



# COMMODITIES AT A GLANCE

Special issue on energy

N°3 - February 2012



UNITED NATIONS



## **INTRODUCTION**

This edition of the Commodities at a Glance has been prepared by the Special Unit on Commodities (SUC) of UNCTAD. The publication aims to collect, present and disseminate accurate and relevant statistical information linked to international primary commodity markets in a clear, concise and friendly format.

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## **STATISTICAL DATA SOURCES**

All statistical data sources for this publication are indicated under each specific graph.

## **NOTES**

The third revision of the Standard International Trade Classification has been used throughout this document for trade statistics.

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UNCTAD/SUC/2011/6

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# Facts and figures: PRIMARY ENERGY

## Making news this quarter

This quarter's edition of UNCTAD's *Commodities at a Glance* describes world energy trade, price, production and consumption trends, with a particular focus on Africa. Over the last three decades, world consumption of primary energy nearly doubled from 280 quadrillion British thermal unit (BTU) in 1980 to 490 quadrillion Btu in 2008 (see Figure 4). A number of factors have been attributed to this dramatic increase in consumption including global economic growth, rapidly industrializing developing countries, increasing world population and urbanization. Over the next two decades, the world population is forecast to grow from approximately 7 billion to 8.32 billion, <sup>1</sup> with the likelihood of rising demand for primary energy resources. International Energy Agency (IEA) projections suggest that between 2008 and 2035 global demand for such resources will increase by 36 per cent or 1.2 per cent per year on average. <sup>2</sup> Most of this projected increase is expected to come from non-OECD countries, particularly India and China, accounting for 18 per cent and 36 per cent respectively of this increase. <sup>3</sup> The Middle East is expected to experience the most rapid demand growth at 2 per cent per year largely due to fast growing energy demand sectors, such as petrochemical industries and power generation. Demand in Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, is also expected to grow as electricity supply needs to increase in response to population growth. However, a lack of infrastructure in the region is expected to limit access to primary energies, and demand growth is projected to match the world average at 1.2 per cent per year. Together, non-OECD countries will account for about 93 per cent of global primary energy demand growth by 2035. <sup>4</sup>

Since the 1970s, there have been significant changes in the composition of primary energy produced globally (see Figure 2). Crude oil production has decreased from 46 per cent of total primary energy in 1970 to 33 per cent in 2010; and by 2035 it is expected to decline further to 26 per cent. <sup>5</sup> Coal production was also in decline until the late 1990s, but the trend has reversed and coal production increased by 3.7 percentage points from its share of 24 per cent of total energy produced in the 1990s. The resurgence in coal use is driven by the growing number of power generation plants to meet high energy demand, particularly from China which consumed 48.2 per cent of total global coal consumption in 2010 and accounted for about two thirds of global production growth in 2010. <sup>6</sup>



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