

MONTHLY ZCA CLEANTECH NEWS



The Cleantech Insight You Need

June 2026

Vol. 17

Editor's note

As we enter June, conflict in the Middle East continues to impact fuel prices and supplies. However, amongst the uncertainty a major milestone has been achieved by renewable energy, with wind and solar combining to surpass gas generation in April.

Other positive clean energy news has emerged with a new Anglo-US consortium launched with the intention of developing the UK's first commercial fusion power plant.

But, in a worrying sign, Cleantech for UK reports that early-stage investment in UK cleantech firms has fallen sharply over the past year, with a 'triple squeeze' of factors being blamed for the decline. These includes high industrial energy prices, higher interest rates, and the closure of the Net Zero Innovation Portfolio without a successor.

Looking ahead, June will see a wealth of cleantech events and conferences, including Cleantech Capital Day in Sweden, the European Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW), and Reset Connect, London.

HISTORIC MOMENT AS GLOBAL RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION SURPASSES GAS FOR THE FIRST TIME

New data from Ember has found, that when combined, wind and solar generated more electricity than gas globally for the first month ever.

In April, wind and solar generated 22% of global electricity, compared with 20% from gas. In total the two renewables produced a record 531 TWh of electricity for the month, 54 TWh more than gas generation which was recorded at 477 TWh. Notably this milestone for renewable energy generation occurred during the first full month of the global energy crisis linked to the conflict in the Middle East. The researchers at Ember argue that this highlights how rapidly the growth in wind and solar generation is reshaping the global power mix, even amid fossil fuel market volatility.

In addition, the data shows no evidence of widespread gas-to-coal switching globally, despite ongoing energy security concerns. However we should also note that direct fuel use, rather than electricity, still accounts for almost four fifths of global energy consumption.

Turning roads into power plants:

Road Energy Production System (REPS) is an Austrian startup which recently announced a \$23.6M equity financing round to scale. The company's core product is a patented road power plant that installs directly into existing road infrastructure and harvests energy from trucks and cars driving over it, without disrupting traffic flow or logistics operations.

CLEANTECH INNOVATION SPOTLIGHT



ANGLO-US CONSORTIUM LAUNCHED TO DEVELOP THE UK'S FIRST COMMERCIAL FUSION POWER PLANT



A new Anglo-US consortium has been launched with the intention of developing the UK's first commercial fusion power plant. Formed by Type One Energy, Tokamak Energy, and AECOM, the UK Infinity Fusion Consortium will develop a project that is commercially credible, deployable using existing enabling technologies, and capable of attracting private capital.

The Consortium says that it will build on the UK's significant investment in magnetic confinement fusion technology, supply chain capabilities, regulation, and power plant siting for the government's STEP Fusion programme. Further, it will harness the experience gained from the first-of-a-kind Infinity Two fusion power plant project at the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA's) Bull Run site in the United States, which is targeted for commercial operation in 2034.

FLEDGLING CLEANTECH START-UPS FACE UNCERTAINTY AS FUNDING FALLS TO LOWEST LEVELS IN 5 YEARS

Early-stage investment in UK cleantech firms has fallen sharply over the past year, with research from Cleantech for UK finding that Seed and Series A deal activity fell by 50 percent in 2025, with just 94 deals made- the lowest figure since before 2020. In terms of total value, Seed funding fell from £314 million in 2024 to £144 million last year- a 54% decline, and Series A funding contracted from £710 million to £366 million, a 48% decline. Capital-intensive industries, such as hardware and infrastructure-heavy technologies, were the most affected.

The researchers argue that the challenges facing early-stage investment in the UK have become increasingly pronounced, with the so-called 'valley of death' for projects remaining a critical constraint. As such a 'triple squeeze' of factors have been blamed for the decline; this includes high industrial energy prices, higher interest rates which in turn are driving market uncertainty and reducing the appetite for risk, and the closure of the Net Zero Innovation Portfolio without a successor.



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EUROPE'S WASTE COULD SUPPLY OVER HALF OF CRITICAL MATERIAL DEMAND BY 2050

New research claims that by 2050, waste recovery systems could enable Europe to recover between 4.1 and 5.7 million tonnes of critical raw materials (CRMs) annually.

Findings from the FutuRaM project suggest that in doing so, secondary resources could act as a substitute for as much as between 33% and 56% of primary materials. This potential ranges from up to 33% under business-as-usual conditions, up to 47% with improved recovery systems, and 56% under a circular economy scenario. This would significantly reduce European reliance on imported materials and strengthen supply security for key technologies such as batteries, electric vehicles, and renewable solar and wind energy.



UPCOMING CLEANTECH EVENTS

Event Title	Location	Date
Cleantech Capital Day	Gothenburg, Sweden	2-3 June 2026
European Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW)	Brussels, Belgium & online	9-11 June 2026
Reset Connect London	London, UK	23-24 June 2026
ICEER 2026 – Energy & Environment Research Conference	Porto, Portugal	15th July 2026
Global Renewable Energy Conference (GRCREN 2026)	Rome, Italy	17-18 September 2026
ZCA Cleantech Awards 2026	Online	October 2026 (TBD)
VERGE 26 – Climate Tech Conference	San Jose, USA	27–30 October 2026
The Climate Tech Summit 2026	San Francisco, USA	3–4 November 2026
RE-Source 2026	Amsterdam, Netherlands	4-5 November 2026
COP31 – UN Climate Change Conference 2026	Antalya, Turkey	9-20 November 2026
CleanTech Forum Europe 2026	TBD	16-18 November 2026
Cleantech Forum North America	TBD	25–27 January 2027
World Future Energy Summit 2027	Abu Dhabi, UAE	January 2027

CLEANTECH INNOVATION SPOTLIGHT

Using synthetic diamonds to kill bacteria:

Element Six and Oxi-Tech have announced a new partnership to develop a technology that can destroy waterborne bacteria and viruses. Oxi-Tech's patented Pulse Oxidation systems use water and low-voltage electricity to generate activated oxygen compounds which

are powerful natural disinfectants that destroy bacteria, viruses, and contaminants. By integrating Element Six's proprietary boron-doped diamond (BDD) technology, the solution becomes more efficient, more durable, and easier to deploy at scale. The technology has a wide variety of applications, and can greatly save on heating energy and chemical use.

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THREE UK OFFSHORE WIND PROJECTS APPROVED AMID GROWING CAPACITY CONCERNS

The UK government has announced that three major offshore wind projects have been given approval. Development consent has been given by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) for Dogger Bank South East and Dogger Bank South West off the northeast coast of England, alongside the North Falls offshore wind farm off Suffolk. Together the projects will add up to 4GW of new offshore wind capacity, enough to power more than four million homes a year. Meanwhile, new data from Offshore Energies UK (OEUK) has drawn attention to the challenge the UK faces in meeting its renewables targets. At the current rate of progress, the UK would reach just over 30GW of offshore wind by 2030, well short of the planned 43GW. The country needs to deliver at least 5 gigawatts (GW) of new offshore wind every year if it is to meet the government's clean power goals, meaning that unless delivery accelerates, the UK risks falling behind its own targets.



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