
Vietnam may need to start importing coal as early as 2012

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VietNamNet Bridge reported that Vietnam may need to start importing coal as early as 2012, three years earlier than expected, to meet its electricity demands.

The Vietnam Coal & Mineral Industries Group said that it would be able to supply enough coal for the nation's electricity needs until 2011 but would need to start importing it in 2012.

According to a report by Ministry of Industry & Trade, the need to import parallels the country's demand for electricity, which is expected to increase by 17% to 20% a year.

Dr Pham Khanh Toan director of the Institute of Energy of Viet Nam said that due to the country's rising reliance on thermal power generation and the Government's increasing power generation targets, much more coal than is currently being produced domestically would be needed.

Mr Toan said that the sector was already failing to meet Government targets as in the fourth quarter of 2009 the domestic electricity industry produced an extra 1,400 MW instead of the targeted additional 3.393 MW.

The Ministry of Industry & Trade report said that in order to meet electricity demands for the period from now to 2025, Viet Nam will need about 4,000 MW more every year. As hydropower resources have nearly been fully exploited, and natural gas resources are limited, the country will have to rely on coal run thermal power plants.

The report stated the demand for coal for power production is estimated to hit 32.5 million tonnes in 2013 and 44 million tonnes in 2015.

Vinacomin estimated that the volume of imported coal would be around 10 million tonnes in 2012. It will be increasing year by year and reach about 28 million tonnes in 2015 and 66 million tonnes in 2020. The majority of imported coal would be for thermal power plants.

(Sourced from VietNamNet Bridge)

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