

The Australia Institute

Research that matters.

English translation of [Swedish article](#) featuring Richard Denniss.



Han vill att Sverige ställer sig bakom förbud mot nya kolgruvor

Fredagen den 30 oktober 2015, kl. 21.21



Richard Denniss är antikolkraftskämpe och chefsekonom på den australienska tankesmedjan The Institute. Nyligen var han på besök i Sverige för att få svenska politiker att ställa sig bakom ett förbud mot nya kolgruvor.

He wants Sweden to support a global moratorium on new coal mines

Richard Denniss is an anti-coal activist and Chief Economist at the Australian think tank The Australia Institute. He recently visited Sweden to convince Swedish politicians to get behind an initiative to forbid new coal mines.

Kiribati's president Anote Tong has through a letter asked prime ministers of the world to support a global moratorium on new coal mines, which Australian Richard Denniss has responded to with the seriousness it deserves.

An increase of two degrees Celsius and rising sea levels would make it impossible to live in major parts of Kiribati and many other low-lying countries.

Richard Denniss from Australia has long been opposed to his own country's poor decisions and now the government is planning to build 50 new coal mines. The largest of them, Adani/Carmichael, is 40 kilometres long and 10 kilometres wide, which Supermiljobloggen has written more about [here](#).

When the rest of the world is planning to reduce their emissions, Australia is about to double their coal exports.

"Australia has a larger share in world's coal market than Saudi Arabia has in the world's oil market. The price of coal will fall even lower when we double our coal exports. There is no possibility of combatting climate change if we build these coal mines. Kiribati will be flooded."

Denniss says that many believe that Sweden will become the first country in Europe to advocate for a global moratorium on new coal mines, and he wants Sweden to take on a leading role.

"Eleven island nations in the Pacific Ocean have already said that they support it. I have started talking to people in Northern Europe and many say that it is most likely that Sweden will be the first European nation to get behind this initiative. President Tong is asking for help and I am optimistic that Sweden will take a leading role. Kiribati is asking a simple question: Does the world need more coal mines or not?"

Denniss says that the winners of a moratorium on new coal mines would be the owners of existing coal mines. Cheap coal is the biggest threat to renewable energy.

"Australia plans to flood the world with cheap coal. A moratorium on new coal mines would keep the coal price high, which is good. Low coal prices encourage the construction of new coal mines."

But what about the owners of existing coal mines? Their emissions have to be reduced as well?

"We need to go further than a moratorium on new coal mines. However, we cannot begin to go forward until we have stopped going backwards."

Low coal prices could hurt the existing owners of coal mines but it would also mean that developing countries will continue to build new coal power stations according to Denniss. A moratorium on new coal mines would decrease the supply when the older coal mines are running out of coal.

“We can use rules and compensation to create a faster change if it does not go fast enough. However, and this is my core message, there is no point in talking about phasing out coal when people still are able to build new coal mines.”

Denniss wants to direct attention to Australia’s coal mines abroad. He believes that this can affect the opinion within the country and that is very important in the lead-up to Paris.

“When other countries talk about this, we talk about it in Australia. When the eleven Pacific island nations took this stance, it became news in Australia. I do not know if we in Australia would be talking about it if there was no global discussion about a global moratorium on new coal mines. More Australians will question these new coal mines if more nations say that the world would be better off without them.

Australia does not want the Paris-meeting to succeed. We want to sell more coal. If more people realize this before Paris, less will listen to Australia during the climate negotiations.”