Ember coal to clean energy

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Coal mines emit more methane than the gas industry, yet this pollution is often overlooked. Half of methane emissions from coal mines can be captured with proven, cost-effective technologies.

Ember, formerly Sandbag, is an independent global energy think tank that uses data and policy to accelerate the clean energy transition.[1][2][3][4][5] Headquartered in the UK,[6] the organisation was launched in 2008 by Bryony Worthington.

Ember was originally founded in 2008 as Sandbag, focussing on the European Union"s Emission Trading Scheme, allowing its members to campaign to reduce the number of permits in circulation and to purchase permits and cancel them.

Sandbag was re-branded as Ember in 2020[7] with a focus on the global power sector, while a separate Brussels-based organisation was established to continue work on the ETS.[8]

Ember"s open data covers annual electricity generation data for over 200 countries and regions, and monthly electricity generation data for 85 countries and regions.[32] It also provides 16 open data tools which track regional and global electricity transitions and coal mine methane emissions standards.[33]

Setting up improved monitoring and implementing existing technologies to utilise or destroy methane should be the first priority for all coal producing countries.

According to the IEA, 53% of methane emissions from coal mines could be captured for an average cost of $230 USD per tonne of methane. The biggest wins can be had by starting with super-emitting mines.

As clean energy replaces coal in the electricity and steel sectors, the process of closing coal mines will need to ensure that methane is trapped, for example by flooding mines.

Satellites are starting to show how big the issue is. However, these are most effective when used in conjunction with other forms of monitoring. Greater attention will mean that countries and companies won"t be able to ignore their emissions for much longer.

Ember launched in 2020 with a focus on shifting the world from coal to clean electricity. While analysing the impact of coal power on the climate, it became clear that the massive methane emissions from coal mining were being overlooked and drastically underestimated.

We set up a specialist unit working on coal mine methane to galvanise action in the world"s biggest emitters,

by using data and analysis to highlight the scale of the issue and the solutions.

Contact us for free full report

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