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ENVIRONMENT FRIENDLY COAL PROCESSING TECHNOLOGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF POLISH ENERGY SECTOR

PRZYJAZNE ŚRODOWISKU TECHNOLOGIE PRZETWÓRSTWA WĘGLA DLA ZRÓWNOWAŻONEGO ROZWOJU POLSKIEGO SEKTORA ENERGETYCZNEGO

Abstract: According to the projections, world net electricity production is predicted to increase from 18.0 trillion kWh in 2006 to 31.8 trillion kWh in 2030. Coal contribution to world electricity supply remains the highest and is said to even slightly increase to 43% in 2030. Being the most abundant and competitive, coal recoverable reserves could satisfy the world's energy needs in the perspective of about 120 years at the current consumption levels. There is, however, a need for further improvement of coal-fired power generation in terms of its economics and environmental impact. The so-called Clean Coal Technologies (CCT) enabling energy efficient and environmentally friendly use of coal include: coal upgrading, improvements in efficiency of existing power plants, advanced power generation technologies, near zero-emission technologies and technologies for CO₂ transport and storage. In the paper the future role of coal in energy systems with a special focus on Polish energy policy, and the main trends in coal processing in the aspect of Clean Coal Technologies are presented.

Keywords: coal, processing, energy

Introduction

A continuous increase in the demand as well as in the share of coal in the energy consumption and electricity production is declared in the reports and forecasts for energy sector. In 2006 the respective values equaled 11,800 Mt_{oe}, 27% and 42% [1]. The energy demand is expected to reach 16,950 Mt_{oe} in 2030 and the share of coal in the energy consumption and power generation are said to be on the similar significant levels of 28% and 42% for it is regarded as a safe and reliable fuel, available from large reserves and worldwide market free of geopolitical constraints, when compared with other fossil fuels as crude oil or natural gas.

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The estimates of coal R/P ratio (*proved reserves to production*) in 2009 support the forecast for its future major role in energy mix as its reserves are said to be sufficient for 122 years, while those of crude oil and natural gas for 42 and 60 years, respectively.

The prices of coal are generally lower and more predictable than prices of crude oil fluctuating in the last decade from about 14 to above 70 USD/bbl* (with a peak in 2008 of 100 USD/bbl) and prices of natural gas dependent on the latter ones [2]. Coal price levels in the relevant period in Northwest Europe have risen from about 30 to 80 USD/ton (with a peak in 2008 of about 150 USD/ton). Storage and transport of coal is also economically competitive, eg it does not require high pressure pipelines.

Nevertheless, coal is considered the most carbon-intensive fuel. Global dependence on all fossil fuels since the mid-19th century led to the release of over 1100 GtCO₂ into the atmosphere [3]. World CO₂ emissions from fuel combustion account for about 70% of total *greenhouse gas* (GHG) emissions and 80% of total CO₂ emission [4]. The emission of CO₂ from energy sector is expected to grow from 29.0 billion metric tons in 2006 to 40.4 billion metric tons in 2030. Coal share in world CO₂ emissions is also expected to grow from 42% in 2006 to 45% in 2030 [1].

In the light of the above, the technologies aiming at more sustainable coal processing, the so-called *Clean Coal Technologies* (CCT) are of special importance in regard to economies with energy sectors heavily dependent on coal. The paper presents the up-to-date trends in coal utilization technologies for energy needs in the aspect of CCT and characteristics of Polish energy system, with a special emphasis put on coal gasification with CO₂ capture.

Clean Coal Technologies

Coal processing technologies are regarded as one of the most CO₂ intensive with present-day 42% share in fossil fuels-based CO₂ emission [5]. But with an increasing deployment of energy efficient and low carbon technologies coal could be considered addressing its environmental challenges.

