

## GOOD NEWS TO START YOUR NEW YEAR

Welcome to a special New Year's edition of the CALL newsletter, compiled by CALL's Good News Interest Group. It brings you *good* news, something we all need: hopeful stories about solar energy, environmental champions, and the excellent economics of renewable energy.

Many may think, "Good news? Really?" We have all been discouraged by the other kind of climate news in 2025, often coming from the United States, but also happening here at home. As renowned climate scientist Katherine Hayhoe reminds us, "[Climate change is the hole in the bucket](#) of every other issue we want to fix: hunger, poverty, health and more. If we don't patch the hole, we can't fix anything."



Photo by iam\_ mediocre:  
[pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)

Today we want to bring you some positive news about "patching the hole", and stories that inspire. Please read on.

*(Note: Our regular newsletter will resume in February. In lieu of regularly scheduled January meetings, there is a January 21st lunch we hope you can attend. See information at the end.)*

## HOPE FROM SOLAR ENERGY

One of the world's big good news stories is about solar energy. An important factor in its increasing global uptake is that it keeps going down in price.

Given that economics is the main driver of this solar revolution, it is not surprising that China, with its fast-growing GDP, is leading the solar transition.



Photo from freepix, AI Generated

Population and rapid industrialization have contributed to China remaining the world's greatest polluter, but it is on a rapid trajectory away from fossil fuels.

- By May of 2025, China had installed the solar power equivalent of an entire gas-powered plant (1GW) every 8 hours<sup>1</sup>.
- Overall, it added [more renewable energy in 2024](#) than the rest of the world combined.
- China's high-speed solar expansion means it offset the power that might have been generated by coal and its associated emissions. [Estimates say that coal generation would have been 50% higher in the last five years](#) without the solar power increase.
- In the first half of 2025, [China's emissions were down one percent](#), despite electricity use going up. Emissions linked to electricity production were [down 3 percent](#), mainly because of solar.
- Given its recent downward trend, some analysts argue China's emissions [have already peaked](#), while others are more guarded.



Photo by Kindel Media: Pexels

- China is exporting solar technology to a world eager for affordable energy: [the global production of solar energy is doubling every 3 years](#).

Some of this global increase is because of developing nations, which are also taking up solar in a big way, slowing their emissions.

A few examples:

- in Pakistan, a solar power kit is routinely [included in a dowry](#), causing demand on the public grid to decrease. Pakistan installed [more solar in a single year](#) than Canada has in its entire history!
- India has emerged as a global leader in solar energy adoption. Key initiatives in setting targets and policies have propelled India to [become one of the largest solar energy markets in the world](#).
- Bangladesh [has provided solar home systems](#) to millions of households, improving access to clean and reliable electricity. This has had a direct impact on education, healthcare, and income generation in rural areas.

- Solar power [helps keep the power on during disasters](#) - that happened in Jamaica [during Hurricane Melissa](#). For many, solar power kept working, when the conventional grid was knocked out.

Even the worst polluters from wealthy nations are also shifting to solar:

- California, the world's fourth largest economy, decreased natural gas used in their 2024 grid by 40% due to offset from renewable energies, primarily solar.<sup>2</sup>
- Several US state governments are bringing in laws to [allow solar panels for balconies](#). Millions of Americans will soon be able to use plug-in panels to take some of their electricity consumption off the grid (Canada, however, is currently MIA in making this an option).
- Saudi Arabia (yes - Saudi Arabia!) has been expanding its solar capacity and aims to have [50% of its electricity from renewables](#) and reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2060. [Eighty-one percent of those renewables are solar](#).
- In Canada, Hydro-Québec announced this year it is investing [\\$10 billion in creating a low-carbon future](#), including solar. The company's president said it is increasing solar capacity because of its lower costs and faster timelines for builds. Homes and businesses are also being given incentives to go solar.



Photo courtesy of <https://www.residentialpanels.org/>

Finally, a solar fun fact: [a study of over 1000 British solar farms with wildflowers](#) concluded these areas more than doubled the number of bumblebees compared to parks with turf grass.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPIONS

Here are some successful environmental activists you may not know. The kind of people who inspire.

