

25 February - 2025

CEO Roundtable

Balancing Economic Growth
and Climate Action in the
Energy Sector



The Al-Attiyah Foundation is proudly supported by:



AGENDA

Tuesday, 25th February 2025

10:00 AM Coffee and Networking

10:30 AM Special Speakers

10:40 AM Moderated Discussion

12:15 PM Closing Comments

12:35 PM Lunch



CEO Roundtable Series

His Excellency Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, Chairman of the Al-Attiyah Foundation, launched the CEO Roundtable Series and Dialogues to provide a platform for knowledge exchange and support for the global community in the quest towards a sustainable energy future. All guests have the opportunity to share their opinions and insights in what is always a lively and thought-provoking discussion.

**The meeting takes place under the Chatham House Rule whereby participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.*



EVENT OUTLINE

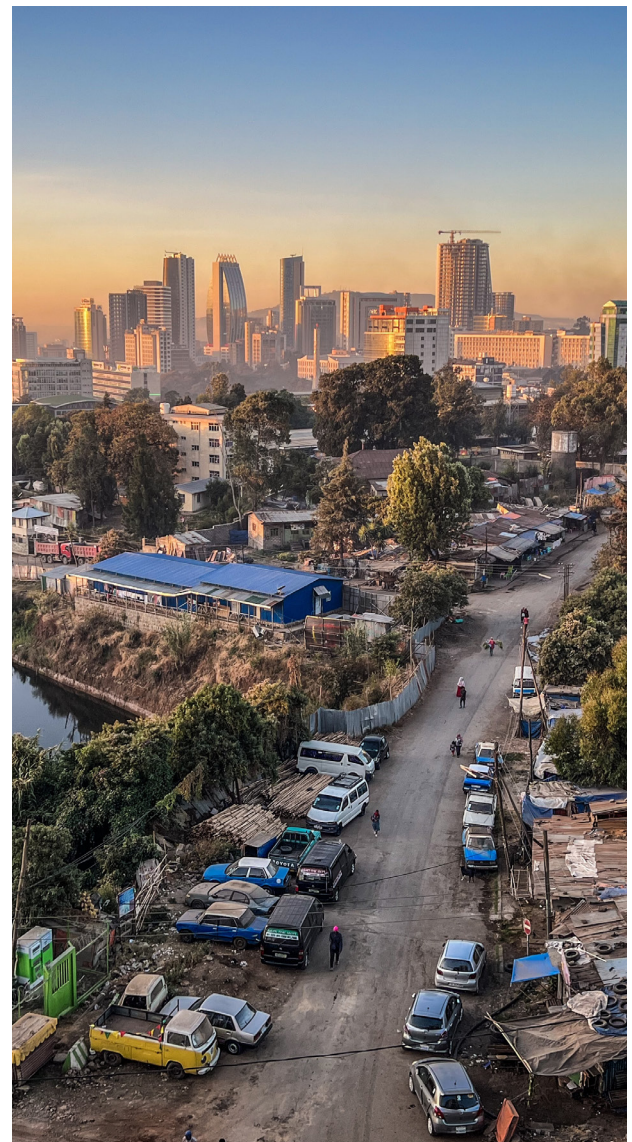
At the first Al-Attiyah Foundation CEO Roundtable of 2025, captains of industry, policymakers, and global experts will convene to discuss balancing economic growth and climate action, particularly in the energy sector. International experts will also provide insights into the pivotal role the global energy sector plays in fueling sustainable development.

As the world grapples with the dual imperatives of economic development and climate action, the energy sector stands at the forefront of the transformation needed to achieve a sustainable future. In recognition of the need for the widest possible participation of all sectors of society to achieve the 2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Foundation has chosen the theme: "Balancing Economic Growth and Climate Action in the Energy Sector" for this Roundtable. This will provide a platform for attendees to discuss policies and strategies for fostering economic growth while advancing climate commitments.

Against a backdrop of extreme poverty in various parts of the world and other developmental challenges, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was globally adopted in 2015. Notwithstanding some notable progress in the past 10 years, we live in a world characterised by unequal distribution of wealth, where more than 800 million people still live in extreme poverty; one out of nine people are still starving; and 1.3 billion people still have no access to electricity.

With only five years left of the sustainable development goals set for 2030, many developing countries are plagued by the

global economic slowdown, tighter monetary and fiscal conditions, high debt sustainability risks, and high rates of unemployment. These challenges continue to drag many countries into poverty, poor infrastructures, lack of access to water, electricity, healthcare, poor educational facilities, hunger and malnutrition. For example, a 2023 report published by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), estimated that nearly 282 million people in Africa (about 20 per cent of the continent's population) were undernourished in 2022 and about 868 million people were severely food insecure.





Economic growth and energy consumption have historically been closely linked. From the industrial revolution to the digital age, energy has powered progress, driving innovation, infrastructure development, and higher standards of living. However, this growth has come at an environmental cost, with the energy sector contributing approximately 73% of global GHG emissions. The extractive sources (coal, oil and gas), which dominate the global energy mix, are contributors to climate change, air pollution, and environmental degradation. As the world confronts the realities of climate change, a shift toward more sustainable energy systems is imperative. The challenge lies in meeting growing energy demands, especially in emerging economies, while reducing emissions. Consequently, the role of the energy sector in the implementation of sustainable development agendas continues to come into sharper focus, generating global debate on how the two aims of cheap energy and low CO₂ emissions can be achieved.

