

# 'Obama wants to force coal plants to reduce emissions'

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US President Barack Obama wants to force coal energy plants to reduce emissions and pay for greenhouse gases they do emit through a cap and trade system, the New York Times said Thursday.

Asked by AFP, the White House did not confirm that such a plan is being considered by the president, who has struggled to fulfill his campaign promises on fighting [climate change](#), with most of his initiatives blocked by lawmakers in Congress since 2009.

According to the New York Times, Obama will bypass legislative avenues by using his executive authority to force coal power plants to reduce their emissions by 20 percent. The president plans to announce the program on Monday, the newspaper said.

The idea is to create a national cap on carbon emissions from coal and to let each decide how to get there through increasing energy production from wind, solar and other renewable sources, and by creating a marketplace where "government-issued pollution permits" can be bought and sold between states.

The plan risks sparking hostility from local governments under Republican control, which have already brought lawsuits over whether the Environmental Protection Agency, under Obama's executive authority, has the power to regulate emissions.

The expected presidential announcement would be part of a set of

initiatives he unveiled in June 2013 to reduce [greenhouse gas emissions](#) by 17 percent from their 2005 levels by 2020.

According to the US Energy Information Agency, 37 percent of electricity in the US is produced from coal plants. Renewable energy sources produce 12 percent.

The White House laid the groundwork for these latest possible measures in early May, when it released a massive report on the economic and physical effects of climate change, which it said were already evident in the United States.

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