

France – From coal to black pellets. CGT puts pressure on government.

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Gardanne power station

As a result of the government and management' decision to close their thermal power station of Gardanne power station (Gazel Energie), employees were made redundant, and many jobs were lost among the subcontractors.

However, workers refused to allow the future of the site to be jeopardised and took steps towards local and national actors, as well as with the local authorities and the State, to maintain and develop employment and an energy production activity on their site.

The workers have designed a project for the future, within the framework of an association in the form of a cooperative society of collective interest, to maintain employment and production capacities, by setting up industrial energy processes combining the circular economy and the fight against global warming.

After numerous meetings, the State decided to commit to supporting part of the project and a memorandum of understanding was signed. In addition, the employees made redundant as part of the PSE will be hired and trained for the projects concerned. "Rehiring" will start from 2025 onwards.

Cordemais power station

The French minister for ecological transition has launched a project called "Ecocombust" for black pellets to replace coal at the EDF Cordemais power plant. The project will be included in the France 2030 recovery plan. After many ups and downs for this innovative project, Ecocombust is an important signal from the government towards an alternative to total disappearance of jobs at this coal-fired power station.

For FNME-CGT, this sector should not disappear. Consequently, FNME-CGT welcomes the construction of a pellet factory on the site of the Cordemais power station, creating new jobs.

The impact on jobs of the decision to close coal-fired power plants concerns several other plants in France waiting for concrete commitments from the government. FNME-CGT reaffirms that all projects carried by workers in this sector must be accompanied by government funding to make the energy transition an opportunity for employment and conversion of industrial sites.

Edited by industriAll Europe