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NEW PATHWAYS

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Powering Past Coal Alliance

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Disclamer

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

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Commitment: Government members of the Power Past Coal Alliance (PPCA) commit to phasing out existing unabated coal power generation and to a moratorium on any new coal power stations without operational carbon capture and storage (CCS). The Declaration foresees **phasing out unabated coal power by 2030 in the OECD and the EU and by 2040 in the rest of the world**. Some countries (Germany, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Croatia) have set their own targets (2040).

Institutional robustness

- Staff & secretariat
- Governance structure
- Budget transparency
- Openness
- Monitoring & reporting
- Engagement & outreach
- Target accountability
- Output effectiveness

Legend: High Medium Low No data

Key moments

2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026

2017: Launch of the PPCA and the PPCA Declaration at COP23

Initial signatories: 27 national, provincial, state and city governments

2019: Launch of Finance Principles

2020: PPCA reaches nearly 100 members

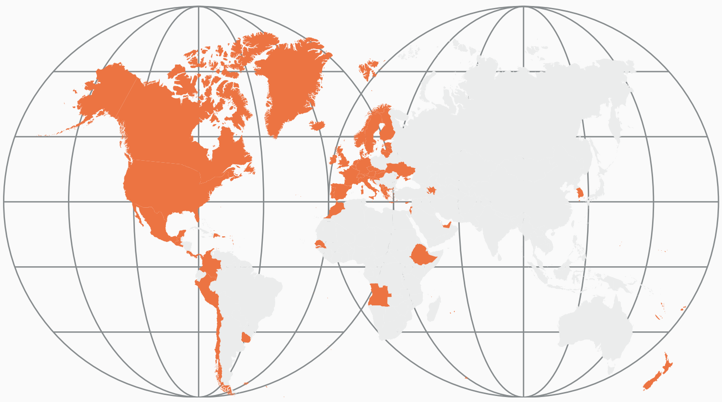
2021: First PPCA Global Summit

51 new members join

2024: Launch of revised set of Finance Principles

2026: PPCA has over 180 members

Signatories

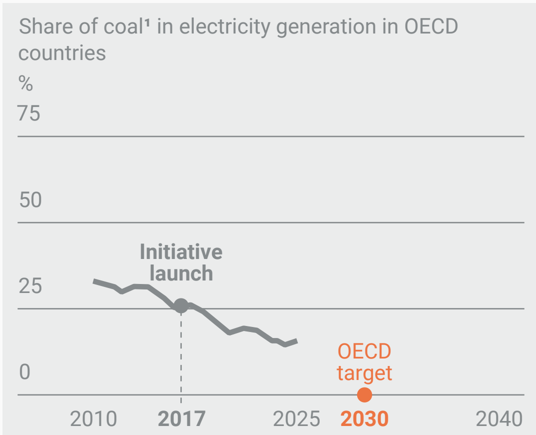


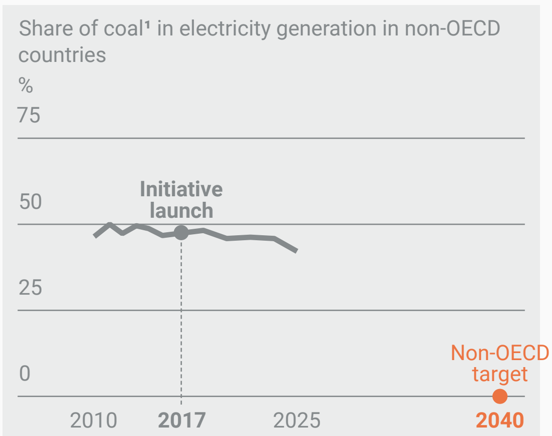
65 national governments; **52** subnational governments; **18** utilities; **28** finance institutions; **19** private sector organisations

Study	Abatement potential
Roelfsema et al. (2026)	Impact of quantifiable COP26 and COP28 initiatives on energy supply (electricity and heat), which include the PPCA: A reduction of **2.3 $GtCO_2e$/yr** below current policies for signatories and of **2.9 $GtCO_2e$/yr** for global implementation in 2030.
Kuramochi et al. (2024)	Impact of early coal phase-out in alignment with net-zero: **1.4 $GtCO_2e$/yr** for all signatories, and **3.8 $GtCO_2e$/yr** globally by 2030.
Muttitt et al. (2023)	Impact of constraining coal decline to the PPCA timeline (2050 in non-OECD): annual change in CO_2 emissions accelerates in the Global North (**-10.4** to **-16.6** in the US; **-8.1** to **-12.5** in Europe), but cumulative emissions until 2045 increase.
Jewell et al. (2019)	Avoided emissions from the premature retirement of coal power plants pledged by PPCA members: **1.6 $GtCO_2$** cumulatively between 2019 and 2050, largely due to the advanced age of coal fleets and considering typical technical lifetimes.

Global progress

Takeaway: The share of coal in power generation is declining in both OECD and non-OECD countries, but not quite quickly enough: it currently stands at 16% in OECD countries and 42% in non-OECD countries.