The term Clean Coal Technologies refers to technologies developed and implemented in order to mitigate the negative environmental impact of coal utilization. During about 40 years of CCT development the focus in CCT moved from SO₂, NO_x, Hg and dust emissions reduction to GHG emission reduction, with a special emphasis put on *carbon capture and storage* (CCS) technologies. At present there are five groups of technologies with a high potential for CO₂ reduction from coal processing specified by the International Energy Agency (IEA). These include coal upgrading, improvements in efficiency of existing power plants, advanced power generation technologies (eg *Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle*, IGCC), near zero-emission technologies and technologies for CO₂ transport and storage. It is estimated that wider deployment of coal upgrading technologies, well-established in developed countries, such as coal washing, drying and briquetting, could contribute to 5% CO₂ emission reduction, while increasing thermal efficiency of existing coal-fired power plants to 40% by equipment upgrading and monitoring would reduce it by 22% [6].

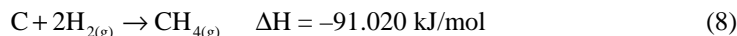
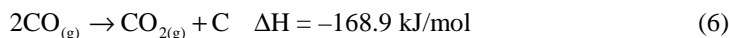
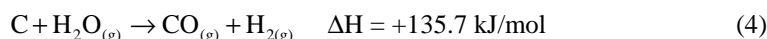
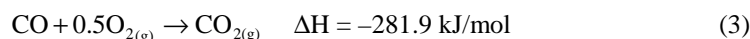
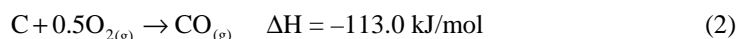
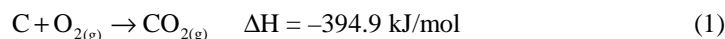
* bbl - barrel

Advanced power generation technologies include *supercritical* (SC) and *ultrasupercritical* (USC) giving outlet steam temperature of 540–566°C at 250 bar and over 590°C under pressure over 250 bar, respectively. Increased thermal efficiency of up to 45% at present and 50% expected in the future (with IGCC or *Pressurised Fluidized Bed Combustion*, PFBC) results in lower levels of CO₂, which would have to be captured per kWh produced.

The IGCC technology has been under development for about thirty years now. The level of operating expertise required for its economic competitiveness still has not been reached, though there are examples of commercial-scale facilities operating worldwide.

In the gasification process known since the 19th century coal is converted into synthesis gas.

The first step of gasification process is pyrolysis, taking place at temperatures above 400°C, resulting in carbon-rich char and hydrogen-rich volatiles production in the absence of oxygen. In the second step, at temperatures over 700°C, the char is gasified. In the IGCC process the *water gas shift* (WGS) step is introduced to convert CO into CO₂ and thus increase the CO₂ content in the final gas. The following reactions between coal and gasifying medium, like oxygen and/or steam can be distinguished (the heats of reactions are calculated for 850°C using HSC Chemistry ver.3.0 [7]):



In general, gasification technology and IGCC in particular, offers higher potential efficiencies, wider variety of feedstock and products (eg electricity, synthetic natural gas SNG, H₂, chemicals) when compared with SC or USC.

The CCT focus is moving in developed countries from conventional pollutants emission control to decarbonization of coal processing by increasing efficiency and CO₂ capture and storage.

CCS technologies are of special importance in the light of Kyoto Protocol targets, increasing energy demand and role of fossil fuels in energy supply.

The technologies for CO₂ separation have been used in industry for a century now but with an aim of producing pure CO₂ streams rather than of its emission mitigation. CO₂ capture is performed among the others in purification of natural gas and in chemical plants for ammonia, alcohols and liquid fuel production. One of the processes of CO₂ separation

from methane in natural gas treatment is chemical absorption. Amine scrubbing could be also used in post-combustion CO₂ capture processes, applicable for conventional coal-fired power generation and gas-fired power generation using combustion turbines. In this case, however, the CO₂ concentration in the gaseous mixture is lower, about 14%, and the relevant energy cost for new power plants is 20÷25% of plant output, resulting from the energy requirements of the process (for CO₂ desorption from the amine solution, dehydration and compression) and reduced plant efficiency. The chemical absorption and other components of the post-combustion capture systems, although operated commercially, have not been used and optimized for large scale of coal-fired plants yet. Still, they are attractive in terms of modernization of the existing plants.

