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2026: The First Year of Tangible Results in the Major Energy Transition, Delivering Visible Outcomes to Lead Carbon Neutrality

- Concentrating all efforts on deploying 100 GW of renewable energy by 2030 and expanding the power grid
- Establishing a decarbonization implementation plan and building a stable power system aligned with renewable energy as a mainstay

The Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment (MCEE, Minister Kim Sungwhan) has released the major work plan of the Energy Transition Policy Office for the year 2026.

The Energy Transition Policy Office is responsible for National Policy Task No. 38, the construction of an energy superhighway as the main artery of economic growth, and National Policy Task No. 39, a major energy transition centered on renewable energy. It is a core department leading the energy transition to implement the 2035 Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and achieve carbon neutrality. It oversees the overall power industry, including power industry policy, the electricity market and electricity tariffs, and the construction and operation of the power grid, and carries out roles such as stabilizing the power supply and demand, ensuring a balanced power mix including renewable energy and nuclear power, expanding the deployment of renewable energy and fostering related industries, and supporting the operation, management, and ecosystem of nuclear power.

Key Achievements in 2025

A stable power supply and demand system was maintained year-round across spring, summer, fall, and winter, while laying the groundwork for a major energy transition. In 2025, a provisional 3.8 GW of renewable energy capacity was deployed, marking the largest increase since 2022 (+559 MW). In addition, the budget for renewable energy deployment and financing in 2026 was significantly increased (from KRW 1.1 trillion to KRW 1.5 trillion), and strategies for onshore and offshore wind power were established, laying the foundation for achieving 100 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030. In particular, the enactment of the Special Act on the Expansion of the National Power Grid led to the launch of the National Power Grid Committee and the designation of national backbone grid facilities. Through the operation of a task force to build locally produced and locally consumed power grids and the designation of seven distributed energy special zones, institutional and policy foundations were put in place to accelerate the construction of the “energy superhighway.” In addition, with the enactment of the Special Act on High-level Radioactive Waste Management and the launch of the High-level Radioactive Waste Management Commission, a system for managing high-level radioactive waste was also established.

Work Plan for 2026

In 2026, the Energy Transition Policy Office will concentrate all its efforts on deploying 100 GW of renewable energy by 2030 and securing the power grid capacity needed to accommodate it. In addition, it plans to establish a roadmap for a just transition away from coal-fired power and for implementing a rational mid- to long-term power generation mix, while focusing on building a stable electricity market system and cooperative governance aligned with making renewable energy a mainstay power source.

To this end, it will pursue four key tasks: (1) accelerating deployment and reducing costs to achieve 100 GW of renewable energy; (2) innovating and expanding power grid operations and building energy superhighway; (3) establishing a power system that accommodates energy transition; and (4) enhancing public acceptability and sustainability of nuclear energy policy.

Key Policy and Institutional Changes in 2026

2025	2026
■ Declaration to phase out coal and 2035 NDC plan announced, but concrete implementation plans insufficient	■ Establishment of the 12th Basic Plan for Long-Term Electricity Supply and Demand (New) ■ Establishment of a just transition roadmap for coal-fired power (New)
■ Insufficient demand in spring and fall and the occurrence of output curtailment	■ Rationalization of seasonal and time-of-use industrial electricity tariffs (New) * Inducing daytime demand on weekends and easing output curtailment
■ Insufficient power market mechanisms to accommodate renewable energy	■ Introduction of a renewable energy quasi-centralized system and expansion of price bidding to the mainland (New) ■ Expansion of the ESS central contract market (Strengthened)
■ Presenting directions such as strengthening the independence of the Electricity Regulatory Commission	■ Implementation through legislative amendments, including strengthening the Electricity Regulatory Commission (Strengthened)
■ Managing grid capacity hoarding by speculative or inactive project developers	■ Review of management measures for delayed projects (Strengthened) ■ Introduction of a priority allocation system for ready projects (New)
■ Insufficient conflict management in power grid construction led by Korea Electric Power Corporation	■ Establishment of a “Conflict Management Expert Committee” within the National Power Grid Committee (New) ■ Establishment of objective standards for electromagnetic fields and provision of related information (Strengthened)
(Solar power) ■ Lack of momentum to expand Solar Income Villages nationwide ■ Slow deployment of solar power in everyday settings such as schools and traditional markets ■ Companies independently installing rooftop solar on factory buildings	■ Installation of more than 500 Solar Income Villages through the establishment of a dedicated organization and expanded policy financing support (New) ■ Deployment of solar power at 500 schools and 50 traditional markets (New) ■ Provision of public-led consulting support to around 400 companies (New)
(Wind power) ■ (Onshore) Collection of wind resource data through the installation of wind measurement masts ■ (Offshore) Individual site development and complex permitting and approval processes	■ Replacement of wind measurement mast installation with wind resource data from the Korea Meteorological Administration (New) ■ Launch of a Prime Minister-led “Offshore Wind Power Commission” to promote government-led planned siting and streamline permitting and approvals (New)
(Renewable energy system) ■ Differing setback distance regulations across 129 local governments ■ Voluntary participation and implementation of K-RE100 by public institutions	■ Legal codification of setback distance regulations at a reasonable level (New) ■ Mandatory participation of all public institutions through inclusion in government performance evaluations (New)
■ Post-decommissioning nuclear waste management costs frozen since 2013	■ Rational recalculation of post-decommissioning nuclear waste management costs (Strengthened)
■ Institutionalization of high-level radioactive waste management (Special Act and Commission)	■ Full-scale launch of site selection for a high-level radioactive waste repository (New)

