

PRESS RELEASE

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New EU-Funded Project to Advance Direct Solar Fuels and Strengthen Europe's Clean Energy Future

The European Union is backing the SUN2X-SET project to unite key stakeholders and establish a coordinated research and innovation forum for Direct Solar Fuels, accelerating Europe's transition toward a climate-neutral and competitive energy system.

The EU-funded SUN2X-SET project (*EU Forum for Direct Solar Fuels*) officially launched in May 2026, aiming to accelerate Europe's clean energy transition by bringing together and empowering key stakeholders in the emerging field of Direct Solar Fuels (DSF). Building on the achievements of previous flagship initiatives, the SUNERGY initiative and the SUNER-C project, SUN2X-SET will establish the EU Forum for Direct Solar Fuels R&I.

The project will align efforts across industry, academia, the research community, policymakers, and civil society, while paving the way for the forum to become a recognised actor under the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan framework. In parallel, SUN2X-SET will develop Europe's first DSF Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) and Technological Roadmap, ensuring their integration into SET Plan priorities and broader EU energy and research policies.

*"Direct Solar Fuels represent one of the most exciting frontiers in clean energy innovation, especially in light of the ongoing geopolitical challenges and drawbacks of the current energy system", says **Gabriele Gaffuri (EERA), SUN2X-SET Project Coordinator**. "With SUN2X-SET, we are bringing together Europe's leading expertise to build a strong, coordinated community that can define clear research priorities, support industrial scale-up, and ensure that this promising technology contributes meaningfully to Europe's climate neutrality goals."*

Through close collaboration with the European Commission, national authorities, and SET Plan stakeholders, the project will integrate DSF into Europe's broader energy innovation landscape. Over its two-year duration, SUN2X-SET will lay the groundwork for a fully operational European DSF Forum, capable of shaping the future of solar fuels innovation. It will contribute to defossilising industry, enhancing energy resilience, and strengthening Europe's industrial competitiveness in clean energy. By aligning scientific excellence, industrial ambition, and policy coordination, SUN2X-SET represents a decisive step toward unlocking the potential of direct solar fuels and reinforcing Europe's leadership in clean energy technologies.

The project consortium, coordinated by the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA), includes four key partners with complementary expertise and a proven track record of collaboration in solar fuels research, ensuring continuity, efficiency, and a shared commitment to advancing DSF technologies. These include:

- 2 European associations:
 - [European Energy Research Alliance \(EERA\)](#): as Europe's largest clean energy research community, bringing together public research centres and universities active in low-carbon energy research, and as a formal Research Pillar of the SET Plan, EERA will act as a bridge between research and policy.

- [CO₂ Value Europe \(CVE\)](#): the leading association representing the entire Carbon Capture and Utilisation (CCU) value chain in Europe.
- 2 knowledge providers from across Europe
 - [Commissariat à l'énergie atomique et aux énergies alternatives \(CEA\)](#): a leading French RTO and key player in scientific and technological research within the energy transition domain.
 - [University of Warsaw \(UWA\)](#): ranked among the top 3% of universities worldwide (Times Higher Education World University Ranking), and holder of the “HR Excellence in Research” award from the European Commission.

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