In oxyfuel combustion process, operated in a number of system worldwide, coal is burned in oxygen. The flue gas is mostly CO₂ and thus the cost of amine scrubbing is about half the cost of CO₂ capture from conventional plants. The cost of air separation unit operation for oxygen production is however considerable. It is applicable to *pulverized coal* (PC) oxygen-fired combustion in an enriched oxygen environment using pure oxygen diluted with recycled CO₂ or H₂O. In the oxy-combustion process with flue gases recirculation: O₂/CO₂, fuel is combusted in the mixture of oxygen and CO₂, which is next recycled with flue gases for combustion temperature control. In a result the flue gases contain mainly CO₂ and steam, which can be condensed. The resulting gas stream contains high concentration of sequestration ready CO₂.

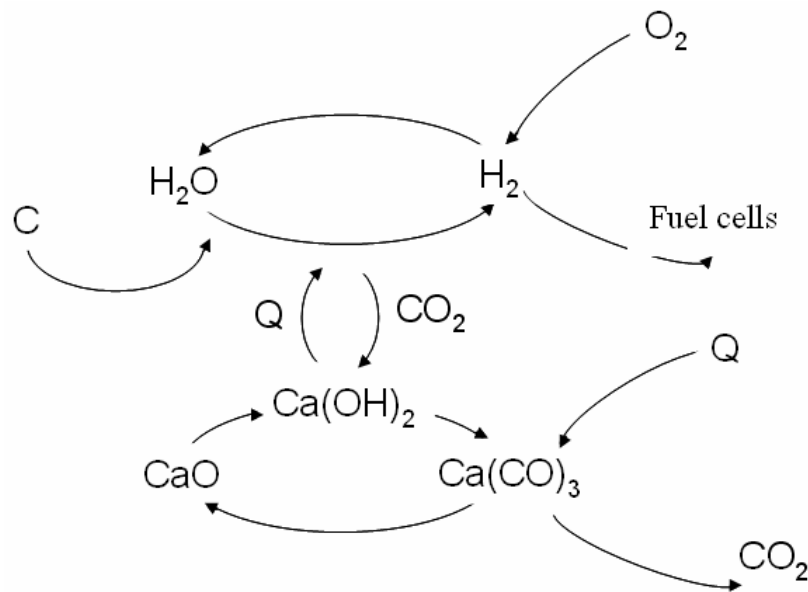


Fig. 1. The idea of the HyPr-RING process. Based on [10]

The pre-combustion CO₂ capture is applicable to gasification plants. It is suitable to be used in the IGCC plants where coal is gasified with steam to gas composed of hydrogen and carbon monoxide, which is further converted in WGS reactors to hydrogen and carbon

dioxide mixture. After separation hydrogen is used as a fuel and carbon dioxide is ready for sequestration. Still no commercial scale system of this type is operated yet.

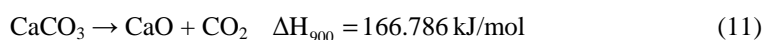
A novel method of the pre-combustion CO₂ capture is under development consisting in CO₂ absorption by CaO [8-16]. The idea of the coal-based hydrogen production and CO₂ capture in a single step is presented in Figure 1.

In the process coal is gasified in a presence of calcium oxide at 600÷700°C and under the pressure of 3 MPa [9].

The summary reactions may be presented as follows:



Calcination reaction used to produce CaO and regenerate it for cyclic application should also be taken into account in a heat balance of the process:



Other materials (CaOSiO₂, MgO) have also been tested as CO₂ sorbents in the process but it was calcium oxide which was proved to produce gas of the best quality and highest volume (H₂ 75%, CH₄ 24%) [17].

Table 1

Selected CO₂ storage sites operated or planned [19-25]

