

China vows massive clean-up of power plants

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China will upgrade its coal-fired power plants to reduce the discharge of pollutants by 60 percent before 2020, top officials said Wednesday.

The move will save around 100 million tonnes of raw coal and cut [carbon dioxide emissions](#) by 180 million tonnes annually, the official Xinhua news agency quoted the State Council, or cabinet, as saying.

By 2020 China will have shut down plants that do not meet the energy-saving standard, according to a statement from the council.

China intends to reduce coal's share of its total energy needs to below 65 percent by 2017, Xinhua reported.

A plan agreed in 2013 pledged to increase clean energy supply and reduce coal consumption, a major source of the air pollution which gripped swathes of northern China earlier this week.

Beijing ordered hundreds of factories to shut and allowed children to skip school on Tuesday as choking smog reached over 25 times safe levels.

The pollution has become a key cause of public discontent with the ruling Communist party.

China has also pledged to curb [greenhouse gas emissions](#), most of which come from coal burning which spikes in winter along with demand for heating.

At the [climate change summit](#) in Paris this week, President Xi Jinping repeated China's pledge that emissions would peak by "around 2030".

China is estimated to have emitted nearly twice as much carbon dioxide as the United States in 2013, and around two and a half times the European Union's total.

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