



Global Alliance for  
Sustainable Energy

PRESS RELEASE

## **FULL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE RENEWABLE ENERGY VALUE CHAIN WILL DRIVE RAPID DECARBONIZATION OF GLOBAL ECONOMY**

Founding members of the Global Alliance for Sustainable Energy address sustainability challenges of renewable industry at COP26 event hosted by GWEC in Glasgow

Alliance brings together 17 founding members including utilities and global players in the solar PV and wind value chains, sector associations and innovation partners

Unique in scope and ambition, the new organization is open to likeminded partners, from industry to civil society, academia and end-users

November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – To accelerate the decarbonization of the global economy and lead a just transition away from fossil fuels, leading actors in the renewable energy industry are committed to working towards the full sustainability of the sector for the benefit of people and the planet, founding members of the Global Alliance for Sustainable Energy told the COP26 climate conference.

As we build a net-zero economy that will rely on solar PV and wind power for almost 70% of its power needs, it's not enough for electricity to be green, it must also take full consideration of its social and environmental impacts along the entire value chain. That's the vision that has spurred 17 founding members from across the renewable energy value chain and the sector's innovation ecosystem to come together to create the Global Alliance for Sustainable Energy this year and share their vision with delegates at the climate talks in Glasgow.

"The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change made clear that we are on course for a 1.5C temperature increase in the next two decades, so we have to act urgently. That's why we are launching this initiative to go beyond the concept of green electricity," said **Salvatore Bernabei, representative of the Alliance's founding members and CEO of Enel Green Power**, at the event. "The Global Alliance for Sustainable Energy involves industry players, service providers, civil society and academia to get a broader perspective and address the entire renewable energy value chain in a coordinated way, the environmental and technological impacts as well as those on society. From the extraction of raw materials all the way to the dismantling of the plants or their second life, everything should be sustainable and have the lowest possible impact."

The Global Alliance for Sustainable Energy brings together utility companies from diverse geographies, major manufacturers in the wind power and solar PV supply chains as well as sector associations and innovation partners. The 17 founding members are, in alphabetical order: **3M, Adani Green Energy Ltd., EDP, Eletrobras, Enel Green Power, Global Solar Council (GSC), Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC), Goldwind, Iberdrola, JA Solar, Nordex Group, NTPC Limited, Politecnico di Milano, Politecnico di Torino, ReNew Power, Risen Energy and Trina Solar.**

Making strong progress towards sustainable energy won't be possible if industry works on its own - the active involvement of other players, such as civil society organizations, is key. **Meredith Adler, Executive Director of Student Energy**, moderated the panel discussion and commented: "We represent young people working to



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become the next generation of energy leaders and we are very excited to see the launch of the Alliance and be part of it. As we are talking about jobs, the future, and the build-out of energy in regions currently lacking power access, a lot of that will be happening with young people who will be the workforce. But also, they are pushing for a more holistic approach on the energy transition especially when it comes to human rights, supply chain and other crucial pieces.”

**Gianni Chianetta, CEO of the Global Solar Council**, told the conference: “Solar PV had 39% global share in new power generation in 2020, which makes us confident the sector can ramp up to reach the capacity needed to align with a net-zero pathway and enable 20 million solar jobs by 2050. But economic competitiveness isn’t enough: it’s time for solar and wind to lead the transition and fill the gaps in access to clean power. The Global Alliance for Sustainable Energy is fundamental to capitalize on the links between renewables and the UN Sustainable Development Goals and disseminate sustainable values along the whole value chain.”

“For a long time we thought we had a sustainable product because we were producing sustainable energy, but over the last few years it has become very clear that to be sustainable you need to be sustainable in every area of your operations,” said **Stewart Mullin, Chief Operating Officer of GWEC**, which hosted the event at the Glasgow conference venue. “That’s why the wind and solar industries are coming together to ensure the two key forms of renewable energy are sustainable from design to delivery.”

For industrial members of the Alliance, the initiative represents the latest step in their journey as they raise their ambition on sustainable energy.

“We need to consider three key themes: urgency, science, and collaboration,” said **Gayle Schueller, Senior Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer, 3M**. “3M established its first renewable energy goals in 2015, and we thought targeting 25% renewable energy use by 2025 was a really bold goal for our global footprint across 70 different countries. We achieved that in three years. Then we doubled it in 2019 and committed to 50% by 2025 with an end commitment of 100% renewable energy use by 2050. We have days already in 2021 when we are running on 50% renewable electricity. The movement on renewable energy is happening much faster than we ever anticipated. But progress is uneven in the world, and there are places where it is still difficult to get that renewable energy. Thus, with the Global Alliance for Sustainable Energy, we have to keep working and collaborating for inclusive and sustainable deployment of renewables, and promote carbon neutrality commitments which are built on science.”

The Global Alliance for Sustainable Energy aims to redefine the meaning of ‘sustainable energy’ and embrace all those working in and impacted by renewables, joining efforts with civil society, end-users, policymakers, academic institutions, materials suppliers, Original Equipment Manufacturers and likeminded utilities to interface with governments and investors. The initiative is fully aligned with the 2030 agenda set out in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The 17 members of the Alliance are set to work together to tackle the sustainability challenges in this transition and bring results both in the short and the medium term. They start their collaboration by focusing on four key areas where they can achieve quick wins for the sustainability of the renewable energy industry, aligning different players by setting and harmonizing standards and metrics, around which common targets can be set, and aligning around best practices. The focus areas are: **net-zero emissions and CO<sub>2</sub> footprints; circular economy and design; human rights; and the water footprints.**



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The alliance is open to new members who share this vision and can contribute concretely towards the ultimate goal of becoming a truly sustainable industry within the transition to net-zero by 2050.

- ENDS -

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

The Global Alliance for Sustainable Energy ([www.sustainable-energy.eco](http://www.sustainable-energy.eco)) is an independent organization created to drive progress towards the full sustainability of the renewable energy industry. The Alliance is committed to the widespread adoption of best practices and the definition of sustainability standards across the solar and wind energy value chains, through education and partnerships. The Alliance aims to align the global renewables sector with the ultimate goal of becoming a 100% sustainable industry, defining concrete steps now in order to achieve net zero by 2050.

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