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Coal Consumption in China by [Jon Smith](#)

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Coal is inexpensive and abundant in China and with its economy based primarily on coal China is doing extremely well with a gross domestic product of 9.7%. Coal consumption in China is huge and is expanding to great heights.

The demand for coal in China is enormous. This is because 80% of the electricity generated is supplied from coal. The nation is the biggest consumer of coal in the world. In the year 2010 China's coal consumption was 3.2 billion metric tonnes per annum and with greater demand the consumption will touch new figures this year. Rapid urbanization and the huge population of middle class using electrical gadgets of all kinds have led to such great heights of coal consumption in China.

Coal Consumption

Coal is largely used to generate electricity. The State Power Grid Corporation distributes coal power in China. Among the industries, the steel industry is the main user of coal. Coal is also used for domestic purposes although it is not permitted in the cities. Nonetheless, it is used in the villages. People cook their food on coal fires. This is hazardous as toxic substances are emitted leading to health issues.

Sustaining Consumption

It is estimated that China has coal reserves of over 110 billion tonnes. If the nation consumes 10% of coal annually, then in 16 years or so its reserves will be used up. So in order to continue this increase of coal consumption in China, the infrastructure will have to be improved to transport coal. Secondly, water is an important resource for coal consumption. With increasing drought situations in China, it is becoming difficult to sustain the consumption. Lastly, the coal industry has not adhered to the safety standards that are seen in the other parts of the world. Hence to sustain China's coal consumption domestic supplies alone will not suffice, the country will have to rely on imports.

The pace at which China's coal consumption is heading has caused serious concerns for the environmentalists. Therefore, the capital city of Beijing has planned to limit its annual consumption to 20 million tons by 2015. Will this target be met is what environmentalists ask.

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