

World Coal Association calls for greater commitment on all low emission technologies ahead of COP21

25 November 2015

LONDON - The World Coal Association (WCA) today published its position statement for COP21 ahead of the start of meetings in Paris next week. The WCA strongly supports an effective agreement at COP21 that integrates environmental imperatives with the aims of energy security, economic development and an end to poverty.

The WCA COP21 position highlights that:

- Without action to support deployment of low emission coal technology it will not be possible to achieve the 2 degree climate target.
- The WCA supports a transition away from the least efficient technology in favour of high efficiency low emission (HELE) coal-fuelled power generation technology.
- Global investment is required in carbon capture and storage (CCS).
- If comprehensive policy and financial support is provided for CCS over the coming decade, including policy parity, it is realistic to believe that a transition toward no new unabated fossil fuels could begin in the late 2020s.
- The WCA welcomes the opportunity to work with our partners in the oil and gas industry to support policies and projects that facilitate the large-scale deployment of carbon capture, use and storage.

Benjamin Sporton, Chief Executive of WCA, commented: "Environmental imperatives, energy security, economic development and an end to poverty are issues which are inextricably linked. In order to achieve emissions reductions consistent with international climate objectives, we need to balance these issues, recognising the importance of low-cost energy and the need to widen the deployment of all low emission technologies."

Raising the average global efficiency of coal plants from 33% to 40% with off-the-shelf HELE technology would save 2 gigatonnes of CO₂ emissions. This is the equivalent of running the Kyoto Protocol three times over or India's annual CO₂ emissions.

"Many countries have included a role for HELE coal-based power generation in their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). We therefore call for an international mechanism to be established to provide financial and other support necessary for countries to accelerate construction of these projects.

“The WCA has proposed the establishment of a Global Platform to Accelerate Coal Efficiency (PACE) to help deliver high efficiency low emission coal-fired power generation in the developing world and we stand ready to work with international partners to support its implementation,” said Mr Sporton.

“We need all sources of energy to meet growing energy needs and all low emission technologies to reduce emissions. It is therefore imperative to establish policy parity for all low emission technologies if we want to achieve our climate targets. Strong policy drives strong action. Growth in renewable energy technology has been driven by policy that provides \$100 billion in subsidies every year. The cumulative value of government policy support provided to CCUS to date is approximately 1% of the cumulative value of policy support provided to renewable technologies.”

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has said that climate action would be 138% more expensive if not impossible without widespread deployment of CCS technology.

“Affordable, reliable and accessible electricity is the foundation of prosperity in the modern world. Each nation will choose an energy mix that best meets its needs and for most countries, coal will continue to play a significant role. We believe real solutions to climate change will only come through technological change and action on all low emission technologies, including HELE and CCUS,” Mr Sporton concluded.

Notes

About the World Coal Association

The World Coal Association is a global industry association formed of major international coal producers and stakeholders. The WCA works to demonstrate and gain acceptance for the fundamental role coal plays in achieving a sustainable and lower emissions energy future. Membership is open to companies and not-for-profit organisations with a stake in the future of coal from anywhere in the world, with member companies represented at Chief Executive or Chairman level. WCA is the global network for the coal industry.

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