

Asian coal plant drive threatens climate goals: report

June 30 2021, by Sam Reeves



The think-tank Carbon Tracker has said that five Asian countries are responsible for 80 percent of new coal power stations planned worldwide.

Five Asian countries are responsible for 80 percent of new coal power stations planned worldwide, with the projects threatening goals to fight the climate crisis, a report warned Wednesday.



China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Vietnam are planning to build more than 600 coal plants, think-tank Carbon Tracker said.

The stations will be able to generate a total of 300 gigawatts of energy—equivalent to around the entire electricity generating capacity of Japan.

The projects are being pursued despite the availability of cheaper renewables, and they threaten efforts to meet the Paris climate deal goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the study said.

"These last bastions of coal power are swimming against the tide, when renewables offer a cheaper solution that supports global climate targets," said Catharina Hillenbrand Von Der Neyen, Carbon Tracker's head of research.

"Investors should steer clear of new coal projects."

Experts see phasing out coal, which produces greenhouse gas carbon dioxide, as key in battling a <u>climate crisis</u> whose impacts—ranging from species extinction to unliveable heat—are expected to accelerate markedly.

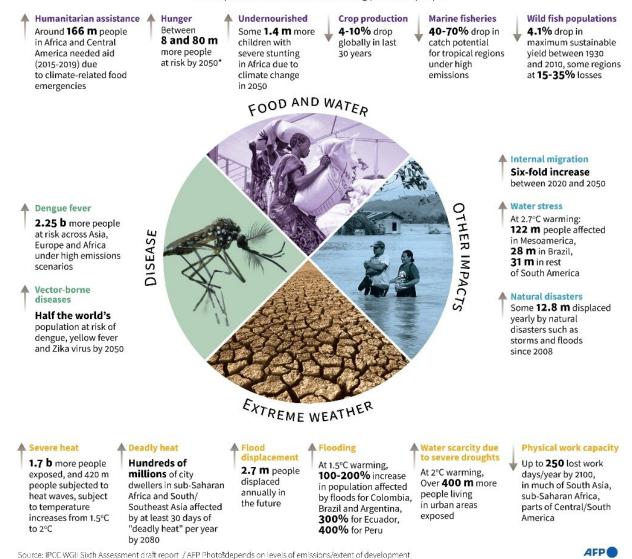
But many countries in the Asia-Pacific region, long reliant on the fossil fuel to power their booming economies, have been slow to act, even as Europe and the United States accelerate their transitions to cleaner energy.

Asia-Pacific consumed over three-quarters of all coal used globally in 2019, according to BP's statistical review of world energy.



Climate change: the impact on humanity

Highlights of a landmark Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) draft report on the effects of a warming planet on people



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'Coal no longer makes sense'

China, the world's biggest coal consumer and greenhouse gas emitter,



tops the list of countries planning new <u>coal plants</u>, according to Carbon Tracker.

It has 368 power stations in the pipeline with 187 gigawatts of capacity, the think-tank said—despite a pledge by President Xi Jinping that China will become carbon neutral by 2060.

India, the second-biggest coal consumer, is planning 92 plants with about 60 gigawatts of capacity, according to the London-based think-tank, which focuses on the impact of the energy transition on financial markets.

Indonesia is planning 107 new plants, Vietnam 41, and Japan 14, it said.

Despite climate concerns, governments continue to pursue coal projects due to reasons ranging from lobbying, to efforts to support the industry, and concerns about security of electricity supply, the think-tank said.



Climate change: the impact on nature

Highlights of a landmark Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) draft report on how a warming planet impacts nature

Extinction rates

A thousand times higher than before the geological period now known as the Anthropocene, the "age of man"

Land and sea species

At 2°C to 3°C warming, up to 54% of land and sea species threatened with extinction this century

Freshwater fish

Climate change could reduce local biodiversity by up to 75% by 2075

Turtles

Upper-range sea level rise predictions suggest 59% loss in green turtles' Mediterranean nesting area, loggerheads at 67%

SPECIES



Ecosystems

Permafrost

At 2°C warming,

15% could be

36 to 67 billion tonnes of carbon

Many terrestrial, freshwater, ocean and coastal ecosystems currently "near or beyond" their ability to adapt

SYSTEMS OCEANS

Coral reefs

At 1.5°C warming, 70-90% of the world's coral reefs are projected to die

Marine heatwaves

At least 34% more frequent and 17% longer since 1925

Arctic sea-ice

Summer sea-ice has decreased an estimated 25%. some 2 million square km since the late 1970s

FORESTS

▲ Fire seasons

Increased temperature, dryness and drought have extended fire season and doubled potential burnable area

▲ Severe drought

At 2°C warming. severe drought in Brazil's natural areas expected to quadruple

▲ Wildfire in the Arctic tundra

Area burned increased ninefold across Siberia from 1996 to 2015

Amazon rainforest

At high emissions, drought and wildfire could transform half of the Amazon basin into grassland, leading to increased global emissions

Source: IPCC WGII Sixth Assessment draft report / AFP Photos / Greg Torda/ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies



Highlights of a landmark Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) draft report on the effects of a warming planet on nature.

But building new plants no longer makes economic sense, as the falling cost of renewables such as solar and wind means they will become cheaper than coal in most parts of the world.



Hillenbrand Von Der Neyen called on governments to use postcoronavirus stimulus spending to "lay the foundations for a sustainable energy system".

"Coal no longer makes sense, financially or environmentally," she said.

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