

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

TO MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS AND PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS:



The time is right for advocacy on the health damage from coal. Based on the established scientific evidence about the health risks from coal combustion, doctors and health organisations can add a long neglected perspective to the debate about Europe's future energy supply.

THEY SHOULD >>>>>

- Highlight to EU and national decision makers that the health impacts and external costs of coal have to be taken into account in energy decisions. From a health perspective building new coal power plants is detrimental to efforts of tackling chronic disease and creates unnecessary costs.
- Become involved in the debates on higher air quality standards and more ambitious climate action at EU level as well as nationally.
- Raise awareness on the health risks from coal power in local consultation processes and help to ensure the enforcement of better pollution control for existing coal in order to protect public health. The tool box in Annex 3 aims to support medical experts by showing how they can get involved in relation to coal power plants in their region.

TO NATIONAL AUTHORITIES:



National authorities have to take the gloves off and reduce outdoor air pollution from coal power plants. In the interest of their citizens' health but also of their neighbouring countries

THEY SHOULD >>>>>

- Introduce a moratorium on the construction of new coal power plants.
- Develop a national phase-out plan for coal in power generation.
- End all exemptions from the highest pollution control standards for existing coal plants.
- End all direct and indirect subsidies and tax exemptions for hard coal and lignite mining as well as coal power generation by 2018, when direct hard coal mining subsidies are already required to end.

TO THE EU:



The phase out of coal power in Europe is possible by 2040 and constitutes an important step to improve air quality, reduce chronic disease and cut greenhouse gas emissions at the same time.

THEY SHOULD >>

- Ensure that the costs and benefits to health are taken into account in any energy and climate policy assessments and decisions.
- Strengthen the IED which regulates air pollution from coal power plants by removing all exemptions for existing plants.
- Adopt stricter emission limit values, comparable to recent Chinese and USA standards, for the whole of the EU by 2020 and introduce binding mercury emission limit values.
- Make sure that Croatia as an EU accession country is required to meet EU pollution control standards for coal power plants without any derogation by 2018, and encourage EU candidate countries to do likewise.
- Support a termination of all EU lending, including by EU financial institutions, to coal plants, coal mining and infrastructure projects that would contribute to an increase in coal capacity. Similarly, support an ending of EU subsidies for CCS technologies.