

# Coal will remain “cornerstone fuel” in global energy economy

Despite being under pressure in the US, coal fired generation will continue to play a key role in power generation globally.

While stricter emissions regulations and low gas prices are forcing the widespread closure of coal fired power plants in the US, coal fired generation continues to show strong growth in Asia, Africa and even Europe.

A recent report: *21st Century Coal – Advanced Technology and Global Energy Solution*, by the International Energy Agency’s (IEA) Coal Industry Advisory Board (CAIB) stated: “Coal will remain the cornerstone fuel in the global energy economy for decades to come.”

The key message of the report focuses on improving efficiencies for advanced coal fired power generation as a first step to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It states: “An estimated 59 Gt of reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from coal power could have been achieved, had new coal units over the past 50 years used the highest efficiency technology available when built.”

The international coal industry welcomed the publication of the new report calling it an important step on the

pathway to near-zero emissions coal.

The report also highlights the transformational potential of CCUS (Carbon Capture Use and Storage) for achieving near-zero emissions from coal fired power generation, including using EOR (Enhanced Oil Recovery) to strengthen the business case for CCS.

In its conclusion the report said in 2013, the IEA should leverage its stature and undertake a special initiative to “re-educate OECD leaders” that coal will remain the cornerstone fuel, and on “other aspects of world energy”.

Commenting on the release of the report, Milton Catelin, chief executive of the World Coal Association (WCA) said: “This report is an important piece of advice to the International Energy Agency and global policymakers on the role of coal in a carbon-constrained world.”

According to Assocarboni, the Italian Coal Industry Association, over the past decade, global coal demand increased by approximately 55 per cent, a higher growth in terms of both volume and percentage than any other energy source.