

# Apple Now Operates on 93% Renewable Energy Worldwide

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**The electronics giant also has a nifty new recycling robot.**

[Julia Pyper](#)

On Monday, Apple unveiled the highly anticipated iPhone SE and the new iPad Pro. Equally exciting for some, the electronics giant announced that 93 percent of its facilities worldwide now run on renewable energy.

The new benchmark shows that Apple is making good on its environmental promises two years after the company pledged to become 100 percent renewable in 100 percent of the company's operations, including all of its offices, retail stores and data centers.

Apple's operations now run entirely on renewable energy in 23 countries, including the United States and China, said Lisa Jackson, Apple's vice president of environment, policy and social initiatives, at the product launch event.

"We think there's no greater challenge in the world than our changing climate," said Jackson, who led the U.S. EPA from 2009 to 2013. "The solution is energy efficiency and renewable energy, and the time for action is right now."

To help reach its target, Apple built a 40-megawatt solar project in Sichuan province, China that accommodates the local population -- which is mostly made up of yaks. Jackson said the system is innovative in allowing for both electricity generation and hay production for the local yak ranchers. That project alone powers Apple's 34 retail stores and 19 offices in the country.

In Singapore, where space is limited, Apple installed solar arrays on 800 rooftops. In the U.S., Apple signed an \$848 million, 25-year [power-purchase agreement](#) from First Solar's 130-megawatt California Flats Solar Project in Monterey County last year -- one of the largest renewable energy deals a U.S. company has signed to date.

The First Solar project will power all of Apple's facilities in California, including the company's "spaceship" campus that's currently under construction in Cupertino. The enormous new campus will also generate clean electricity. The [latest drone footage](#) shows solar arrays under construction across 700,000 square feet of rooftop, enough space to generate 8 megawatts of power.

While Apple has yet to reach its overall 100 percent renewable energy target, Jackson pointed out on Monday that all of Apple's data centers currently run on renewables.

"Think for a second about what that means," said Jackson. "It means every time you send an iMessage or make a FaceTime video call or ask Siri a question, you can feel really good about reducing your impact on the environment."

All of this sounds nice in theory, but in reality, Apple's environmental footprint is much, much bigger than the buildings it owns. Facilities make up just 1 percent of Apple's overall carbon footprint, according to the electronics giant's latest [sustainability report](#).

To start addressing supply-chain emissions, Apple announced [an initiative](#) last fall to install more than 2 gigawatts of new clean energy in partnership with its suppliers in China. As part of the same initiative, iPhone manufacturer Foxconn will construct 400 megawatts of solar by 2018. These are ambitious targets, but Jackson's update on Monday may offer some assurance that Apple is committed to reaching its goals.

Renewable energy isn't Apple's only environmental focus. Jackson announced yesterday that 99 percent of the company's packaging comes from paper that has been recycled or is from "sustainably managed forests." This is important as the company moves to all-paper packaging, she said.

Jackson also introduced [Liam](#), Apple's iPhone-dissecting robot that can take apart a discarded cell phone every 11 seconds to recover valuable metals, including cobalt, lithium, gold, silver and platinum.

In 2014, e-waste represented \$52 billion of potentially reusable resources, according to a United Nations University report. However, less than one-sixth is believed to have been properly recycled or made available for reuse.

"We need more R&D if we are going to realize the idea of a circular economy in electronics," Jackson said in an interview with [Reuters](#).

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