



GLOBAL ENERGY NETWORK INSTITUTE

a solution to global problems

OPEN LETTER to COP21 Climate Change Experts And Negotiators

RE: Negotiating CO₂ Targets vs. Linking Renewables Between Nations

The Global Energy Network Institute (GENI) agrees with the conclusions reached by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its fifth Assessment Report that there is no doubt that global warming is taking place and it is certain that human activity is responsible for the increase in mean global temperatures since the mid-20th century.

The stated goal of the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris is to cap global temperatures in 2050 at 2°C. This requires difficult negotiations to achieve a consensus agreement. **We submit that there is viable solution today that offers the most thoughtful strategy towards sustainable energy development on a national and global scale.** That strategy: **Develop the abundant renewable energy resources in each nation and interconnect them using high-voltage transmission between regions and continents.**

Viewing the climate crisis solely from the viewpoint of the negative effects of greenhouse gases and imposing pressure on governments and companies to limit their industrial capacities is a difficult challenge for negotiators. In parallel with cutting carbon emissions, we invite you to view the COP21 meeting as an opportunity to literally build solutions: clean, reliable renewable energy in all nations – and encourage economic growth, job creation and better health.

Renewable energy sources produce negligible global warming emissions. In contrast to fossil fuel generation, renewables do not strain the water supply by competing with agriculture and drinking water systems. In addition to reducing global warming emissions, renewables offer significant public health benefits and decrease overall social costs by reducing the health issues caused by water and air pollution.

The Unknown Fact: The untapped potential of solar, wind, hydro and geothermal can power all global electrical demand. Renewable energy technologies are now cost-competitive with fossil fuel production. Numerous case studies have repeatedly shown that renewable energy can be rapidly deployed to provide the majority share of future electricity needs. **Several countries have reached 100% renewable today!**

The renewable energy industry is more labor-intensive and can be a significant source for job creation in every country. More jobs are created for each unit of electricity generated

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from renewable sources than from fossil fuels. Additionally, growth in the renewable energy industry creates positive economic “ripple” effects. Local governments can collect taxes from renewable energy projects, which can support vital public services, especially in rural communities where projects are often located. Renewable energy projects keep money circulating within the local economy, and in most nations renewable electricity production reduces the need to spend money on imported coal and natural gas.

Renewable energy is already providing affordable energy solutions worldwide, and can help stabilize energy prices in the future. The cost of renewable energy technology has dropped steadily, and is projected to decline further. In areas with strong wind resources, wind power competes directly with fossil fuels today. The costs of renewable energy decline as industries mature and markets take advantage of economies of scale.

While renewable facilities require upfront investments to construct, once built they operate at very low cost and for most renewable technologies the fuel is free. As a result, renewable energy prices are relatively stable over time. Wind and solar energies are less prone to large-scale failure because they are spread out over a large geographical area. A severe weather event in one location will not cut off power to an entire region and they are generally immune to weather extremes such as water scarcity or hurricanes.

Simply stated, our proposal focusses on building renewable energy resources around the world and interconnecting energy networks between nations and continents, with an emphasis on tapping the abundant renewable energy resources of our planet. Linking energy sources across borders and time zones provides inexpensive, off-peak energy production to areas that need it most and contributes to increasing trade, cooperation and peace between neighboring nations. Interconnecting nations creates mutually beneficial opportunities for utilities that builds trust over time. In fact, in recognition of nations harnessing the power of many, 110 nations are already linking their energy grids across borders around the world. **The solution to climate change is feasible and the solution is here now.**

Leading to Paris, we encourage you to emphasize "*building renewables*", even as you negotiate CO₂ reductions. We urge you to emphasize the linking of your renewable energy resources and interconnecting across borders. This decreases pollution, conflict and poverty in the process. Rather than focusing on how to cut national greenhouse gas emissions, we encourage you to implement the GENI initiative as the primary approach to climate change policy and focus on building infrastructure that has a global and lasting impact.

The GENI initiative gets us off the path of pollution and on the road to renewables.
Your decisions will affect our world for generations. Go green, everywhere, today.

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