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Eni plans clean energy projects in 3 countries

MILAN (Reuters) – Italian oil major Eni, which has historically invested little in renewable energy given its strong track record in discovering oil and gas, plans renewable energy projects in Egypt, Italy and Pakistan.

As part of a push into green energy, Eni aims to bring 420 megawatts of mostly solar power generation online by 2022 by reusing derelict land linked to existing fossil fuel operations.

The world is currently adding more clean energy capacity than coal, oil and gas combined and Eni joins other oil majors in turning to green energy investments to curb carbon emissions and get a foothold in the fast growing sector.

Last year, Europe's top oil firms

urged governments around the world to introduce a pricing system for carbon emissions as part of a wider push to move to a low-carbon economy.

French oil company Total said this week it was buying high-tech battery maker Saft as it seeks to expand its renewable energy business.

In Italy alone, Eni said yesterday it expects to build more than 220 megawatts of solar power capacity in regions including Liguria, Sardinia, Sicily, Calabria, Puglia and Basilicata for an estimated 200 to 250 million euros.

Eni's existing gas-fired plants will be used in tandem with solar to cover any shortfalls when the sun doesn't shine.