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Geo-Engineering

Report: Policymakers must incentivise carbon capture to hit Paris targets



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Carbon capture technology is vital for hitting Paris climate targets, researchers say | Credit: Siemens

Governments must decide who is responsible for capturing carbon and incentivise the technology's adoption on a 'gigatonne scale', warn Norwegian scientists

Without rapid action from policymakers to kickstart a large scale carbon capture industry the world is in danger of missing its climate targets under the Paris Agreement, Norwegian scientists warned today.

Swift action is needed to accelerate development of the nascent carbon capture and storage (CCS) sector into a vast industry that can remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere at the "gigatonne scale" scientists from the CICERO Center for International Climate Research in Oslo warn.

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Without rapid progress the world may be unable to avert dangerous temperature rises of more than 2C - the upper threshold set by the Paris Agreement and identified by scientists as the point after which 'dangerous' greenhouse gas feedback loops become increasingly likely.

In a paper **published today in the scientific journal *Nature***, the scientists call on policymakers to undertake three concrete actions to push forward with carbon dioxide removal from the atmosphere, which they claim could provide a cost-effective way to decarbonise 'hard-to-reach' industries such as agriculture.

First they call on governments to identify which sectors of society and which organisations should be responsible for leading carbon capture development. They also urge governments to talk with other nations to consider which countries should spearhead carbon capture development.

Secondly, they urge policymakers to develop a detailed accounting system to track responsibilities - including the financial flows - for carbon capture development.

Finally, they call on governments to produce policy portfolios to incentivise the technology's widespread adoption, that crucially "go beyond encouraging small-scale boutique applications to support the necessary 'gigatonne' scale".

The UK's Committee on Climate Change has identified CCS as an essential component of the UK's carbon-cutting efforts if it is to meet 2050 targets at the least cost, but the government's CCS strategy is in flux after it unexpectedly axed a £1bn project in 2015.

Although CCS is better developed in other markets, such as Canada, it is still far from the stage where it can play a major role in global decarbonisation.



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