

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."

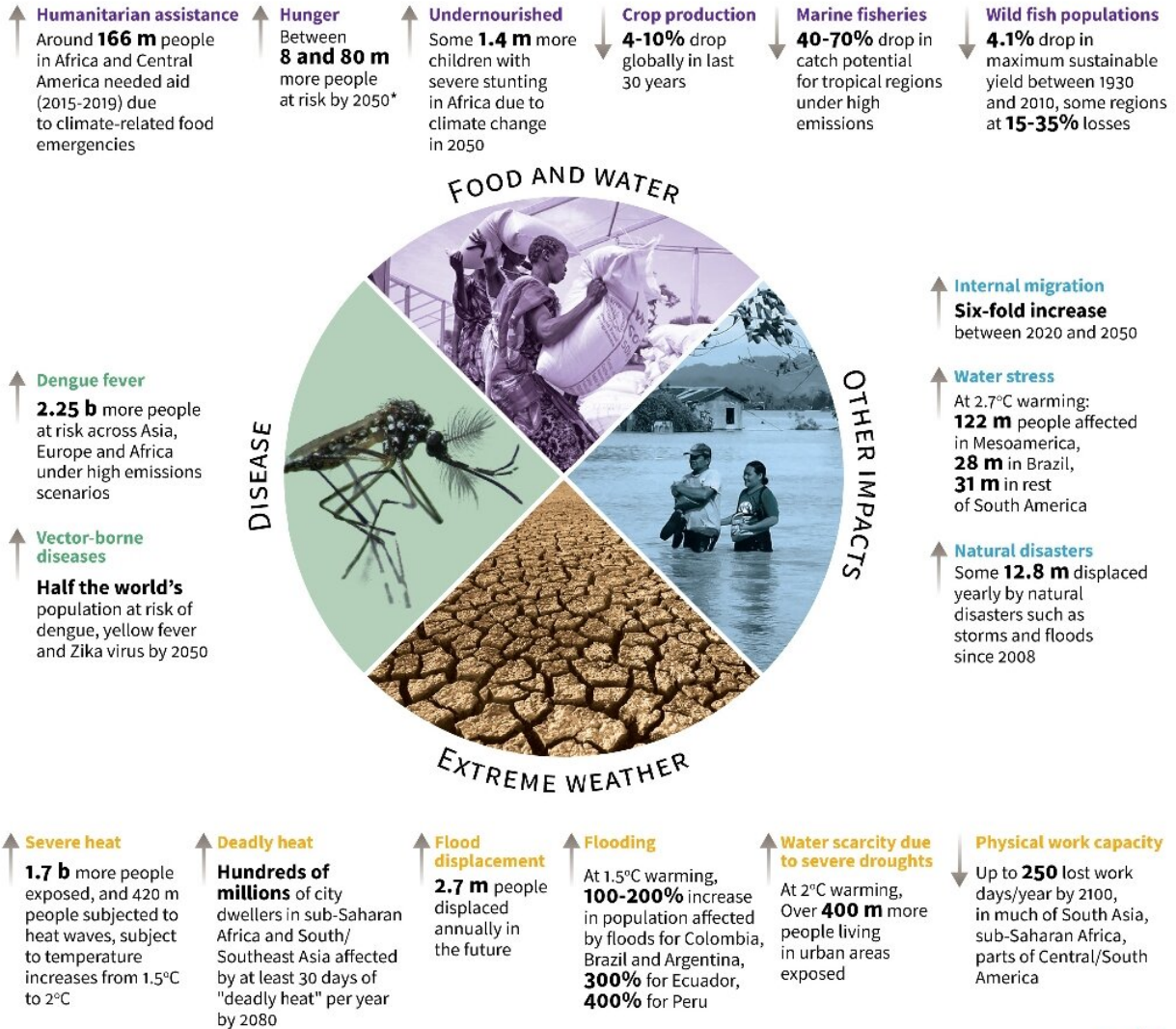
Experts see phasing out coal, which produces greenhouse gas carbon dioxide, as key in battling a [climate crisis](#) whose impacts—ranging from species extinction to unliveable heat—are expected to accelerate markedly.

