

PRESS RELEASE

Greenpeace activists construct “coal plant” at ADB Headquarters

Manila, 18 April 2007—Greenpeace activists today constructed a four-meter replica of a (smoke-spewing) coal plant at the main entrance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) headquarters in Manila.

The Bank has been under heavy criticism for its extensive funding of fossil fuel projects in Asia which have massively contributed to the region's greenhouse gas emissions and abetted dangerous climate change. The protest came two weeks ahead of the Bank's Annual Governors Meeting in Kyoto, birthplace of the Kyoto Protocol, the only legally-binding global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

“The Bank should accept this coal plant as a graphic reminder of the ADB's role in funding climate change in Asia. Since the ADB continues to finance the construction of a number of coal-fired power plants across Asia, we are building one right at its doorsteps. Coal plants should not be built here nor anywhere else, but because the Bank loves them so much we are presenting them this gift” said Jasper Inventor, Greenpeace Climate and Energy Campaigner.

The most recent report by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified Asia as one of the regions most vulnerable to the grave impacts of climate change. Among those who will be the worst affected are Asia's poorest nations. The report suggests that between 1.1 billion and 3.2 billion people will face water shortages and between 200 million and 600 million will confront hunger by 2080 as global warming causes heat waves, fires, droughts and storms.

“The ADB's mission is to alleviate the plight of the poor in Asia. But, by financing some of the most polluting, carbon-intensive, greenhouse gas emitting power projects in Asia such as coal power plants, the ADB is guilty of causing climate change and exacerbating poverty in the region,” said Inventor.

Fossil fuel energy sources are a major cause of climate change, with coal being the most carbon-intensive and climate-damaging. The ADB, however, has invested heavily in coal plants in Asia. In Thailand it financed the gigantic 2400 megawatt (MW) coal-fired plant in Mae Moh, and another 1434 MW power plant in Rayong. In the Philippines, the Bank directly financed the 600 MW Masinloc coal-fired power plant in Zambales Province and helped finance the transmission lines for the 1200 MW Sual coal plant.

The Bank's coal investments continue. In 2006, the ADB has approved the financing of two large coal projects in India: the 2,980 MW Sipat Super Thermal Power Project and the 1,500 MW Kahalgaon Super Thermal Power Project Stage II extension. It is looking at financing a 1,000 MW coal-fired power plant in Vietnam and a coal mine in Phulbari, Bangladesh that will displace over 50,000 people.

Asia's emissions represent nearly one-quarter of the global greenhouse gas emissions today compared to its previous one-tenth share in the early 70s. This is due to the steep increase in the region's energy consumption, which grew by 230% in the period 1973 to 2003, compared to the average 75% global increase.

Greenpeace asserts that global CO2 emission reductions of 50 percent by 2050 are required if we are to have a chance of preventing the worst impacts of climate change. Such cuts are technically and economically possible if we change the way we produce and use energy. What is lacking is the right policy framework and real leadership by multilateral institutions such as the ADB.

“The ADB has the power to jumpstart an energy revolution in Asia—a revolution that leaves behind climate-damaging fossil fuels and drives the massive expansion of renewable energy and energy efficiency programs. These are the real solutions that the ADB should support if it truly wants to fight poverty and provide its member countries with lasting energy security,” said Inventor.

Greenpeace is an independent, campaigning organization which uses non-violent, creative confrontation to expose global environment problems, and to force the solutions which are essential to a green and peaceful future.

For more information:

Jasper Inventor, Climate and Energy Campaigner, +63 917 300 9567
Lea Guerrero, Media Campaigner, +63 916 374 4969, +63 2 434 7034