

Google investing \$1billion in renewable energy

20th February, 2014



Tech giant Google is investing \$1billion in renewable energies to make its operations totally green. The company hopes to exploit solar energy, wind farms and other forms of alternative energy to power its data centres around the world. Rick Needham, Google's Director of Energy and Sustainability, told reporters: "We've invested over a billion dollars in 15 projects that have the capacity to produce two giga-watts of power around the world." Mr Needham added it was an economic necessity for Google to invest in energy. He said: "Procuring power for ourselves and investing in...renewable power plants...all make business sense. They make sense for us as a company to do. We rely on power for our business."

Mr Needham said Google still has a long way to go before all of its operations are fuelled by renewable energy. He said about 34 per cent of Google's power requirements are sourced from renewables. Needham told reporters it wasn't always easy to meet this target in some parts of the world, saying: "Our goal is to be 100 per cent renewable powered. There are lots of challenges in getting there, not the least of which is operating in many jurisdictions that are in different parts of the world." He added: "At Google we invest in innovative renewable energy projects that have the potential to transform the energy landscape and help provide more clean power to businesses and homes around the world."

Sources: CNBC / RT.com / Guardian LV.com

Writing

The world should set a deadline to use only renewable energy from 2040 and stop using fossil fuels from then. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

tech / giant / renewable energy / sustainability / power / necessity / business sense / operations / meet a target / challenges / innovative / projects / transform / landscape

True / False

- Google says it is planning to compete with the big oil companies. T / F
- Google wants to power all of its operations using renewable energy. T / F
- A Google spokesman said it economically unnecessary to go green. T / F
- The spokesman said it made business sense to invest in renewables. T / F
- Over a third of Google's operations are fuelled by renewables. T / F
- Some countries make it difficult for Google to be 100% green. T / F
- Google said it isn't interested in changing the energy industry. T / F
- Google isn't interested in providing power to homes and businesses. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. operations | a. depend |
| 2. exploit | b. cutting edge |
| 3. capacity | c. wisdom |
| 4. sense | d. use to good advantage |
| 5. rely | e. authorities |
| 6. fuelled | f. businesses |
| 7. requirements | g. change |
| 8. jurisdictions | h. power |
| 9. innovative | i. needs |
| 10. transform | j. powered |

Discussion – Student A

- When do you think the whole world will be powered by renewable energy?
- Why might there be resistance from some countries to go green?
- Should countries that are not going green face penalties?
- What will the global energy situation look like in 100 years from now?
- Could Google become a global leader in providing energy?
- Would you switch to renewable energy even if it was more expensive?
- How would the world be different if all energy came from green sources?
- What do you think oil companies think of renewable energy?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. make its operations totally | a. energy projects |
| 2. other forms of | b. sense |
| 3. it was an economic | c. clean power |
| 4. make business | d. by renewable energy |
| 5. We rely | e. green |
| 6. fuelled | f. necessity |
| 7. it wasn't always easy to meet | g. the energy landscape |
| 8. invest in innovative renewable | h. on power |
| 9. the potential to transform | i. this target |
| 10. provide more | j. alternative energy |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of Google's idea to go 100% renewable?
- How much of your power use comes from green energy?
- Should Google win an award for its commitment to go green?
- What renewable energies are commonly used in your country?
- What potential does your country have for going green?
- Do you think all big companies will follow Google's example?
- Why does Google's idea make business sense?
- How could you be greener?

Spelling

- make its taoieprsno totally green
- otielpx solar energy
- other forms of teiernavtla energy
- energy and anttsiayiulbsi
- an economic yintsese
- nrprgoicu power for ourselves
- 34 per cent of Google's power eequimnrtes
- cseourd from renewables
- operating in many orctiidussjni
- we invest in innvoevati renewable energy projects
- have the pittneaol to transform
- the energy paadlcse

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. h	4. c	5. a
6. j	7. i	8. e	9. b	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Use less power

You think using less power is the best way to go green. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least doable of these (and why): borrowing instead of buying, walking to work or eating less meat.

Role B – Borrowing instead of buying

You think borrowing instead of buying is the best way to go green. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least doable of these (and why): using less power, walking to work or eating less meat.

Role C – Walking to work

You think walking to work is the best way to go green. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least doable of these (and why): borrowing instead of buying, using less power or eating less meat.

Role D – Eating less meat

You think eating less meat is the best way to go green. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least doable of these (and why): borrowing instead of buying, walking to work or using less power.

Speaking – Going Green

Rank these ways to go green with your partner. Put the easiest for you to do at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| • eat less meat | • use heating/air-con less |
| • take short showers | • borrow instead of buying |
| • skip bottled water | • walk/bike to work/school |
| • buy in bulk | • wash clothes in cold water |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.