

G7 coal dependence to cost 450 billion a year by end of century

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Coal plants in the G7 are on track to cost the world \$450 billion a year by the end of the century and reduce crops by millions of tonnes as they fuel the gathering pace of climate change, Oxfam reveals today.

In its new report, [Let Them Eat Coal](#), endorsed by business leaders, academics and climate experts, Oxfam warns that coal is the biggest driver of climate change, which is already hitting the world's poorest people hardest and making the fight to end hunger tougher.

The G7 countries remain major consumers of coal. G7 coal plants emit double the fossil fuel emissions of Africa and ten times as much as the 48 least developed countries.

The international agency reveals that Africa faces costs of \$84 billion a year by the end of the century due to the damage caused by G7 coal emissions. This is 60 times the amount Africa currently receives from the G7 in aid to support agriculture and food production.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned that Africa's food production systems are highly vulnerable to climate change, with declines likely in cereal crops across the continent of up to 35% by mid-century. Oxfam warns that seven million tonnes of staple crops could be lost annually by the 2080s because of G7 coal emissions.

Oxfam says G7 leaders meeting in Germany from tomorrow should shift from coal to renewables, which offer a safer and cost effective alternative and the prospect of millions of new jobs around the world. This would also be a giant step towards the G7 not only meeting current emissions targets but moving closer to what is urgently needed.

The UK could feasibly stop burning coal for its energy supply by 2023, according to Oxfam's report. Oxfam says that the UK government should set out a plan backed by clear policies to make sure this happens. This includes investing in smarter energy storage, reducing demand and improving energy efficiency for those living in poverty, for example by insulating drafty homes.

Max Lawson, Oxfam's Head of Global Policy and Campaigns, said: "The G7's addiction to coal is hiking up costs for developing countries and putting more and more people on the frontline of climate change at risk of hunger.

"Ahead of the UN climate talks later this year, G7 leaders need to go cold turkey on coal and recognise their responsibility to lead the way towards renewables. This will make significant additional cuts in their carbon emissions, generate jobs and give the step-change needed towards a safer, sustainable and prosperous future for everyone."

Globally, coal is responsible for almost three-quarters (72%) of power-sector emissions, and while more than half of today's coal consumption is in developing countries, the scale of G7 coal burning is considerable. If G7 coal plants were a country, it would be the fifth biggest emitter in the world.

At Copenhagen in 2009, all countries agreed to prevent warming of more than 2°C to avoid runaway climate change, but the world is now on track to warm by 4°C. Five of the G7 countries since then are burning more coal: France, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the host country Germany.

Oxfam's report analyses the different energy mixes of each G7 country and sets out when each one can feasibly become coal-free. Country-specific plans and policies could ensure the shift from coal is achieved in France by 2020, Italy by the early 2020s, the UK by 2023, Canada and the US by 2030, Japan by 2035 and Germany by 2040.

The report is endorsed by a number of climate, business and development specialists. These include the former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Professor Olivier de Schutter; Nick Molho, Chief Executive of the Aldersgate Group of business, political and civil society leaders; Sharon Burrow, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation; and Dessima Williams, former Ambassador of Grenada to the UN and former Chair of the Alliance of Small Island Developing States.

Professor de Schutter said: "Climate disruptions are already affecting many poor communities in the global South, and coal-fired power stations are contributing, every day, to make this worse. They increasingly look like weapons of destruction aimed at those who suffer the impacts of changing rainfall patterns as well as of extreme weather events."

Oxfam says that the G7 must lead the way because they are most responsible for climate change. The G7 also have the most resources to decarbonise their economies and fund both emissions cuts and adaptation so that developing countries can protect themselves from climate change and develop in a low-carbon way.

Oxfam is also calling on the G7 to stand by existing commitments to jointly mobilise \$100 billion a year by 2020. Additionally, Oxfam wants to see progress from the G7 in both raising public finance over the next five years and increasing the proportion of funding for adaptation.

G7 leaders will be talking about decarbonising their economies at the Summit. Oxfam says this is an opportunity for leaders to set the tone towards the crucial UN climate talks in Paris at the end of the year. // Ends

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원문링크 : <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2015/06/g7-coal-dependence-to-cost-450-billion-a-year-by-end-of-century>