

Renewables could bring job boon to Poland: Greenpeace

March 11 2011



The sun sets on photovoltaic solar panels in southern Spain. An ambitious switch from fossil fuels to green energy could generate up to 350,000 new jobs by 2020 in the Poland, the European Union's most coal-dependent member, Greenpeace said Friday in Warsaw.

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"Implementing the measures proposed in the 'An Energy Revolution for Poland' would contribute to the creation of over 350,000 new jobs by 2020 in [energy production](#) sectors," the global environmental group said in a statement referring to the [green energy](#) policy scenario it has proposed for Poland.

"This is nearly twice the current level of employment in the [coal mining](#) and processing sector," it said.

Official statistics show Poland's coal sector employed 178,000 personnel as of September 2010.

Poland, which currently relies on coal-fired plants for 94 percent of its electricity, has committed itself to easing its near total dependence on fossil fuels as part of the EU's climate package limiting [greenhouse gas emissions](#) by 2020.

Poland's government plans to meet the EU emission targets by introducing atomic energy in almost equal measure with renewables as well as so-called Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technologies to sequester [carbon dioxide emissions](#) from coal-fired power facilities.

Warsaw has said it wants nuclear power to generate 9.3 percent of the country's electricity by 2030, while coal's share should drop to 60 percent and renewable sources would account for about one quarter.

The country's first nuclear power station is expected to come on line in 2022.

But Greenpeace along with other Polish environmental groups want plans for atomic energy nixed and for about 20 percent of Poland's energy mix to come from [renewable sources](#) like wind, biomass and solar by 2020, growing to nearly half by 2030.

Greenpeace is also urging Poland's liberal government to create a renewable energies department as part of the country's economics ministry to speed development of the sector.

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Citation: Renewables could bring job boon to Poland: Greenpeace (2011, March 11) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-03-renewables-job-boon-poland-greenpeace.html>

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