PR14 / Lived Experiences and the Policy Interactions in Global Energy Transitions: Practitioner Perspectives

Topic : Practice

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GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The energy transition is not only a technical or economic shift; it is a significant legal and social transformation that touches how societies organise resources, rights, responsibilities, and the public interest. For practitioners working across electricity, clean cooking, transport, fuels, buildings, and industry, the transition unfolds through countless human moments. It shows up when they navigate new regulatory requirements, listen to community concerns, coordinate permits, balance environmental duties with practical constraints, and respond to growing expectations
of justice and fairness. The first objective of this panel is to bring these lived
experiences into the global conversation and explore how law and policy shape and impact the day-to-day work of practitioners.

A second objective is to create a space where practitioners from different countries and sectors, including energy planners, clean mobility experts, regulators, legal advisors, engineers, community organisations, and administrators, can openly share their experiences. Although their fields may be different, they face similar tensions: sometimes outdated laws that meet fast-changing technologies, regulatory uncertainty that slows innovation, procedural bottlenecks that affect timelines, or legal safeguards that clash with operational realities. By exchanging these stories and experiences, practitioners can see how legal design, institutional behaviour, and implementation challenges interact across contexts.

A third objective is to strengthen the dialogue between practitioners, legal scholars, and policymakers that is often missing. Effective energy law cannot emerge from theory alone; it must be grounded in an understanding of what happens in the field.

This panel aims to ensure that practical wisdom informs legal reform, regulatory evolution, and institutional development in ways that are humane, realistic, and responsive to people’s needs.

Research questions
How can the lived experiences of practitioners across energy sectors inform legal and policy frameworks that are practical, context-sensitive, and socially just?

What legal, regulatory, institutional, and compliance hurdles do practitioners face when implementing clean energy solutions in areas such as cooking fuels, clean mobility, electricity, or industrial transitions?

Which locally driven innovations, whether technical, institutional, legal, or community-based, offer lessons for designing more adaptive energy laws and regulations across regions?

How can deeper collaboration between practitioners, legal scholars, and policymakers improve the implementability, equity, and accountability of energy transition strategies?

Scientific relevance

Much of energy transition research focuses on technology, economics, and long-term modelling. But transitions are ultimately governed by law: environmental rules, permitting systems, tariff regulations, safety standards, social setup, land use norms, and rights frameworks that determine what is possible and what is not. These legal structures shape practitioners’ daily experiences, often more than technology itself. By bringing practitioner voices into an academic-legal setting, this panel enriches academic discourse with grounded insights into how law operates in practice, not merely how it

is written.

Scientific relevance also arises from comparison across energy domains and countries. A regulatory barrier slowing electric mobility in one region may resemble the legal obstacles faced in clean cooking transitions elsewhere. These parallels highlight deeper questions of institutional capacity, regulatory design, public accountability, and distributive justice, which are central to legal research.

Finally, this panel supports a growing recognition that successful transitions require law to be both principled and adaptable. Understanding how practitioners interpret, negotiate, and sometimes improvise within legal frameworks provides valuable evidence for designing laws that are fair, effective, and implementable. Their stories remind us that energy systems are not only technical infrastructures but legal and social systems shaped by human agency.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

The global energy transition is reshaping how societies produce, distribute, and use energy across electricity, fuels, transport, cooking, industry, buildings, and emerging low-carbon technologies. Yet this transition is not driven by targets alone. It unfolds through the everyday work of practitioners who translate policy and law into real systems, real decisions, and real change. Their experiences reveal how the transition actually happens: in regulatory offices, public institutions, industrial plants, mobility systems, community programs, and complex administrative processes.

This panel invites papers that explore the intersection of law, governance, and the lived experience of practitioners engaged in energy transitions across diverse regional and sectoral contexts, especially from the Global South. We welcome contributions that bring forward the voices, insights, and reflections of those who navigate technical challenges, institutional constraints, regulatory requirements, and legal ambiguity daily.

We encourage submissions that examine how practitioners interpret and implement legal and policy frameworks, how institutions adapt to changing expectations, and how various segments within the energy sector experience the transition in uniquely human ways. Contributions may draw from empirical research, field studies, legal analysis, organisational insights, institutional ethnography, or interdisciplinary approaches that bridge law with the realities of practice.

Papers may address, but are not limited to, the following themes:
? How practitioners navigate the relationship between law, regulation, institutional capacity, and daily operational responsibilities.

? The legal and governance challenges encountered in clean cooking transitions, mobility shifts, industrial decarbonisation, distributed energy solutions, renewable fuels, and other sectors.
? How regulations, permitting systems, safety standards, rights frameworks, and compliance requirements shape the pace and direction of energy transitions.
? The kinds of practical innovations practitioners develop, whether technical, organisational, or regulatory, and what these teach us about designing adaptable and context-sensitive legal frameworks.
? The tensions between policy ambition and on-ground feasibility, and how practitioners manage these tensions.
? How collaboration between practitioners, legal and policy scholars, policymakers, and institutions can improve the implementability, equity, and accountability of transition pathways.

? How practitioners can contribute to theorizing policy practice, and support knowledge transfer with future policy scholars and practitioners.

We particularly welcome papers that highlight lived realities: the uncertainties, constraints, workarounds, negotiations, and success stories that define implementation, especially in the Global South. These human centred insights help reveal how law and public policy operate not just in principle but in practice, and how energy transitions depend on people interpreting, adjusting, and sometimes reinventing processes to make change possible.

Submissions that offer comparative perspectives from the Global South and beyond are especially encouraged. We also welcome conceptual papers that rethink the role of law and public policy in shaping transitions, as well as practical case studies that illuminate institutional behavior, regulatory capacity, and on-the-ground decision-making.

Selected papers will contribute to a deeper understanding of how law and public policy influence energy transitions and development, how practitioners respond to legal and institutional realities, and how practice-based knowledge can inform more coherent and effective energy policy. Ultimately, this call seeks work that recognises a simple truth: energy transitions are lived, negotiated, and implemented by people, and their experiences belong at the centre of global discussions.