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Markets have 'clean energy fever '

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Renewable energy investment worldwide could hit \$100 billion in 2006. That's great for the industry, but watch out for market corrections on the horizon. Sam Eaton reports.

TEXT OF STORY MARK AUSTIN THOMAS: 2006 is shaping up to be a banner year in terms of renewable energy investments. One industry watcher thinks the worldwide total could hit \$100 billion. From the Marketplace Sustainability Desk, Sam Eaton looks at the numbers.

SAM EATON: London-based New Energy Finance says new investments in clean energy and low carbon technologies rebounded in the fourth quarter this year, putting 2006 on course for another record.

Venture capital and private equity investment in the sector surged nearly 170 percent over last year as firms catch what's been dubbed the "clean energy fever."

But Michael Liebreich, Clean Energy Finance's CEO, cautions that the return on that investment is by no means a sure thing.

MICHAEL LIEBREICH: It's clear that fortunes are going to be made in the sector but fortunes are also going to be lost because the usual investing disciplines have not been and are not being adhered to in all sectors at the moment. Liebreich says with money flowing into clean tech companies faster than they can deliver new technologies and products, there could be some severe market corrections on the horizon.

Especially for the U.S.'s booming ethanol industry.

In Los Angeles, I'm Sam Eaton for Marketplace.