Location, reservoir name and process type, scale	Injection start [year]	Average injection rate [ton of CO ₂ /d]	Total planned storage [ton of CO ₂]
Fenn Big Valley, Canada, ECBM, pilot	1998	50	200
Sleipner, Norway, Utsira saline formation, commercial	1996	3,000	20,000,000
Weyburn, Canada, EOR, commercial	2000	3,000÷5,000	20,000,000
Minami-Nagoaka, Japan, aquifer, gas filed, demonstration	2002	40	10,000
Recopol, Poland, ECBM, pilot	2003	1	10
Qinshui Basin, China, ECBM	2003	30	150
Yubari, Japan, ECBM, demonstration	2004	10	200
In Salah, Algeria, depleted gas field, commercial	2004	3,000÷4,000	17,000,000
Frio, USA, saline formation, pilot	2004	177	1,600
K12B, the Netherlands, EGR, demonstration	2004	100	8,000,000
Salt Creek, USA, EOR, commercial	2004	5,000÷6,000	27,000,000
CSEMP, Canada, ECBM, pilot	2005	50	10,000
Pembina, Canada, EOR, pilot	2005	50	50,000
Teapot Dome, USA, EOR, demonstration	2006	2,600,000/year	
Snohvit, Norway, saline formation	2007	1900	23,000,000
Ketzin, Germany, saline formation	2008	100	60,000
Otwey, Australia, saline formations and depleted gas field, demonstration	2008	126,5	100,000
Gorgon, Australia, saline formation	planned for 2009	10,000	120,000,000
Belchatow, Poland, onshore saline aquifers, commercial	planned for 2015	-	over 500,000

In summary, CO₂ concentration from the post-combustion process (13÷15% vol. in coal-fired systems and 3÷4% vol. in gas-fired turbines) and pressure is low, which implies

the need for treatment of high volumes of gas and impurities such as particulate matter, SO₂ and NO_x present in flue gas degrade sorbents. The pre-combustion and oxy-combustion processes utilize air separation units to combust coal in an oxygen-enriched environment, but the amount of oxygen required in oxy-combustion is significantly higher than in the pre-combustion process, increasing CO₂ capture costs.

In the pre-combustion process CO₂ stream is much more concentrated than in the post-combustion flue gas, and less oxygen is required in comparison with the oxy-combustion process, which makes the CO₂ capture less expensive. At present, however, there are few gasification plants in full-scale operation and capital costs are higher than for PC plants [6, 18].

Captured CO₂ can be commercially utilized for enhanced oil and gas recovery or for enhanced coal bed methane recovery from deep unminable coal seams.

The CO₂ storage capacity is estimated to be on the levels of 675÷900, 3÷200, 1,000÷10,000 GtCO₂ for oil and gas fields, unminable coal seams and deep saline formations, respectively [19]. The first industrial-scale CO₂ storage was started at Sleipner gas field in the North Sea (Norway), where compressed liquid CO₂ separated from methane is injected into a deep saline aquifer below the sea bed. In Table 1 selected CO₂ storage sites operated or planned are listed [19-25].

Role of coal in energy mix of Poland

Poland is listed among the major world coal producers. Its energy system depends heavily on coal with 58% of electricity generated on hard coal and 32% on lignite (data for 2007) [26], while as much as 70% of natural gas and 95% of crude oil is imported [27]. Polish proved reserves of crude oil in 2007 amounted to 0.096 billion bbl and of natural gas 5,820 billion cubic feet [28].

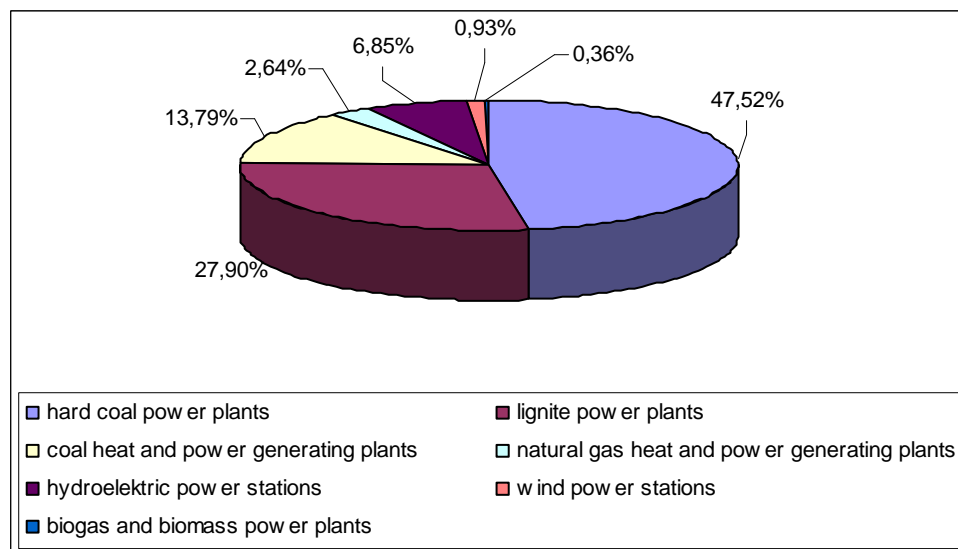


Fig. 2. Total installed electricity capacity for Poland (2008) [26]

