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Internet's energy consumption growing, report finds

17 June 2010

The internet's energy consumption is growing exponentially, a recent piece of research has revealed.

According to scientists at the Universities of Leeds and Cambridge, the internet currently uses between three and five per cent of the world's global electricity supply.

They have now undertaken a project entitled Intelligent EnergyAware Networks (INTERNET) in a bid to reduce the internet's dependency on non-renewable energy sources and cut down its carbon footprint.

Professor Jaafar Elmighani, lead investigator on the project, commented: "The predicted future growth in the number of connected devices, and of the bandwidth of the internet of an order of magnitude or two, is not practical if it leads to a corresponding growth in energy consumption."

A recent study from Greenpeace revealed that the growing popularity of cloud computing could see data centres and telecommunication centres consume more than triple their current rate of electricity by 2020.

"As the cloud expands, the IT industry's appetite for energy will increase, making it a major source of climate change unless the industry adopts and advocates renewable energy use

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and backs laws to cut global warming," said Casey Harrell, a campaigner for Greenpeace International.

Posted by Emily Thomas

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