

IEA: Carbon emissions hit record high in 2018



Global energy-related carbon emissions rose to a record high last year as energy demand and coal use increased, mainly in Asia, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Tuesday.

Energy-related CO₂ emissions rose by 1.7 percent to 33.1 billion tonnes from the previous year, the highest rate of growth since 2013, with the power sector accounting for almost two-thirds of this growth, according to IEA estimates.

The United States' CO₂ emissions grew by 3.1 percent in 2018, reversing a decline a year earlier, while China's emissions rose by 2.5 percent and India's by 4.5 percent.

Global energy demand grew by 2.3 percent in 2018, nearly twice the average rate of growth since 2010, driven by a strong global economy and higher heating and cooling demand in some parts of the world, the IEA said.

Global gas demand increased at its fastest rate since 2010, up 4.6 percent from a year earlier, driven by higher demand as switching from gas to coal increased.

“Coal-to-gas switching avoided almost 60 million tonnes of coal demand, with the transition to less carbon-intensive natural gas helping to avert 95 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions,” the IEA said. “Without this coal-to-gas switch, the increase in emissions would have been more than 15 percent greater,” it added.