Swedish-British billionaire Johan Eliasch uses his fortune for conservation. He [saved 400,000 acres of the Amazon rainforest](#) by purchasing a logging company there – and stopping the logging. He established the Rainforest Trust which has safeguarded 37 million acres of rainforest globally. He co-heads Cool Earth, working with indigenous people to protect their rainforest communities.



Photo Courtesy of coolearth.org



Photo courtesy University of Alberta,  
School of Public Health

Siila Watt-Cloutier is a [Canadian Inuk activist and advocate for the north](#). She launched the world's first international legal action on climate change because of what was happening in the Arctic. She has championed the causes of the Inuit internationally and received numerous honours, including the United Nations' Champion of the Earth Award. Currently, Watt-Cloutier is the inaugural Indigenous Climate Fellow, focussing on developing new climate-conscious leaders, at the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, University of Victoria.

American [businessman Bob Keefe](#) is executive director of E2, a non-partisan group of over 11,000 business owners, investors and entrepreneurs advocating for clean energy and environmental protection policies. One example of his success: Keefe played a key role in the passage of the California Clean Car Standards, America's first legislation to limit global warming emissions. He firmly believes the economics of clean energy will prevail.



## AND SPEAKING OF ECONOMICS...

Here's how clean energies help economies.



Photo from Pexels.com,  
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- Clean energy investment [hit \\$2 trillion worldwide](#) in 2024.
- In the first half of 2025, [a record \\$386 billion was invested globally](#) in new renewable energy development. That's up ten per cent from the previous year.

- The UN says [clean energy jobs now outnumber fossil fuel jobs](#). The clean energy sector employs almost 35 million people worldwide.

- Also on jobs: the International Energy Agency says electricity represents [more than three-quarters of all energy job additions](#) in the last five years. Of these job additions, solar is the prime driver - it's responsible for half the job increase since 2019.



Photo from [IRENA.org](https://www.irena.org)

- How about cost? The UN reports that [“over 90% of new renewables cost less than the cheapest new fossil option.”](#)

- And Canada? The country’s investment in clean energy technology and infrastructure grew by [19 percent in 2024 to US\\$35 billion](#). Sounds good, but we’re adding a heads up on this - the president of a non-partisan business, labour and Indigenous group called New Economy Canada says we [need to continue the momentum](#) through policies and regulations if investment growth is to continue.

