



Coal at the port of Gdansk, Poland, June 2023. Photograph: Mateusz Słodkowski/AFP/Getty Images

Energy industry

Greenhouse gas emissions from global energy industry still rising – report

Researchers say ‘urgent action’ needed as rise in renewables is eclipsed by increase in world’s total energy consumption

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Mon 26 Jun 2023 00.01 BST

Greenhouse gas emissions from the energy industry continued to rise to new highs last year despite record growth in wind and solar power, according to a comprehensive review of global energy data.

The report, undertaken by the **Energy** Institute, found that fossil fuels continued to make up 82% of the world’s total energy consumption in 2022, in line with the year before, causing greenhouse gas emissions to climb by 0.8% as the world used more energy overall.

Global energy consumption is expected to rise further in the year ahead, potentially bringing higher greenhouse gas emissions, after China ended its **strict Covid restrictions** on travel this year that had previously kept a lid on jet fuel consumption.

Juliet Davenport, the Energy Institute's president, said: "Despite further strong growth in wind and solar in the power sector, overall global energy-related **greenhouse gas emissions** increased again. We are still heading in the opposite direction to that required by the **Paris agreement**."

The report, which is published in partnership with KPMG and the consultancy Kearney, found that renewable energy sources – excluding hydro power – met just 7.5% of the world's energy demand last year. This represents an increase of nearly 1% over the previous year, driven by record growth in wind and **solar energy**. Solar generation climbed by 25% in 2022 while wind power output grew by 13.5% compared with the year before.

However, the renewable energy boom was eclipsed by a modest rise in global energy consumption of 1.1% last year – compared to a 5.5% increase in 2021 – which meant more oil and coal was burnt to meet demand, the report found.

Simon Virley, the head of energy and natural resources at KPMG, said: "Despite record growth in renewables, the share of world energy still coming from fossil fuels remains stubbornly stuck at 82%, which should act as a clarion call for governments to inject more urgency into the energy transition."

Global oil demand rose by 2.9m barrels a day last year to reach an average of 97.3m bpd for 2022, in part due to the return of global economic activity after the Covid pandemic, according to the Energy Institute.

At the same time, demand for coal climbed to highs not seen since 2014, rising 0.6% compared with 2021, driven by demand in India and China, the report said. The appetite for coal power increased in line with record high prices for gas in Europe and Asia following **Russia's invasion of Ukraine**. Gas made up 24% of the world's energy use last year, down from 25% the year before, but gas production remained relatively steady.

The Energy Institute warned that stubbornly high energy-related emissions risk derailing the aims of the **Paris climate agreement** unless urgent action is taken by global governments, according to the report. Under the Paris accord emissions should fall by half by the end of the decade to avoid triggering catastrophic levels of global heating.

Richard Forrest, the head of global sustainability at Kearney, said the rise in greenhouse gas emissions reinforced the need for “urgent action to get the world on track to meet the Paris targets”. He added that the need to deliver clean, affordable and secure energy “has never been greater”.