



## **Environment Digest 16**

**April 29<sup>th</sup> 2020**

Lockdown regulations across the globe have confined the majority of people to their homes, with movement restricted to the provision and access of essential services and goods. Most governments have managed to respond with the needed urgency, and have implemented various approaches to safely monitor COVID-19. These include closing borders and businesses, grounding airlines, and restricting unnecessary human movement. Some of these closures and restrictions have contributed to the following effects, as observed here and abroad:

### **Energy use**

The declines in mass transportation; office heating and lighting; conferencing and hospitality; and manufacturing, processing and trade, have all resulted in drastic reductions in energy consumption. This, in turn, has required lower inputs into energy generation processes as demand continues to drop. On the other hand, residential energy demand continues to fluctuate, as influenced by various socio-economic factors and seasonal changes in different parts of the world.

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/united-states-energy-electricity-power-coronavirus-covid19/>

<https://m.engineeringnews.co.za/article/covid-19-leads-to-energy-curtailment-issues-2020-04-17>

### **Carbon emissions**

Energy generation is one of the most significant contributing activities to carbon emissions, especially for entities such as South Africa's Eskom, which is heavily reliant on the burning of coal to produce electricity. This is followed by road and air travel, which contribute a significant amount of carbon emissions. During lockdown, most travel is restricted-except for essential services.

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-coronavirus-has-temporarily-reduced-chinas-co2-emissions-by-a-quarter>

<https://time.com/5812741/air-pollution-coronavirus/>

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-04-27/in-global-coronavirus-energy-slump-coal-is-the-biggest-loser?srnd=premium>

### **The new normal**

There is a growing concern about the COVID-19 aftermath; will life as we know it return to normal or will this mark the beginning of a 'new normal'? Some people are hoping that governments and

societies will maintain the momentum and be prepared to explore the present opportunity to address the world's other pressing challenges with the same urgency that the COVID-19 crisis is being addressed with.

<https://www.esi-africa.com/industry-sectors/renewable-energy/renewable-energy-in-the-time-of-covid-19/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/31/how-will-the-world-emerge-from-the-coronavirus-crisis>

---

**Lovedonia Mkansi**  
**Project Co-ordinator**