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



Source: IPCC WGII Sixth Assessment draft report / AFP Photos depends on levels of emissions/extent of development



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

'Coal no longer makes sense'

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

tops the list of countries planning new [coal plants](#), 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.

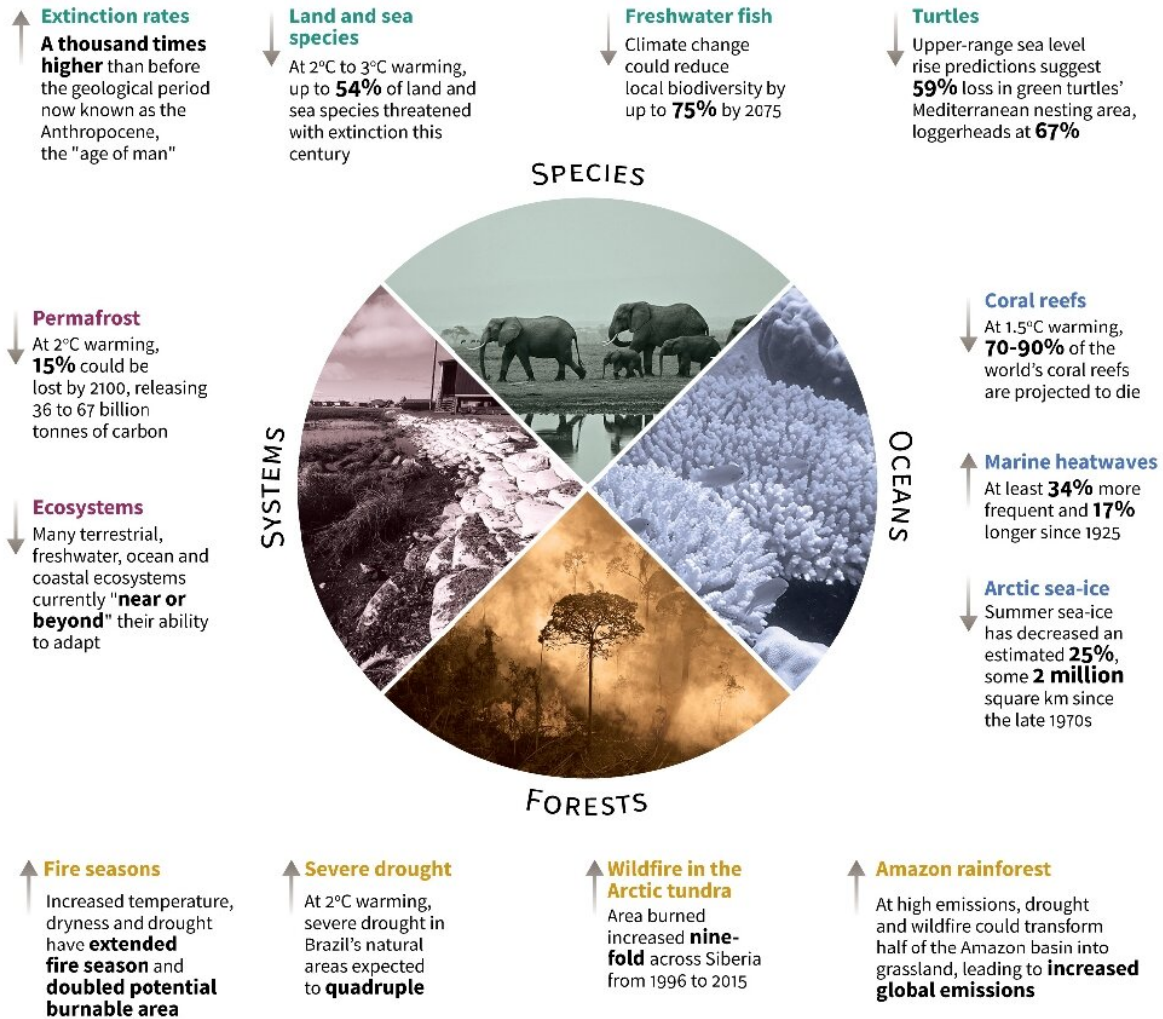
India, the second-biggest coal consumer, is planning 92 plants with about 60 gigawatts of capacity, according to the London-based think-tank, which focuses on the impact of the energy transition on financial markets.

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



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 post-coronavirus 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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