

Energy, Behavior, and Climate Change

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Abstract

Every day individuals, households, and organizations make a large number of decisions about their energy consumption or other matters that impact the environment in intentional or unintentional ways. Such decisions involve risk, uncertainty, long time-horizons, and distributed responsibility. In this presentation, I will examine the cognitive and motivational barriers that can prevent rational decisions. Solutions involve taking advantage of the ways in which people make decisions and acquire, represent, and process information that go beyond rational deliberation and choice. A better understanding of the abundance of goals that motivate people's choices and of the ways in which they arrive at their decisions provides entry points to the design of decision environments that help people, households, and organizations make decisions with which they will be more satisfied in the long run.