In the ever-growing discourse on sustainable development, the sustainability of industry sectors that are founded on the extraction of finite, non-renewable natural resources, such as coal, oil and gas, remains a major topic of debate. At the centre of this debate is the most enduring and universally accepted definition of sustainable development – the Brundtland definition – “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

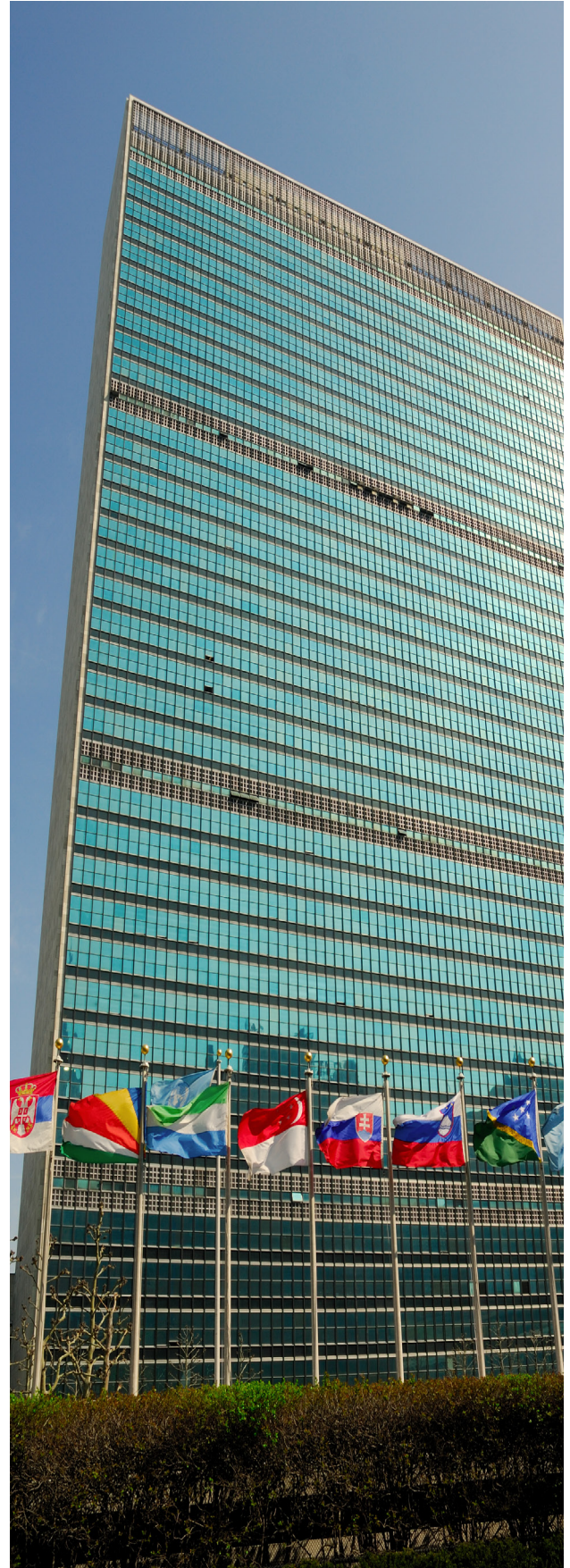
The role of the energy industry as a catalyst for economic growth in a manner consistent with commitment to address climate change, lies in the sector’s ability to convert natural resources capital into new forms of capital, such as economic, social and human capital, all of which provide broader focus on human conditions and quality of life issues that are essential requirements for attaining the

United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whilst also delivering cheap, affordable and secure energy for all. The Paris Agreement recognises the role of energy sector by providing for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and participation of all sectors of society, including the energy sector.

While some countries are successfully unlocking the benefits of economic growth, through the development of their natural resources, there are still many developing countries that are a long way away from successfully navigating the energy, climate change, and economic growth nexus. Several developing countries that are well-endowed with natural resources, face several challenges, including:

- Environmental challenges
- Geopolitical and socio-economic challenges
- Keeping up with rapidly changing policy landscape
- Inability to attract and scale up the involvement of the private sector
- Insufficient capacity to diversify their economy

Addressing these challenges would require a comprehensive approach that integrates technological innovation, policy interventions, and global cooperation. At the Roundtable, participants and the international guest speakers will discuss these dynamics and issues relating to the role of the energy sector in economic growth, energy access and equity, global energy mix, climate action in the energy sector, and opportunities and challenges for sustainable growth.



