

China to build one of earth's biggest solar power stations (21.11.2006)

SHANGHAI (AFP) - China intends to build one of the world's biggest solar power stations at a cost of 765 million dollars, state press have reported.

The 100-megawatt facility, to be built in Dunhuang, an oasis town in northwest China's Gansu province, will be a collaborative effort between the local government and Beijing's Zhonghao New Energy Investment, Xinhua news said Tuesday.

The project will take five-years to construct, it added.

The report followed plans announced by Australia last month to build the world's biggest solar power station, a 154 megawatt behemoth, which the builder said could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 400,000 tonnes a year.

Australia, like the United States, has refused to sign the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, and the station is part of Australia's rethink on national environmental policies that are under sharp criticism at home and abroad.

China for its part, which signed the Kyoto accord in 1998, is the world's second-largest emitter of climate change gases after the United States and the world's largest coal burner.

About 70 percent of China's energy comes from burning the fossil fuel and hundreds more coal-fired power plants are being built every year.

China has set goals for renewable energy to account for 16 percent of its overall energy production by 2020 and to increase energy efficiency per unit of gross domestic product (GDP) by 20 percent over the next four years.

But already there are signs that those targets are being missed, with energy per unit of GDP rising by 0.8 percent in the first half of the year, according to government figures.

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