
Coal's share of global energy is growing



China Photos/Getty Images

A view of an open pit coal mine is seen in 2006 in Chifeng of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, China. Reportedly, in the first month of 2006, China's coal consumption rose by 13.8 percent over the same period of 2005.

by ***Sally Hershops*** (</people/sally-hershops>)

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[BP's annual world energy report \(http://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/about-bp/energy-economics/statistical-review-of-world-energy/review-by-energy-type/coal.html\)](http://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/about-bp/energy-economics/statistical-review-of-world-energy/review-by-energy-type/coal.html) is out, and it turns out coal has its largest share of the global energy market since 1970.

Just because coal use is going down in the U.S. doesn't mean it's not popular in other parts of the world.

"Coal is still a fairly fast growing fuel globally," says James Stevenson, director of North American coal at IHS Energy, a global research and consulting firm. "We have fairly strong growth in countries like China."

The use of coal is also expanding in Latin America, parts of the Mediterranean, and Africa, though more slowly. Even Germany is burning more coal, partly because it's shutting down its nuclear power plants.

Kristoffer Inton, an equity analyst with Morningstar, says coal is easy to come by.

"That's the main advantage of coal," he says, "that it's cheap and it's available."

And even with the EPA's newly proposed regulations for carbon, it still expects coal to generate 30 percent of the power in this country. Inton notes, globally, coal is probably one of the easiest ways to get power.

"So what we're seeing right now is that even though there's high coal usage in China and growing usage in

some other countries, there's a significant amount of supply out there," he says.

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