



# Net Zero by 2050: IEA

## Why in News

Recently, the [International Energy Agency's \(IEA\)](#) released its **Net Zero Emissions (NZE) Roadmap** - named '**Net Zero by 2050**'.

- It is the **World's first comprehensive energy roadmap** which comes ahead of the [United Nations Conference of the Parties \(COP\) 26 climate change](#) convention in Glasgow, Scotland in November 2021.
- '[Net zero emissions](#)' refers to achieving an overall balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and greenhouse gas emissions taken out of the atmosphere.

## Key Points

### ▪ Need:

- Climate **pledges by governments till date even if fully achieved would fall well short of what is required** to bring global energy-related **carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions to net zero by 2050** and give the world an even chance of **limiting the global temperature rise to 1.5 °C**.

### ▪ Aim of the Roadmap:

#### ◦ Examine Impact:

- To **examine the impacts of announced NZE pledges** and what they might mean for the energy sector.

#### ◦ New Energy Pathway:

- To **develop a new energy-sector pathway towards achieving NZE globally by 2050**.

#### ◦ Recommend Governments:

- To set out key policy **recommendations for governments to act upon in the near-term, and a long-term agenda** for change to achieve net-zero goals, including with a view to reaching other [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

### ▪ Principles to be Followed:

#### ◦ Technology Neutrality:

- Technology neutrality, with **adoption driven by costs, technological readiness**, country and market conditions and trade-offs with wider societal goals.
- **Technology Neutrality** is generally described as the **freedom of individuals and organizations to choose the most appropriate and suitable technology** to their needs and requirements for development, acquisition, use or commercialisation, **without dependencies on knowledge involved as information or data**.

- **Universal Cooperation:**
  - Universal international cooperation, in which **all countries contribute to net zero**, with an eye to a 'just transition' and where advanced economies lead.
- **Minimizing Volatility:**
  - An **orderly transition** that seeks to **minimise stranded assets** where possible, while **ensuring energy security and minimising volatility in energy markets**.
- **Milestones Set by the Roadmap:** More than **400 milestones** to guide the global journey to net zero by 2050 which include:
  - **Fossil Fuels:**
    - **No investment in new fossil fuel supply projects, and no further final investment decisions for new unabated coal plants.**
  - **Vehicle sale:**
    - **No sales of new internal combustion engine passenger cars by 2035.**
  - **Electricity Generation:**
    - The **global electricity sector should reach net-zero emissions by 2040.**
    - It calls for annual additions of **solar power to reach 630 gigawatts by 2030**, and those of **wind power to reach 390 gigawatts**.
      - Together, this is **four times the record level set in 2020.**
    - It suggests the following on global electricity generation towards 2050:
      - **714% more renewables.**
      - **104% more nuclear.**
      - **93% less coal** (and all remaining coal with [Carbon Capture and Storage \(CCS\)](#)).
      - **85% less natural gas** (with 73% of that with CCS).
- **Significance:**
  - It is supposed to provide a **pathway to bridge the current gap between rhetoric and reality in reducing [GreenHouse Gas \(GHG\)](#) emissions** from the energy and industry sectors.
- **Criticism:**
  - **Ignorance:**
    - IEA **did not consider historical emitters**, ignoring the principle of 'climate justice'.
    - **Developed countries benefited from the [Industrial Revolution](#)** at the cost of emitting GHGs, leading to **climate change**.
    - Hence, **they have the economies to decarbonise, allowing space for poor and developing countries** to get financing and innovation organised to switch to cleaner energy options.
  - **Regulations Needed:**
    - There is potentially an **over-reliance on behavioral change to consume less energy**.
    - **Regulations will be essential** to positively motivate constructive social change in economies.

## International Energy Agency

- IEA is an **autonomous Intergovernmental Organisation** established in 1974 in Paris, France.

- IEA mainly focuses on its energy policies which include **economic development, energy security and environmental protection**. These policies are also known as the 3 E's of IEA.
- India became an **Associate member of IEA in March 2017** but it was in engagement with IEA long before its association with the organization.
  - Recently, India has **inked a [Strategic Partnership Agreement with the IEA](#)** to strengthen cooperation in global energy security, stability and sustainability.
- The **World Energy Outlook Report** is released by the IEA annually.
- Recently, it has released the [India Energy Outlook 2021 Report](#).
- **IEA Clean Coal Centre** is dedicated to providing independent information and analysis on how coal can become a cleaner source of energy, compatible with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

## Way Forward

- The world is facing a **formidable task of transforming the energy sector within 30 years in a cost-effective manner**, even as the world economy more than doubles in size and the global population increases by 2 billion people.
- The need for the world to reach NZE by 2050 lies in the **major interim steps** that need to be taken through 2030 — **to engineer cheap and green energy from hydrogen and renewable energy while making them accessible to all**.

**Source: DTE**

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/net-zero-by-2050-iea>

