

## Testimonials

### John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate (April 7, 2021)

"The leadership of the UAE, I think among all the nations in that region, have been singularly understanding of the need for their shift [on climate and energy], and have for a number of years now...They have already been engaged in some of that diversification and investment in alternative and renewable. Now much more."

### Jennifer Granholm, US Secretary of Energy (April 23, 2021)

"Agriculture is such a critical piece of the climate action puzzle. The United States thanks the UAE for accelerating the research and development necessary to lower emissions from that sector. The US is proud to join you as an inaugural member of the Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate initiative."



For more information about the UAE's climate initiatives, visit <https://www.uae-embassy.org/about-uae/climate>