

Ensuring Job Security and Supporting Career Transitions as Coal-Fired Power Generation Phases Out

- Policy forum on October 22 at the National Assembly brings together labor groups, government, and experts
- Forum explores links between special act implementation and just transition zones

The Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment (MCEE, Minister Kim Sungwhan) announced that it will hold a forum on labor policy responses to the phaseout of coal-fired power generation on the morning of October 22 in Seminar Room 1 at the National Assembly Members' Office Building in Yeongdeungpo-gu, Seoul, in collaboration with 14 National Assembly members' offices, including that of Assembly Member Kim Ju-young.

The forum was organized to discuss policy measures to minimize the employment impact of the phased closure of coal-fired power plants by 2040 and to support job security for workers and a smooth transition to new employment.

In particular, the forum will gather views from stakeholders, including labor groups, focusing on implementation measures for the Special Act on Support for Coal-Fired Power Plant Workers and Abolished Regions, scheduled to take effect on September 16 next year (2027), and the special zone system for a just transition.

The forum will begin with opening remarks by National Assembly Member Kim Ju-young and a welcome address by Lee Hohyeon, Second Vice Minister of MCEE, followed by a keynote presentation and a panel discussion.

First, Lee Kyunghee, a research fellow at the Korea Legislation Research Institute, will present on “Legal Strategies for a Just Labor Transition in Regions Affected by Coal-Fired Power Generation Closures.” The presentation will examine key implementation tasks, including the role of the special act in preparing employment measures before power plants close, the scope of support for workers, participation mechanisms, vocational training, and funding.

Next, Eoh Il-cheon, a director at the Ministry of Employment and Labor, will present on “Overview of Special Zone System for a Just Transition and Proposed Public Notice.”

The presentation will outline the criteria and procedures for designating special zones to proactively support regions expected to experience changes in employment and industrial structures as they transition to carbon neutrality, along with support measures and plans to link the system with the special act.

The panel discussion will be moderated by Oh Sang-Bong, Senior Fellow of the Korea Labor Institute, and will include representatives from labor organizations such as the Korea Federation of Power Industry Unions (KFPIU), the Federation of Korean Public Industry Trade Unions (FKPIU), and the Korean Public Service and Transport Workers’ Union (KPTU), as well as legal and labor experts and the director general for the Clean Electricity Transition Division at the MCEE. Participants will discuss measures to ensure job security and support job transitions for workers employed by power plant operators and subcontractors.

※ **Panelists (six):** Kim Dong-gyu, Vice Chairman of KFPIU (Chairman of the Korea Western Power Labor Union); Lee Byeong-hwa, Chairman of the KOEN Service Labor Union (FKPIU); Hong Won-pyo, Director of the Public Institutions Division at the KPTU; Lee Hy

eon-gyu, attorney at Kim & Chang; Jeon Ju-hee, Researcher at the Seogyo Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences; and Kang Bu-yeong, Director General for the Clean Electricity Transition Division at the MCEE.

The MCEE plans to review the opinions presented at the forum and incorporate them into the development of the Coal-Fired Generation Transition Roadmap, which is being prepared in conjunction with the 12th Basic Plan for Electricity Supply and Demand, as well as subordinate regulations under the special act and related plans. The MCEE also plans to work with relevant government agencies, including the Ministry of Employment and Labor, local governments, and labor groups to develop concrete measures to ensure job security and support workers in transitioning to new employment.

Second Vice Minister Lee Hohyeon said, “It is important to consider the impact of the energy transition on power plant workers’ employment.” He added, “We will listen carefully to the voices of workers and other stakeholders on the ground and work with relevant government agencies and local governments to develop concrete support measures to ensure job security and facilitate the transition to new employment.”