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Elon Musk is optimistic on climate, says decarbonization will be achieved through nuclear then solar power

Hannah Towey Mar 27, 2022, 3:16 PM



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SpaceX founder Elon Musk at the company's HQ in Hawthorne, California on October 10, 2019. [Philin](#)

- **Elon Musk said he is confident society will solve "the climate issue," it's just a question of when.**
- **He predicted that solar power "will be the main long-term way that civilization is powered."**
- **But until that transition is made, he said countries need to maintain nuclear energy.**

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Elon Musk is optimistic about Earth's climate future.

"We will solve the climate issue. It is just a question of when," he said in a [recent interview with Mathias Döpfner](#), the CEO of Insider's parent company, Axel Springer.

The Tesla and SpaceX CEO predicted decarbonization will ultimately be achieved through solar energy. The key to this transition, according to Musk, is a technology to effectively store the sun's energy for future use.

"Obviously the sun only shines during the day, and sometimes it is very cloudy," he said. "So you need solar batteries. That will be the main long-term way that civilization is powered."

An advertisement for SafeSite Facilities Ltd. It features a background image of two construction workers in high-visibility vests and hard hats standing near a construction site. Overlaid on the left is a list of services: Barriers & Traffic Management, Fencing & Hoarding, Event Products, Alarms & CCTV, and Construction. Below the list is the contact information: Tel: 0800 012 5189 and safesitefacilities.co.uk. At the bottom, it says "Discover full range of SafeSite Facilities products" and "SafeSite Facilities Ltd" with a "Learn more" button.

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Until the shift to solar is feasible, he told Döpfner that it's essential to maintain nuclear energy plants.

"I can't emphasize that enough," he said. "This is total madness to shut them down. I want to be clear, total madness."

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month, he called for more nuclear energy in Europe on Twitter as [Russia's invasion of Ukraine](#) underscored Germany's reliance on Russian oil

[invasion of Ukraine underscored Germany's reliance on Russian oil.](#)

Elon Musk

@elonmusk

Hopefully, it is now extremely obvious that Europe should restart dormant nuclear power stations and increase power output of existing ones.

This is **critical** to national and international security.

11:27 PM · Mar 6, 2022

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"If you are somewhere where severe earthquakes or tsunamis occur, it is more of a question mark," Musk said earlier in the interview. "If there is no massive natural disaster risk — which Germany does not have — then there is really no danger with the nuclear power plants."



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world, the country is at risk to [storms, floods and earthquakes](#), according to the Helmholtz Association, the largest scientific organization in Germany.

Döpfner mentioned both wind and solar as viable alternatives to nuclear in a question to Musk. The Tesla CEO did not comment on wind in his response.

Musk did not provide a timeline to back his climate optimism, but said in 15 years the climate issue will look "much better" from a sustainable energy standpoint.

Solving the problem is "the fundamental goal of Tesla," he added.

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