The production, consumption and capacity of electricity generation in Poland in years 1998-2008 are given in Figures 2 and 3. The total installed electricity capacity in Poland in 2008 was 35,850 GW. The prognosis of power generation structure up to 2020 is given in Figure 4. The total electricity generation is expected to amount to 128.7, 140.10 and 156.10 TWh in years 2010, 2015 and 2020, respectively [26].

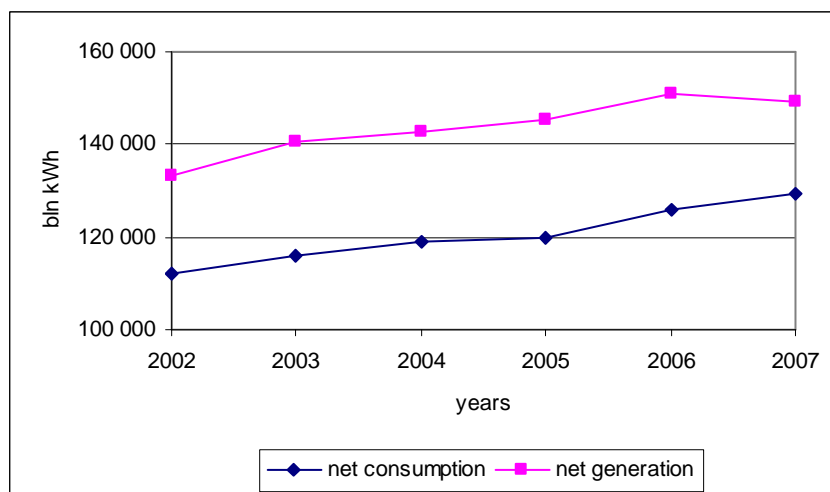


Fig. 3. Net electricity generation and consumption in Poland (2002-2007) [5]

The investments in Polish energy system planned for the next ten years are given in Table 2.

Table 2

The planned investments in Polish energy system [26]

Company	Location	Capacity [MW]	Start date (year)	Technology / Fuel
Polska Grupa Energetyczna	Opole	460	2012	hard coal
	Opole	460	2013	hard coal
	Turow	500	2014	lignite
	Dolna Odra	400	2016	combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT)
	Dolna Odra	400	2019	CCGT
Poludniowy Koncern Energetyczny	Halemba	up to 440	2012	hard coal
	Blachownia	100÷200	2012	hard coal or coke oven gas
	EC Bielsko-Biala	100	2012	hard coal
Vatenfall	Vatenfall Heat Poland Warsaw	400	2013	hard coal
CEZ	Skawina	600÷1,000	2014	hard coal
Polish Power	Zarnowiec	1,600	2013-2014	hard coal (gasification)

As can be seen their majority are coal-based plants, which comes as no surprise, taking into account the domestic fossil fuel resources and energy police principles specified below.

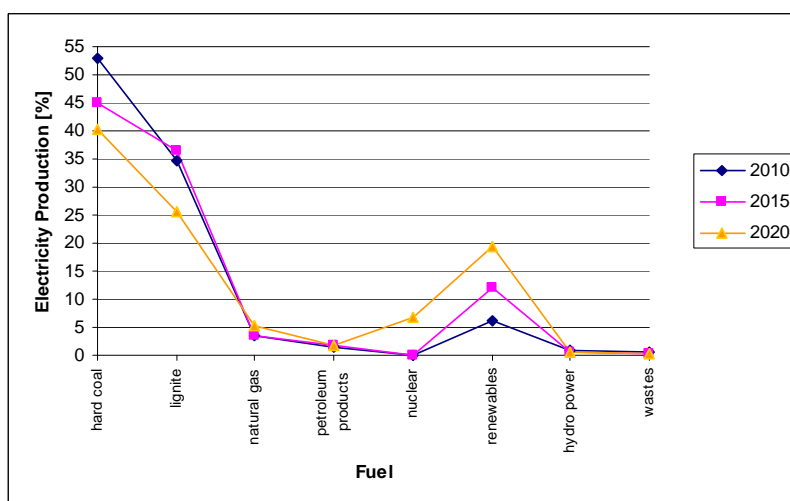


Fig. 4. Prognosis of electricity generation structure by fuel in Poland [26]