Moderator:



Mr. Axel Threlfall,
Editor-at-Large at Reuters

Speaker



Mr. Janos Pasztor,
Former UN Assistant
Secretary-General on
Climate Change

Speaker



Mr. Ovais Sarmad,
Former Deputy Executive
Secretary of UNFCCC and
UN Assistant Secretary-
General

Speaker



Prof. Jacopo Torriti,
Professor of Energy
Economics and Policy at
Reading University

Speaker



Mr. Creon Butler,
Director, Global Economy
and Finance Programme,
The Royal Institute of
International Affairs,
Chatham House

OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF THE ROUNDTABLE

- To Identify innovative business models and investment approaches that achieve economic growth without compromising environmental sustainability.
- To exchange views with experts on the progress that countries are making towards the achievements of the UN SDGs by 2030.
- To examine the impact of current and future policies on the energy sector, focusing on aligning corporate strategies with evolving climate regulations.
- To share insights into how energy companies are integrating all aspects of sustainable development into their business decisions.
- To analyse how climate regulations (e.g., carbon taxes, emissions trading systems) impact business operations, investment decisions, and overall economic growth.
- To discuss the complexities of transitioning to clean energy, including supply chain issues, workforce reskilling, and infrastructure development.
- To examine long-term perspectives for building resilient energy systems that drive economic growth whilst simultaneously addressing climate risks and security of supply.

DISCUSSION POINTS

- 01) What is the role of innovation and technology in achieving a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions within the energy sector?
- 02) Is carbon capture and storage a major solution to the emissions problem?
- 03) What role should governments and industry coalitions play in supporting decarbonisation efforts?
- 04) How can circular economic principles enhance resource efficiency in the energy sector?
- 05) What are the key barriers to financing renewable energy projects at scale?
- 06) How can public-private partnerships enhance access to capital?
- 07) Strong policy and regulatory environments are essential to align economic growth with climate action. How can governments and international bodies foster a conducive environment for sustainable energy initiatives?
- 08) How can international cooperations help harmonise cross-border energy systems?
- 09) What role do global frameworks play in driving national energy strategies?
- 10) Collaboration between the public and private sectors is vital for addressing the complex challenges of the energy transition. What are the key success factors for effective Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the energy sector?
- 11) How can the private sector align its goals with public policy priorities?
- 12) How can PPPs address social and economic inequalities in energy access?



FURTHER BACKGROUND READING MATERIALS



Balancing energy security and transition: A critical outlook for 2025 (2025)

Energy transition is a long-term goal, and balancing energy security with energy transition goals requires addressing both short-term and long-term needs. Oil and natural gas will continue to play a crucial role in the global energy structure in the coming decades, and the coordinated development of oil and gas with renewable energy will become a stable transformation path in the foreseeable future.



Managing Energy, Economic, and Environmental Transition: Workshop Report (2024)

The transition from coal-dependent economies to ones driven by sustainable energy sources presents a global challenge in balancing climate action, energy access, and economic development. The "just transition" concept recognizes the importance of addressing societal impacts, environmental sustainability, governance, and financial mechanisms in this process.



The Economics of Climate Change Mitigation: Balancing Environmental Goals and Economic Growth (2024)

Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges of our time, posing significant risks to the environment, society, and the global economy. As the world grapples with rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and melting ice caps, the need for effective climate change mitigation strategies becomes increasingly evident.



Can we have economic growth and tackle climate change at the same time? (2022)

Whether economic growth can be sustained while tackling climate change and staying within wider environmental limits is an area of ongoing debate. Different perspectives range from a view that economic growth is not bounded by environmental limitations to one that suggests sustained economic growth is simply not compatible with environmental limitations.



Realism is Key to Balancing the Energy Transition with Growth (2024)

The global energy transition has reached a critical juncture. Increasingly, we are observing a reassessment of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions targets as more nations enter periods of economic growth and increased energy demand.

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah International Foundation for Energy and Sustainable Development is a non-profit think tank inaugurated by His Highness the Father Emir, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani in 2015. The Foundation works closely with its members, academia, and a wide network of international experts, to provide independent insights, in-depth-research and informed debate on critical energy and sustainable development topics.

Mission: To provide robust and practical knowledge and insights on global energy and sustainable development topics and communicate these for the benefit of the Foundation's members and the community.

Vision: To be an internationally respected independent think tank that is a thought leader focused on global energy and sustainable development topics.

Research Reports & Publications

- Daily News Flash
- Weekly Energy Market Review
- Monthly Energy Research Paper
- Monthly Sustainability Research Paper
- Monthly News Articles
- Special Industry Reports
- Webinar Whitepapers
- CEO Roundtable Whitepapers
- Annual Sustainable Development Book




Podcasts, Webinars & Videos

- Bi-monthly Podcast Interviews
- Monthly Energy Educational Video
- Monthly Sustainability Educational Video
- Monthly Webinars
- Annual High-Profile Webinar

Events & Activities

- The Al-Attiyah International Energy Awards
- Quarterly Energy Dialogues
- Qatar Sustainability Week
- The ICP Bosphorus Summit

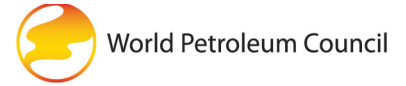
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OUR PARTNERS

The Al-Attiyah Foundation collaborates with its partners on various projects and research within the themes of energy and sustainable development.





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