



SPECIAL EVENT

On the occasion of the International Day of Clean Energy 2026

26 January from 10 AM to 12 PM, UN HQ, CR12

Clean energy is a cornerstone of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and essential to achieving the Paris Agreement on climate change. Achieving SDG 7, ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all, is vital to advancing the SDGs, meeting the 1.5 °C climate goal, and delivering equity, dignity and opportunity for all.

SDG 7 stands out as a beacon of progress within the 2030 Agenda. Today, nearly 92% of the global population has access to basic electricity, up markedly over the past decade, while clean cooking access has increased from about 64% to 74%. Clean energy technologies are driving a new energy age, powering homes, businesses, and economies, improving public health, advancing gender equality, and creating around 35 million decent jobs worldwide. More than 90% of new renewable power is now cheaper than the lowest-cost new fossil fuel alternative. Clean energy, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the projected US\$3.3 trillion global energy investment in 2025, represents one of the 21st century's greatest economic opportunities.

Yet progress remains insufficient. Some 666 million people still lack electricity, and 2.1 billion rely on polluting fuels for cooking. Renewable energy deployment must triple, and energy efficiency gains must double annually by 2030 to align with a 1.5°C-compatible net-zero pathway. Clean energy investment is also deeply imbalanced: Africa holds 60% of the world's best solar resources but receives just 2% of global clean energy investment. To achieve universal access and keep 1.5°C within reach, annual global clean energy investment must more than triple by 2030, particularly in Africa, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS. Investing in clean energy is central to strengthening energy security, affordability, innovation, and inclusion in and benefits from the digital economy for all.

To accelerate progress, the General Assembly, through resolution 80/142, called for the implementation of an updated Global Plan of Action for the extended Decade of Sustainable Energy for All to 2030, as presented in the Secretary-General's report A/80/374. At UNFCCC COP30, world leaders reaffirmed the central role of clean energy in addressing the climate crisis, while underscoring the immediate need for closing the access gap in clean cooking. Importantly, in 2026, SDG 7 will undergo its third in-depth review at the High-Level Political Forum, assessing progress and opportunities for closing remaining gaps toward 2030, in a manner consistent with just and inclusive transitions needed for a future post-2030 development framework.

Celebrated annually on 26 January, the International Day of Clean Energy, established by General Assembly resolution 77/327, provides a global platform to raise awareness, promote action, and foster international cooperation. In 2026, UN DESA, with support of UN-Energy, will convene a special event co-hosted by the Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Sustainable Energy (Denmark, Ethiopia, Norway, and Pakistan). This observance will also mark the launch of the updated Global Plan of Action for the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All until 2030 and contribute to preparations for the SDG 7 review at HLPF 2026. Key priorities of UN-Energy's 2026-2030 Work Programme will also be highlighted in support of these efforts.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

HIGH-LEVEL OPENING

Moderator: Mr. Navid Hanif, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, UN DESA

Keynote address

- H.E. Mr. Lok Bahadur Thapa, President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council

Co-hosts address:

- H.E. Mr. Tesfaye Yilma Sabo, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the UN (tbc)
- H.E. Ms. Merete Fjeld Brattested, Permanent Representative of Norway to the UN
- H.E. Mr. Erik Laursen, Deputy Permanent Representative of Denmark to the UN
- H.E. Mr. Muhammad Usman Iqbal Jadoon, Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN

Remarks:

- Ms. Sofia Borges, Chef de Cabinet, Office of the President of the General Assembly
- Mr. Alexander De Croo, UNDP Administrator and Co-Chair of UN-Energy (video message)
- Ms. Damilola Oginbiyi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All and Co-chair of UN-Energy (video message)
- Ms. Sheila Oparaocha, Executive Director, ENERGIA

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Statements by Member States, UN entities and other accredited IGOs and Major Groups

CLOSING SESSION

Closing