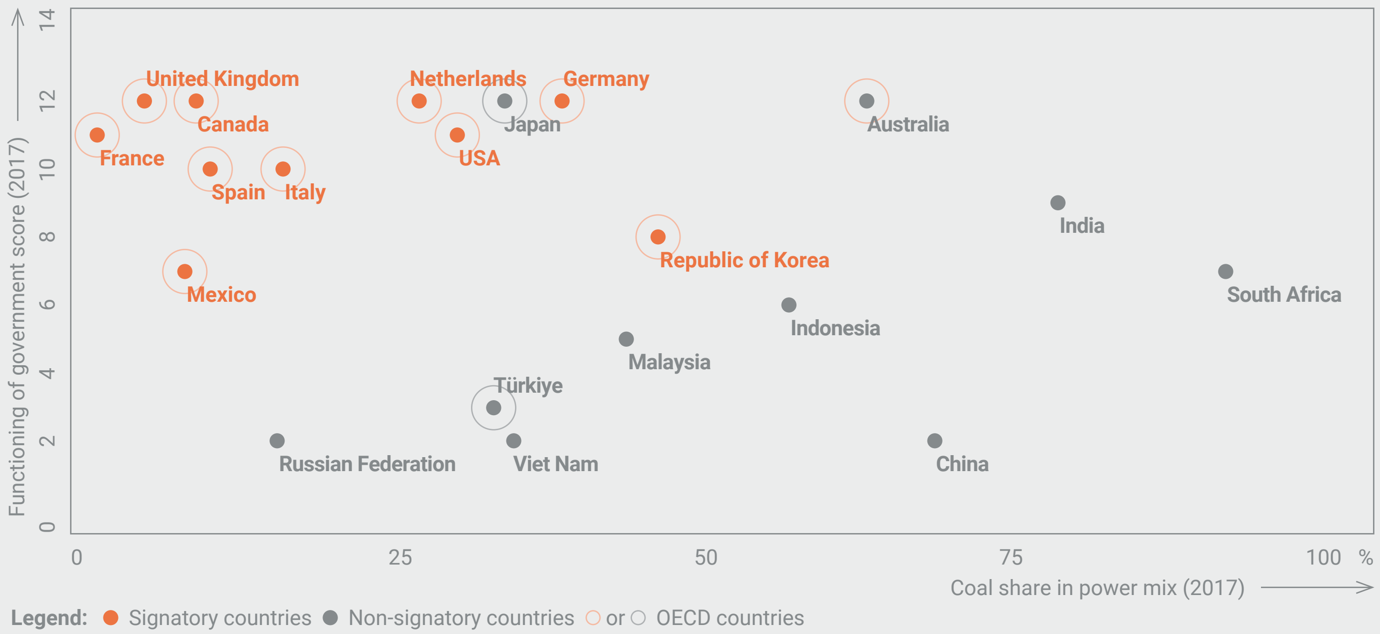


1 The coal share is based on the total amount of coal-fired generation, including coal with CCS. The target refers to the phase-out of unabated coal power.

Ambition

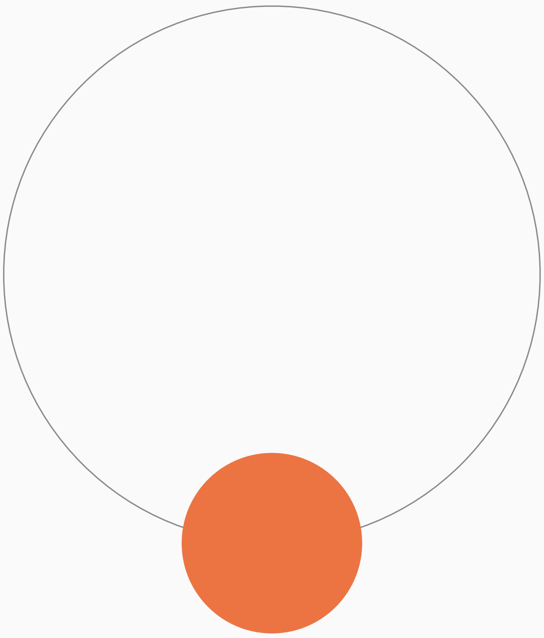
Takeaway: At the time of launch, PPCA signatories were characterised by well-functioning governments and a low share of coal.

