

China, LatAm urged to jointly develop renewable energy

MEXICO CITY, Dec. 15 (Xinhua) -- The joint development of renewable energy technology by Latin America and China could provide a major boost for the region, Mexican experts have told Xinhua.

Juan Carlos Belausteguigoitia, a researcher at the Energy and Natural Resources Center of the Mexico Autonomous Institute of Technology, said that joint research could reduce the cost of clean fuels and remove their disadvantage against cheap fossil fuels.

The cost of wind energy has dropped by 30 percent in a decade due to continued research by various nations, including China, he said.

"Research and development is vital. China is a leader in many of these technologies, making an interchange with Latin America highly desirable," added Belausteguigoitia, a former chief environmental economist in Latin America for the World Bank.

Latin America is a big producer of clean hydroelectricity but it must boost the share of wind and solar power in its energy matrix to meet its 2030 targets, said the scholar.

For his part, Antonio Del Rio, director of the Renewable Energy Institute at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), sees the Latin American clean energy market as opportunity for Chinese involvement.

"Chinese companies could invest in collaborative projects with countries in the region to apply systems that can adapt to the meteorological and climate particularities of each area," he said.

Del Rio added that financing was also needed to further develop existing technology. He said Mexico has already made advances in thin-film solar cells but needs money to roll them out.

According to Belausteguigoitia, Latin American governments need to have more favorable public policies to ensure better cooperation with China. Favorable policies have led to Chinese investment in hydropower, wind and solar power projects in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico.