

The Paris Mirage - *Reducing emissions while increasing them*

Many governments will pledge to reduce their countries' CO2 emissions at COP21. Paradoxically, at the same time, most are working to increase them. Mitigation is not yet framed in terms of extraction of fossil fuels, but rather exclusively in terms of "emitting". This allows extraction to go on, barely affected by mitigation efforts. Climate policy does not yet speak to mining and extraction policy. Governments continue to provide subsidies for fossil fuel extraction, even to exploration. The biggest national extraction sectors that in 2014 caused more than half a gigaton of CO2 emissions each are shown in Figure 1. Together, they are responsible for a total of 20 out of 35 gigatons of global fossil fuel CO2 emissions.

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| 1. China coal: 7.7 Gt ↑ | 5. Saudi Arabia oil: 1.3 Gt ↑ | 9. Australia coal: 1.0 Gt ↑ |
| 2. USA coal: 1.8 Gt ↓ | 6. India coal: 1.3 Gt ↑ | 10. Indonesia coal: 0.9 Gt ↑ |
| 3. USA gas: 1.5 Gt ↑ | 7. Russia oil: 1.3 Gt ↑ | 11. Russia coal: 0.7 Gt ↑ |
| 4. USA oil: 1.3 Gt ↑ | 8. Russia gas: 1.2 Gt → | 12. South Africa coal: 0.5 Gt ↑ |

Figure 1. Key extraction sectors with annual CO2 emissions and 5-year-trends (arrows)

What will COP21 achieve to turn these trends around and thus address the key driver of the climate crisis? The following table shows the same sectors, the size of their proven reserves, how many years they could keep extracting at the current level, and the expected impact of an assumed Paris Accord on their future development - based on currently submitted INDCs.

Sector	Extraction (GtCO2/year)	Reserves (GtCO2)	Years (R/P ratio)	Paris Accord Impact
China coal	7.7	229.0	30	No impact (intensity target)
USA coal	1.8	474.6	262	Negative impact
USA gas	1.5	19.5	13	No impact (coal substitution)
USA oil	1.3	15.4	11	No impact (import substitution)
Saudi Arabia oil	1.3	84.6	64	No impact (no target & export)
India coal	1.3	121.2	94	No impact (intensity target)
Russia oil	1.2	32.7	26	No impact (hot air & export)
Russia gas	1.2	65.3	56	No impact (hot air & export)
Australia coal	0.8	152.8	155	No impact (export)
Indonesia coal	0.9	56.0	61	Possibly small negative impact
Russia coal	0.7	314.0	441	No impact (hot air)
South Africa coal	0.5	60.3	116	Possibly negative impact

Figure 2. Sectoral impacts of an assumed Paris Accord over the next 15 years

The overall picture is very disappointing: fossil extraction will continue to increase in most places, in spite of the Paris Accord. It is essential to include the extraction sector in climate change mitigation policy. The amount of fossil extraction over the next 15 years is going to determine whether we will enter the danger zone of likely run-away climate change ([click here for a map of the terrain](#)). Unless we address extraction head on, COP21 will offer a mirage: a picture that looks like reducing emissions while we are in fact increasing them.

Sources: BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2015, own calculation