Coal share in power mix and functioning of government at initiative launch



Significance

Takeaway: PPCA signatories represent only a small share of global coal generation, yet scaling up participation worldwide is critical given that coal-fired power alone accounts for roughly 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

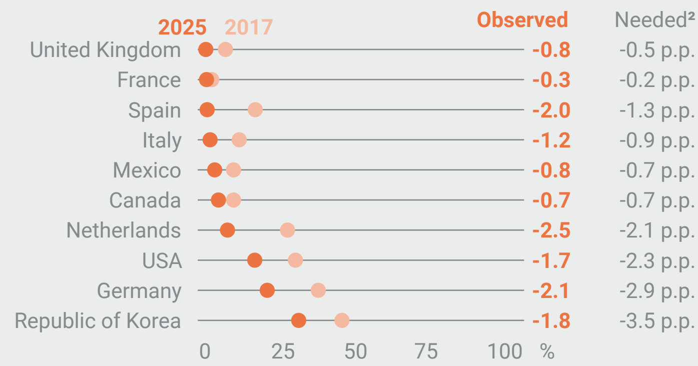


11% Signatories' share of total coal generation (2025)

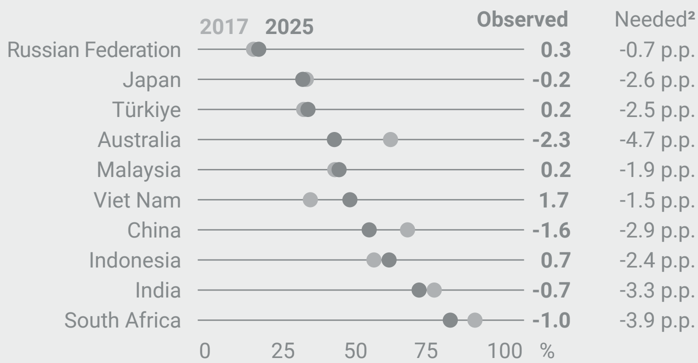
Country-specific progress since initiative launch

Takeaway: On average, signatory countries are achieving a higher annual reduction in their coal usage than non-signatory countries. Several signatory countries are (almost) on track to meet their targets.

Observed and needed average annual change of electricity generation share of coal in **signatory countries**



Observed and needed average annual change of electricity generation share of coal in **non-signatory countries**



2 Required annual change rate to meet target (assuming a linear trajectory between launch and target year). Non-signatory countries have not adopted any targets; the benchmark reflects the change required to match signatory commitments.

Case study: Morocco

Morocco joined the PPCA in 2023, announcing its membership during COP28 in Dubai. At the time, coal accounted for over 60% of power generation and the Kingdom did not yet have a formal coal phase-out date. Two years later, Morocco committed to phasing out coal power by 2040 in its updated NDC – conditional on adequate international support.

Experts directly attribute this commitment to Morocco's PPCA membership, which helped translate intent into a concrete date, and policymakers have emphasised their commitment to working with the PPCA on financial and technical levers. Meanwhile, the Kingdom has stopped planning new coal plants, aligning with Morocco's earlier 'No new coal' commitment of 2021. The country has also set ambitious renewable energy targets to exploit its vast renewable energy potential.

Related initiatives: No New Coal Compact; Coal Transition Commission; Global Coal to Clean Power Transition Statement; GBT Power

Related GST effort area: (28b) accelerating efforts towards the phase-down of unabated coal power

Case study: Germany

Germany joined the PPCA in 2019, announcing its membership ahead of the UN Climate Action Summit and at the peak of youth climate strikes. Earlier that year, the 'Coal Commission' – a multi-stakeholder body set up by the German federal government – had suggested a phase-out by 2038. While this process was praised for being inclusive, it was simultaneously criticised for its lack of ambition. Nonetheless, in 2020, the Coal Phase-Out Act mandated the end of coal-fired power generation by 2038.

Ultimately, the coal exit was primarily negotiated domestically, and the PPCA membership did not accelerate the timeline. Policymakers claimed that it did send a strong signal internationally. Importantly, the 2038 target is inconsistent with the PPCA's own rules. The German government in 2021 wanted to bring this target forward to 2030 but did not – despite experts expecting a market-driven phase-out ahead of 2038.

Key takeaways

01 As one of the longest-standing international climate initiatives, the PPCA is characterised by relatively high institutional robustness and international recognition. It has played a significant role in normalising time-bound coal phase-out targets.

02 Although the PPCA did not deliver substantial avoided emissions in its early years, it has one of the largest abatement potentials of any initiative – provided that there is global participation. However, the world's two largest coal users, China and India, are not members and do not have coal phase-out plans.

03 Member countries are characterised by relatively well-functioning governments, as well as relatively low shares of coal in their power mixes. Together, the 65 national government members account for just 11% of total coal power generation.

04 In some cases, for example Morocco, joining the PPCA has likely prompted the formulation of a domestic phase-out target. In other cases, such as New Zealand and Norway, member countries do not even mention coal phase-out plans in their latest NDCs.

05 Despite favourable economics and multiple social and environmental co-benefits, global progress on phasing out coal remains off track for a 1.5°C-aligned pathway. Several countries are leading the way by achieving higher reduction rates than required, demonstrating that it can be done.

Sources:

Clean Energy Wire (2024): German government says no new law planned to ensure coal exit.

Climate Action Tracker (2023): Morocco. Policies and Action.

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Muttit et al. (2023): Socio-political feasibility of coal power phase-out.

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PPCA (2026). The end of coal is in sight.

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