

# One thing we have learnt this week – Saudi renewables programme

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[Rub\\_al\\_Khali\\_002](#) Saudi Arabia is relaunching its Saudi renewables programme. An announcement was made last year but but nothing much has happened since then. The programme is still relatively small with bids being invited for 400MWp of wind and 300MWp of solar. The Saudis include nuclear as renewables (which I don't). The thought of providing enough cooling water for this in such a hot part of the world as well as one that is so politically unstable makes this seem a nightmare to me. A nuclear programme is also pressing ahead though. So what is going on? Has Saudi Arabia decided the oil age is over? Are they running out of oil? As this blog has covered before the country is uniquely dependent on oil and gas for its electricity consumption (especially gas which overlies their oil). Electricity is really cheap being at a very maximum 6.9cents a kWh. This makes it difficult for renewables to compete, but the costs are heavily subsidised. The low price has led to electricity demand soaring by up to 8% a year. One possible reason for the Saudis continuing to pump oil at low prices is they need the electricity. By 2030 unless something gives they will use almost all their oil domestically for electricity production. Hence their Saudi renewables programme and our interest in it, since without Saudi oil peak oil will be back. Neil

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