

Non renewable energy use

If we want to comply with the Paris Agreement and prevent the global temperature from increasing by more than 2°C this century, it is essential that 60 % of the oil still available, as well as 90 % of the coal, remain unused underground. This comes from a recent study published in Nature, which encourages us to stop using non-renewable energies to save ourselves from a climate disaster. The dangers of these energy sources extend far beyond global warming. We will tell you more about the environmental impacts of non-renewable energies.

Let's start with a significant fact - in just one year, humans consume what nature has taken millions of years to produce. This is the case with fossil fuels, for example. It takes thousands or millions of years for them to form, and in a few short decades we will have exhausted all the reserves of these energy sources.

Coal, oil and natural gas are known as non-renewable sources of energy because they exist in limited quantities in nature. In other words, they are generated from finite resources or they take an extremely long time to regenerate.

Nuclear energy is also a non-renewable energy source because the uranium it uses as fuel does not regenerate on its own. Nevertheless, it does help to fight against climate change, because it does not emit CO₂ or greenhouse gases.

These resources are found in nature, but they disappear as they are used. According to a recent study published in the scientific journal Nature, oil reserves will be depleted by 2043. The same applies to coal and natural gas - the date when we will no longer have these fossil fuels is fast approaching. But the reason why we must urgently seek new sources of energy is not because these resources are running out, but because of the serious environmental impact of non-renewable energies on our planet.

Fossil fuels account for 80 % of current global demand for primary energy, and the energy system is the source of approximately two-thirds of worldwide CO₂ emissions.

Both CO₂ and other greenhouse gases are able to accumulate and emit heat. And, as the experts have shown, an increase in the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere leads to a significant increase in the Earth's temperature. Today, the Earth's temperature has already increased by over 1°C since the pre-industrial era. You can read more about it [here](#).

If current trends continue - i.e. if the current share of fossil fuels is maintained and the forecast that energy demand will double by 2050 proves to be correct - we will be a long way from keeping the global temperature rise to 2°C, never mind 1.5°C. Such warming would have disastrous consequences for the planet and its climate.

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Furthermore, on the list of environmental disasters resulting from human activities, oil slicks are among the most serious and also the most common. One of the most affected areas on the planet is the Amazon.

Having been affected since 2014 by frequent oil spills, nearly 400 communities in the Peruvian Amazon have lead, cadmium, mercury and other heavy metals in their system.

The province of Sucumb?os, part of the Ecuadorian Amazon, is one of the areas most affected by oil pollution. Food, water and air are affected by spills. The rainforest is full of mecheros, huge chimneys that burn the exhaust gases from oil extraction and also pollute rainwater, the primary source of water for the area's inhabitants.

Where nuclear energy is concerned, it is necessary to handle radioactive waste correctly. This is waste that cannot be recycled and must be stored very safely because it can generate radioactivity for centuries and even millennia. Nuclear waste has to be managed by ensuring maximum safety, as radioactivity is harmful to the health of people and the planet. Radioactivity released in large quantities is lethal and can also cause deformities and disease in people living in the area over several generations.

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Web: <https://hollanddutch tours.nl/contact-us/>

Email: energystorage2000@gmail.com

WhatsApp: 8613816583346