The documented balance resources of hard coal in Poland are estimated on the level of 43 201 million tons (31.12.2008) with 75% of steam coals and 25% coking coals (see Table 3). The resources located in operating deposits constitute 37.2% of the balance resources and amounts to 16,082 million tons. The resources are located in three basins with the largest being the Upper Silesian Coal Basin (Gornoslaskie Zagłębie Węglowe - GZW) with the area of 5,800 km² and over 78% of total domestic hard coal deposits, of which 19% are classified as exploited, 24% reserve and 27% prospective.

Table 3

Hard coal resources in Poland (2008) [29]

	No. of deposits	Geological resources [million tons]		Industrial
		balanced	off balance	
Total	138	43,201	24,667	4,338
of which resources of exploited deposits:				
Operating plants	47	16,082	8,464	4,166
of which resources of off balance deposits:				
Total	50	26,493	12,291	171
1. Deposits explored	37	13,569	5268	171
2. Deposits pre-explored	13	12,923	7,023	-
of which resources of abandoned deposits:				
Total	41	626	3,922	-

The Lublin Coal Basin (Lubelskie Zagłębie Węglowe - LZW) covers the area of 9,100 km² with 21.5% of the total domestic hard coal deposits of which only 0.8% are exploited, 10% reserve and the majority - prospective. The identified and exploited deposits of the Lower Silesian Coal Basin (Dolnoslaskie Zagłębie Węglowe - DZW), abandoned for technical and economic reasons, are placed in the area of 350 km² and amounts to about 150 million tons.

The documented balanced lignite reserves in the total amount of 13,563 million tons are located in Belchatow, Turrow, Patnow and Adamow [29]. The levels of geological and industrial lignite resources are given in Table 4.

Table 4

Lignite resources in Poland (2008) [29]

	No. of deposits	Geological resources [million tons]		Industrial
		balanced	off balance	
Total	77	13,5623	4,599	1,371
of which resources of exploited deposits:				
Total	13	1,744	104	1,371
1. Operating plants	12	867	90	751
2. Plants under construction	1	877	14	620
of which resources of off balance deposits:				
Total	59	11,810	4,491	-
1. Deposits explored	29	2,791	715	-
2. Deposits pre-explored	30	9,019	3,776	-
of which resources of abandoned deposits:				
Total	5	9	4	-

The principles of Polish Energy Policy by 2030

The primary directions of Polish energy policy until 2030 include strengthening the fuels and energy supplies security, improvement of energy efficiency and mitigation of the hazardous environmental impact of power industry. In the light of unquestionable leading role of coal in domestic energy mix and limited potentiality for import of liquid and gas fuels and electricity (up to 10%) the energy and fuels supplies security is defined as ensuring stable supplies to meet domestic needs at acceptable prices and with optimal use of own resources, that is coal as the main fuel for power industry. The meaning of diversification of liquid and gas fuels supply was widened and now takes into account not only diversification of supply directions but also diversification of technologies. The latter one refers to a development of coal-based technologies of liquid and gas fuels production. Meeting the expected increasing demand for electricity by creation of new generation capacity is to be performed using low-emission technologies of coal-based energy generation to ensure meeting the required pollutants emission levels, including SO₂, NO₂, dust and CO₂, in line with climate protection and climate-energy package adopted by EU [30]. The reduction of CO₂ emission is to be performed to the extent technically feasible, while avoiding too strong dependence on imported fuels. The above mentioned technologies include coal gasification to synthetic natural gas (SNG) and coal liquefaction to liquid fuels as well as efficient coal-pretreatment technologies. Construction of new, highly efficient power generation units and cogeneration technology by 2020 is also declared among the policy objectives. CCS technologies are planned to be implemented to enhance fuel recovery in gas and crude oil extraction. New ways of CO₂ industrial utilization are to be subject of R&D activities in terms of CCS development. At least two demonstration CCS installations are expected to be located in Poland. The electricity transmission system is to be modernized and extended to enable cross-border exchange of at least 15% by 2015 and 25% by 2030 of electricity used. But at the same time independence in terms of electricity

and heat generation is expected to be maintain based almost entirely on domestic coal resources.

