

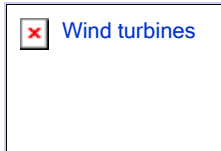
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Kyoto Protocol carbon-cutting mechanism notches up 500th project

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PARIS (AFP) - A market mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol for cutting greenhouse gases recorded its 500th project, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) said.

The 500th scheme under Kyoto's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is for an 8.75-megawatt wind farm in Gujarat, India, designed to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) by more than 15,300 tonnes annually, the Bonn-based UNFCCC said in a press release.

Under the CDM, industrialised countries which have binding targets for cutting greenhouse-gas emissions can offset some of their pollution by investing in emissions-cutting schemes in developing countries.

"The 500th project is an exciting milestone, especially considering that the Kyoto Protocol was ratified just two years ago and that a year ago, less than 100 projects were registered," UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer said.

CDM projects are underway in more than 40 countries.

If they meet expectations, they will have reduced carbon emissions by more than 1.8 billion tonnes by the time Kyoto runs out in 2012, a figure equal to the combined annual emissions of Canada, France, Spain and Switzerland, the UNFCCC said.

The Kyoto Protocol entered into force on February 16 2005.

It does not include the United States, the world's biggest polluter, which itself accounts for nearly a quarter of global emissions. China, the second largest polluter, is not required to make targeted pledges of reductions as it is a developing country.

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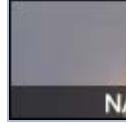
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