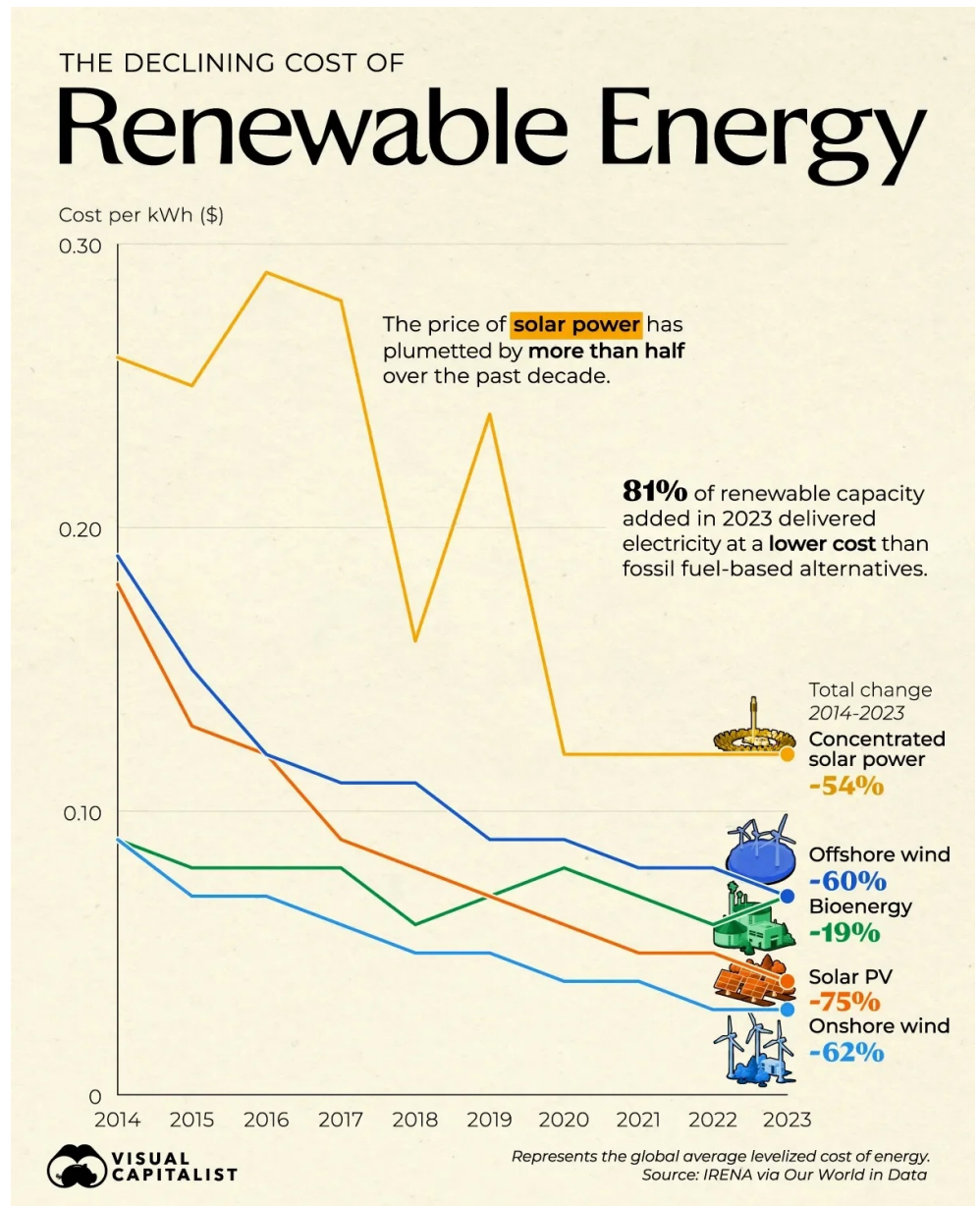


Chart courtesy of [visualcapitalist.com](https://visualcapitalist.com)

## A THOUGHT FOR THE NEW YEAR



Photo Courtesy of [janegoodall.org](http://janegoodall.org)

Jane Goodall was one of the world's great advocates for the environment, who made hope one of her resounding themes. Goodall died Oct. 1, 2025. In March, she [recorded a message to be aired after her death](#). "Even today," she said, speaking directly to the TV camera and hence to all of us, "when the planet is dark, there still is hope. Don't lose hope. If you lose hope, you become apathetic and do nothing... You have it in your power to make a difference. Don't give up."

Wishing everyone the best for 2026 – and for maintaining, and acting in, hope.

The Good News Interest Group

Michael Barkley, Joy Crysdale, Christie MacCallum, Wendy Quirion  
Special thanks to Elaine Graham for both her research and wise input at this project's inception.

## AND A FINAL NOTE

### UPCOMING EVENTS

While CALL will not hold meetings in January, please mark your calendars for **Wednesday, January 21 at 12:00 pm** as we gather at the Hothouse Café to celebrate our accomplishments and the new year. An RSVP invitation will be sent to you early in 2026.

### SOURCES FOR GOOD NEWS

If you are interested in receiving good climate and environment news on a regular basis, here are some of the sources the Good News Interest Group follows. All subscriptions to these are free.

*Fix the News* - all kinds of good news, including climate <https://fixthenews.com/archive?sort=new>

*Talking Climate*, Katherine Hayhoe - climate only  
<https://www.talkingclimate.ca>

*WARP* - also all kinds of good news, including climate  
<https://www.warpnews.org>

*We Don't Have Time* - climate business news  
<https://www.wedonthavetime.org/our-community>



[Donate to CALL](#)

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bill McKibben, *The New Yorker*, July 9, 2025; *4.6 Billion Years on, the Sun is having a Moment*, drawn from his book, *Here Comes the Sun: A Last Chance for the Climate and a Fresh Chance for Civilization*.

<sup>2</sup> Bill McKibben, *The New Yorker*, July 9, 2025; *4.6 Billion Years on, the Sun is having a Moment*, drawn from his book, *Here Comes the Sun: A Last Chance for the Climate and a Fresh Chance for Civilization*.