

US and India set to join UN climate deal and agree on renewables



Asia's largest solar power station, in Gujarat, India
Ashley Cooper/Corbis Documentary/Getty

By Conor Gearin

It would firmly put the Paris deal on the road to becoming a reality.

When he meets with US President Barack Obama on Tuesday, India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, is likely to announce that his country will ratify the [2015 Paris agreement](#) to limit global warming.

[Obama has already said](#) he would use his executive power to make the US ratify the agreement first reached in December and then signed at the UN headquarters in April.

This would clear the [hurdle](#) of getting nations accounting for at least 55 per cent of global carbon emissions to officially join the agreement before it takes effect.

The last roadblock would then be getting enough countries – 55 – to join. So far, [34 countries](#) that make up 49 per cent of emissions have joined.

Need for energy

But India's ability to meet its ambitious climate goals depends on US investment in India's development of clean energy, said a panel hosted by the [World Resources Institute](#) ahead of the meeting. A clean-energy partnership is also on the discussion agenda for Modi and Obama when they meet tomorrow.

India's energy needs are huge: some [240 million people](#) in the country still have no access to electricity.

For the nation to [meet its target of producing 100 gigawatts of solar energy](#) by 2022, it needs financial backing from US investors with interest rates that keep the energy affordable for citizens, says [Ajay Mathur](#), chief spokesperson for India at the Paris climate summit last December. "I think it's eminently doable by 2022," he says. "The devil is in the details."

"The important thing now is [to ask] what can the United States do to help drive more money into India?" says [Andrew Light](#), a former India counsellor for the US Department of State. "We should be looking for a package of creative finance solutions the United States and India can work on and announce."

Striking a deal requires actions on both sides, with India working to reform financial regulations and the US Department of State encouraging private companies to invest, says Light. "Then I think you can really see things accelerate at a much faster pace."

Read more: [UN climate chief: Here's why Paris climate deal will work; Paris is a pragmatic climate deal, even if it is 25 years late](#)