

The cancellation of the Cayirhan B (800 MW), Agan (1580 MW) and Ayas (625 MW) coal projects contrasts starkly with a tender for 1 GW of solar auctioned recently. It received over 250 bids worth a potential 4 GW of solar capacity, demonstrating that interest and momentum is behind renewable energy while coal's prospects decline.

The three coal power plant projects accounting for ten percent of Turkey's planned coal pipeline have been now scrapped. Most notable was the license cancellation of Cayirhan B by the Electricity Market Regulatory Authority (EMRA). It was the first project to be privatised under a new law aimed at offering developers off-the-shelf sites, a strategy that places responsibility for securing permits and vital checks and balances, such as environmental impact assessments, land expropriation, and building permissions in the hands of state-owned company EÜAŞ, before offering them up to tender at private auctions. The second site offered under the same scheme, Alpu, in Eskişehir, has seen the procurement procedure repeatedly cancelled after no companies entered any of the seven tenders held for the site.

"Turkey's coal pipeline has been halved between 2016 and the end of 2020. The cancellation of a further 10 percent of projects shows that its coal industry is declining just as rapidly as the rest of Europe's," said Duygu Kutluay, Campaigner at Europe Beyond Coal. "Since 2016, the Turkish government has actively sought to make it as easy as possible for coal companies to simply move in and start operating, presenting coal projects as lucrative, no strings attached investments. But it's increasingly obvious that investors think the smart money is in Turkey's rich renewables potential rather than coal. The government should heed this message, and start diverting the support schemes it readily offers for coal to the clean energy transition instead."

The Hunutlu coal power plant in Adana is now the only coal plant under construction in Turkey. A recent report by WWF Turkey and SEFIA shows that the 1.7 billion dollar, Chinese-backed plant will need to operate for at least 26 years to repay its initial investment, with the situation likely to get worse as market conditions increasingly favour wind and solar over coal.

Source: eureporter.co