

ENERGY POLITICS:

a summary of "International Energy Politics in an Age of Climate Change" from the Annual Review of Political Science, 2023

The debate around shifting to renewable energy has been shaped by two schools of thought:



Leaders will be forced to act as climate damage worsens.



If we find the right price for carbon, the economy will do the rest.

IT'S MORE COMPLICATED because politics is also critical for climate solutions.



Power plants cost a lot and aren't replaced very often.



Fossil fuel regions don't want to shift to renewables.



Powerful fossil fuel industries fight to prevent climate action.



New energy sources usually don't replace existing ones, they add to them. Increasing renewable energy doesn't mean fossil fuel use stops.



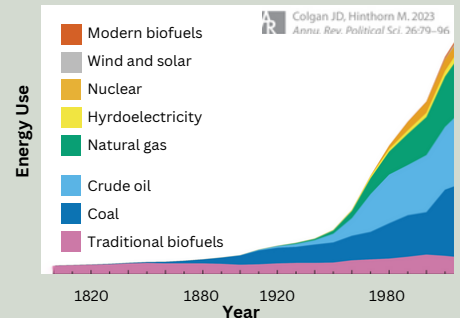
Technical issues and red tape make adding new energy sources to existing systems challenging.



If one country has stricter green policies than another, the stricter one might be at an economic disadvantage.



Voters don't want to pay for green policies, especially when the benefits are theoretical or far-off.



OVERCOME THE OBSTACLES

Political Coalitions



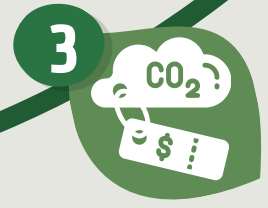
Linking climate policies with other popular policies fosters broader support for climate action.

Policy Sequencing



Strategically introducing climate policies that show immediate benefits builds support for more impactful measures like carbon pricing.

Carbon Tarriffs



Fees on imports from countries with lax carbon controls can make countries with strict climate policies more competitive.

THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL ENERGY POLITICS

European countries accelerated their energy transition after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022 to avoid depending on Russia for their energy.



The shift towards renewable energy may reduce conflicts over oil, but there will still be competition for the minerals needed for renewable technologies.



Countries that export fossil fuels risk losing power during the transition, but some might see increased profits and influence in the short-term if they control the remaining oil as competitors exit the market.

Oil companies are at a crossroads. Some may become leaders in renewable energy, and others will continue with oil and gas, especially if climate policies stay weak.



Technologies like automation and artificial intelligence could shift global energy leadership, challenging US dominance if it doesn't keep pace with China.



China leads the world in both carbon emissions and renewable energy tech, so it is crucial for global climate action.



China also controls essential minerals, further strengthening its position.



Developing countries often face the worst environmental impacts and have fewer resources to invest in clean energy.



THE CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION WILL CREATE WINNERS AND LOSERS, BUT IT WILL ALSO RESHAPE GLOBAL POLITICS AND ECONOMICS.