The preparatory works in terms of legal, social acceptance and technical aspects of nuclear energy systems are to be undertaken. The renewable energy production in Poland nowadays takes place mainly in small local power generation units and for local users. An increase in renewable energy sources in the final energy use to the level of 15% in 2020 and 20% in 2030 and biofuels in the transport fuels market to 10% by 2020 is, however, to be strongly supported.

The importance of CCT should therefore be recognized, especially in countries with the energy systems dependent on coal and commitments in terms of international activities aiming at sustainable development and GHG emission reduction in particularly. The technical advances within CCT development can not be achieved without partnership and cooperation between enterprises and local governments as well as between companies and scientific and research communities. Creation of the Innovative Silesian Cluster of Clean Coal Technologies, constituting the platform for R&D and policy activities, aimed at promotion of such wide cooperation in terms of CCT development in Poland [31].

Summary and conclusions

The Clean Coal Technologies are of special interest and importance in the light of increasing energy demand and stable role of coal in ensuring energy security. The focus of CCT development has changed and nowadays the efforts in this regard are more devoted to optimization and implementation of highly efficient, zero-emission coal-based power generation technologies. The importance of CCT development, as a part of sustainable energy system, is recognized worldwide as over 40% of continuously increasing electricity demand is and will be generated in coal processing systems. Considerable financial support is secured for R&D projects worldwide within national and international programs.

The need for undertaking intensive activities in the field of CCT is also acknowledged in Poland. This should come as no surprise considering the structure of Polish energy system, characteristics of domestic fossil fuel resources base as well as national commitments in terms of European climate package. Targets and means aiming at facilitating development of CCT are included in the Energy Policy for Poland by 2030. There is also a considerable level of know-how and expertise available from the R&D institutes and industry traditionally related to mining and power generation fields. Coordination and support of future and already undertaken efforts as well as cooperation between different stakeholders of research and development, scientific and industry circles have, however, to be ensured. Some activities in this regard have already been initiated.

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PRZYJAZNE ŚRODOWISKU TECHNOLOGIE PRZETWÓRSTWA WĘGLA DLA ZRÓWNOWAŻONEGO ROZWOJU POLSKIEGO SEKTORA ENERGETYCZNEGO

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Abstrakt: Według analityków, światowa produkcja energii elektrycznej wzrośnie z $18,0 \cdot 10^{12}$ kWh w 2006 do $31,8 \cdot 10^{12}$ kWh w 2030. Udział węgla jako surowca do produkcji energii elektrycznej pozostaje największy od lat i w roku 2030 ma osiągnąć 43%. Ocenia się, że z uwagi na najbogatsze zasoby i konkurencyjność rynkową dostępne zasoby węgla mogą zaspokoić światowe zapotrzebowanie na energię w perspektywie około 120 lat przy obecnym poziomie zużycia. Istnieje jednak konieczność doskonalenia technologii produkcji energii z wykorzystaniem węgla w zakresie ich sprawności i oddziaływania na środowisko. Tak zwane czyste technologie węglowe (CTW) umożliwiają wysoko sprawne i przyjazne środowisku użytkowanie węgla i obejmują: technologie wzbogacania węgla, poprawy sprawności istniejących elektrowni węglowych, zaawansowane technologie produkcji energii elektrycznej, technologie zeroemisyjne oraz technologie transportu i składowania CO₂. W pracy przedstawiono przewidywaną rolę węgla w energetyce ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem polityki energetycznej Polski oraz główne tendencje w zakresie technologii przetwarzania węgla w aspekcie czystych technologii węglowych.

Słowa kluczowe: węgiel, przetwarzanie, energia