

How Did the UAE Mark the International Day of Clean Energy?

This year saw the inaugural International Day of Clean Energy take place on January 26th, as nations around the world took the opportunity to showcase their contributions towards a more sustainable future for us all. The initiative was announced in August of last year, after significant efforts by the UAE and others to bring the day into being.

To mark its occurrence, the Emirati government took a look back at a momentous 12 months in the country, in which the UAE adopted its Energy Strategy 2050, launched its National Hydrogen Strategy and hosted COP28, the climate summit attended by leaders from all over the world. What's more, 2023 was also recognised as the Year of Sustainability in the UAE – and the success of the venture has resulted in the Emirati authorities extending it into 2024.

A landmark day

It was initially announced that the world would celebrate its first ever International Day of Clean Energy in 2024 in August of last year. The proclamation came as the culmination of a lengthy campaign by the UAE to introduce the date into the global calendar and the resolution to introduce it was jointly submitted by the UAE and Panama.

Accordingly, the UN General Assembly approved the resolution late last summer and chose January 26th as the date of commemoration due to the fact that it is the same day that the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) – which is headquartered in the Emirati capital – was first founded.

“Launching an International Day of Clean Energy is a powerful way to remind the world of its commitment to universal clean energy access and meeting the Paris Agreement climate goal,” [explained Francesco La Camera](#), who currently serves as the Director-General of IRENA. The aforementioned Paris Agreement goal was a collective promise made in 2015 by nations around the world to limit global warming to a maximum of 2°C (and a preferred threshold of 1.5°C) compared to pre-Industrial Revolution levels.

Leading by example

As well as being instrumental in bringing the event into being, the UAE has also sought to lead by example on environmental issues – especially in the past 12 months. 2023 saw the country adopt its UAE Energy Strategy 2050, which plans to eliminate coal from the national energy portfolio, increase the contribution of renewable sources, maximise efficiency and reduce emissions.

Meanwhile, the UAE also established a framework of action to establish two hydrogen oases and identified potential areas of three more. In this manner, the UAE hopes to become a leading light in the field of green hydrogen, proliferating the clean power source around the world, creating jobs at both home and abroad and slashing emissions once more.

Finally, the UAE also hosted the COP28 climate summit in November and December. At the conference, the nation was instrumental in ensuring that the draft resolution was agreed upon by attendant states. For the first time, the documentation included reference to “fossil fuels” and transitioning to more sustainable forms of energy, representing a major breakthrough in the history of COP conferences. As such, the International Day of Clean Energy has shone brightly in its first incarnation, and the future looks set to only improve.