Major Work Schedule for 2026

Title		Schedule
Key Task 1: Accelerating deployment and reducing costs to achieve 100 GW of renewable energy		
	■ Launch of the Solar Income Village Task Force	February
	■ Launch of K-RE100 for public institutions	February
	■ Call for applications for renewable energy deployment support projects (including solar power for schools and traditional markets)	February
	■ Enforcement of the Special Act on Offshore Wind Power	March
	■ Launch of the Offshore Wind Competitiveness Enhancement Commission	March
	■ Announcement of industrial complex solar power consulting program	March
	■ Legal codification of setback distance regulations for renewable energy	Q1
	■ Establishment of measures to replace wind measurement mast installation with wind resource data from the Korea Meteorological Administration	Q2
	■ Announcement of the Solar Income Village program	H1
	■ Announcement of the 2026 offshore wind power auction	H1
	■ Announcement of the 2035 offshore wind auction roadmap	H1
	■ Reform of the onshore wind power auction system	Q3
Key Task 2: Innovating and expanding power grid operations and building energy superhighway		
	■ Replacement of existing transmission lines with high-capacity conductors	Ongoing throughout the year
	■ Implementation of budget-funded projects to improve continuous operation capabilities	Ongoing throughout the year
	■ Formation of an implementation task force for distributed energy special zones	February
	■ Launch of the Next-Generation Power Grid Industry Development Forum	February
	■ Preparation of detailed implementation measures for energy	Q1

	hubs	
	■ Revision of regulations related to continuous operation capabilities (including the Rules for the Use of Transmission and Distribution Electrical Facilities)	Q1
	■ Pursuit of legislative amendments to enable priority grid interconnection for Solar Income Villages	H1
	■ Establishment of a specialized subcommittee on conflict management within the National Power Grid Committee	H1
	■ Enactment of a Notice on Power Grid Impact Assessment	H1
	■ Improvement of allocation criteria for speculative project capacity in the power grid	H1
	■ Launch of the deployment of distribution network ESS and site-specific microgrids	Q3
Key Task 3: Establishing a power system that accommodates energy transition		
	■ Reform of seasonal and time-of-use tariffs for industrial (Type B) customers	Q1
	■ Establishment of optional tariff schemes for residential heat pump users	Q1
	■ Introduction of a renewable energy quasi-centralized system	Q1
	■ Launch of a research study on restructuring public power generation companies	H1
	■ Preparation of a plan to introduce region-based electricity tariffs	H2
	■ Opening of the ESS central contract market	H2
	■ Introduction of the renewable energy price bidding system on the mainland	H2
	■ Establishment of the 3rd Basic Plan for the Management of High-level Radioactive Waste	H2
	■ Establishment of the 12th Basic Plan for Long-Term Electricity Supply and Demand	H2
	■ Legislative amendments to strengthen the independence of the Electricity Regulatory Commission and establish a Power Regulatory Authority	H2
Key Task 4: Enhancing public acceptability and sustainability of nuclear energy policy		
	■ Launch of Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power's call for proposals for new nuclear power plant sites	Q1
	■ Submission of an application for standard design approval of the i-SMR	Q1
	■ Commencement of continued operation of Kori Unit 2	Q1
	■ Establishment of a site suitability survey plan for high-level	Q1

	radioactive waste management facilities	
	■ Establishment of the 3rd Basic Plan for the Management of Low- and Intermediate-level Radioactive Waste	Q1
	■ Completion of Saeul Unit 3	H2
	■ Establishment of the 3rd Basic Plan for the Management of High-level Radioactive Waste	H2
	■ Approval of continued operation for Kori Units 3 and 4	Within the year