

Panel Discussion: Investing in Energy and Sustainability

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Abstract

The panel discussion on "Investing in Energy and Sustainability" will focus on the interaction of private sector funding and government support as it effects the development, diffusion and adoption of sustainable energy technologies. Key questions to be discussed include: are sufficient sustainable energy technology solutions available now to assist in our reducing our carbon footprint? If not, what are the key technology paths that need to be pursued (i.e., funded) to achieve a sustainable future? What is the role of government support for new technologies: basic research, support for commercial scale, both? What is the role of private sector investment capital in the development of new technologies and is the private sector, with its return time horizon, sufficient to support new technologies through scale up and diffusion? What are the roles of subsidies and local (i.e., state) government policies and how can both be best constructed for maximum impact? Finally, how should we think of the pros and cons of divestment as a strategy to catalyze sustainability - is it really impactful or can it have no more than limited impact without a broader policy construct?