Spain solar energy for the environment

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Spain is poised to become a major contributor to Europe"s renewable energy landscape, supported by its robust solar potential and favorable market conditions. In 2023, Spain is on track to increase its solar capacity by 4 GW.

Government policy is driving a powerful movement towards renewable energy in Spain, especially solar, which utilizes the country"s plentiful sunshine to provide clean power and work for ...

Spain"s total wind generation capacity, its prime renewable source in recent years, has doubled since 2008. Solar energy capacity, meanwhile, has increased by a factor of eight over the same...

In 2020, solar capacity in Spain sat at 13.2 gigawatts (GW). By 2030, under current policy and investment plans, that capacity is set to exceed 72 GW - a more than five-fold increase in a decade. And it is not just utility-scale solar that is grabbing the headlines - rooftop solar is also popping up throughout Spain.

Spain"s proposals, set to be adopted by the cabinet in coming weeks, spell out an ambitious target to draw 100 per cent of the country"s electricity from renewables by 2050. The plan also aims ...

By Rapid Transition Alliance Staff, originally published by Rapid Transition Alliance

The Franciso Pizaro solar farm"s status as the biggest solar farm in Europe is likely to be short-lived, but the next project that takes the throne is destined to be a fellow compatriot. Solar energy in Spain is set to rapidly surge in the next eight years, demonstrating the effectiveness of national leadership combined with local flexibility and cooperative business models. The result is a country making headway towards its target of generating 74 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030 and 100 % by 2050, revealingly in contrast to the UK where, during an energy crisis, the refusal of permission for solar farms reportedly added ?100 million to energy bills.

In 2020, solar capacity in Spain sat at 13.2 gigawatts (GW). By 2030, under current policy and investment plans, that capacity is set to exceed 72 GW - a more than five-fold increase in a decade. And it is not just utility-scale solar that is grabbing the headlines - rooftop solar is also popping up throughout Spain. In 2021, rooftop solar on private properties increased by 102 percent compared to the previous year, as domestic self-consumption grew from 19% in 2020 to 32 percent of the total in 2021.

Spain"s heritage of cooperative business structures is also helping to unleash the power of the sun. Cooperatives in Spain date back to the mediaeval guilds but became more widespread during the 19th century through the farming cooperative movement. Thanks to a variety of policy changes at a national level and the legislative flexibility afforded to devolved local authorities, solar energy cooperatives have blossomed

throughout Spain as high energy prices dramatically reduce the payback time of installing solar systems and local communities push ahead with becoming energy self-sufficient.

The acceleration of solar generation capacity in Spain could not come any sooner. Chaos and volatility across international fossil fuel markets, and Russia"s weaponisation of fossil fuel exports, have made many energy importing nations acutely vulnerable to price fluctuations, while driving inflation ever-higher and pushing millions into destitution. Pressures are being felt at every level of society, and there are real concerns that tensions could reach a breaking point.

As a net-importer of energy, Spain has been particularly impacted by surging fossil fuel prices across oil, coal, and gas markets. In 2020, around 68% of Spain"s total energy needs were met by energy imports. While Spain"s energy system is less intertwined with Russian gas compared to its European partners, Germany and Italy, Russian LNG still accounted for nearly 12% of Spanish gas imports in May 2022. Achieving energy independence is a major driver for renewable generation in Spain, and its sun and wind are its greatest untapped resources.

The global surge in solar power, from Spain to Namibia, has been made possible by the dramatic fall in costs over the last decade. From 2009 to 2019, the price of electricity from solar generation declined by 89%. The sharp fall in the cost of solar generation, which means it now produces the cheapest electricity ever, was the result of a virtuous cycle. With greater levels of deployment, prices fall as manufacturers benefit from economies of scale, which then entices new manufacturers to enter the space, further driving down costs and improving technology. This process of learning and improving means that the more solar humanity builds, the cheaper the energy generated will become.

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