World Energy Body Warns Nations Must Drop Fossil Fuels, Fast

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A landmark report from the International Energy Agency says nations need to move faster and more aggressively to cut greenhouse gas emissions and avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change.

The report, released on Tuesday,警告 world leaders that the world is on track to produce significantly more greenhouse gas emissions than could be safely absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere to limit global warming to 1.5 Celsius above preindustrial levels. It calls for an immediate end to new oil and gas exploration and calls for a major shift to carbon-free energy by 2050.

"The challenge is huge, the stakes are high and the risks are real," said Fatih Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency, in a statement. "If we don't act now, the window of opportunity to avoid the most harmful consequences of climate change will close forever."

To help nations make the transition to cleaner energy, the agency outlined a potential timetable:

- **2022:** The world's advanced economies would need to set a target to be carbon-neutral by 2050, and developing nations would need to outline plans on how they would reduce their emissions by 2030.
- **2025:** All new cars and trucks sold in Europe and China would need to be zero-emission. By 2030, the majority of light-duty vehicles would need to be electric.
- **2030:** By 2035, the world's advanced economies would need to be zero-carbon. By 2040, the world as a whole would need to be on track to achieve the goal of net-zero emissions.
- **2050:** By 2050, the world would need to be on track to achieve the goal of net-zero emissions.

"The international community must act now to keep global warming to a manageable level," said UN climate chief Patricia Espinosa. "We need everyone, including governments, businesses, investors and citizens, to focus from all governments — working together with one another — to achieve this goal."

The report concludes that climate change is already here, with heat waves and wildfires growing more frequent and intense in recent years. But it also says that the worst is yet to come unless nations make a significant shift in their energy policies.

"The world can make enormous strides in cutting emissions over the next decade, but the window is closing quickly," said Stephen Comstock, the institute's executive director. "If the world's governments want to change course quickly, the consequences of inaction will be catastrophic."

Other challenges abound. While a push for clean energy could create some 30 million new jobs globally, another 5 million people would need to move from the production of fossil fuels to the production of renewable energy. The International Energy Agency said that it would need to move much faster and more aggressively away from fossil fuels.

Governments will have to pay careful attention to the geopolitical risk of a shift away from fossil fuels. For instance, mining for critical metals such as cobalt would need to move much faster and more aggressively away from China, where the country is largely responsible for the production of cobalt.

The shift away from fossil fuels would also require a crash research program to improve clean energy technologies. It would also require a significant increase in investment capital to decarbonize.

"The transformation on the scale necessary would require governments to pay much greater attention to the economic and geopolitical implications of profound shifts in the energy sector," said Dr. Victor. "We need to act now to ensure a smooth transition."