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Commissioner
DG ENER: Directorate-General for Energy

Ditte Juul Jørgensen

Director-General
DG ENER: Directorate-General for Energy

Cristina Lobillo Borrero

ENER.A: Energy Policy: Strategy and Coordination
DG ENER: Directorate-General for Energy

European Commission
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel
Belgium

Re: Commission must support International Energy Agency transition to open data

Dear Ms Simson, Ms Jørgensen, Ms Lobillo Borrero

This letter concerns the **national energy data** that the **International Energy Agency** (IEA) collects and distributes. Recent reports (Ritchie and Roser 2022) indicate that IEA have agreed in principle to publish that data as open and it is now up to IEA member countries — and primarily those in the industrialized world — to match the consequent lost sales revenues. The Commission clearly has a tight relationship with the IEA (IEA 2021). I do not know if the Commission can contribute funding as well — although if it can, it should.

What I do know is that it is vital that this information **emerge from behind its paywalls** and be properly licensed for use and re-use.

For example, at least two open energy system modeling teams have begun **work in Africa** and it is imperative that this IEA data be both available and open in this context. Projects include U4RIA and PyPSA-meets-Africa.

That same sentiment applies to analysis for European countries too. Indeed I suggest the Commission's **Fit for 55 program** is more likely to flounder if its policy prescriptions are not fully transparent and reproducible. Moreover citizens can potentially contribute to and utilize the analysis and will more easily uncover, develop, and implement local net-zero solutions if the necessary data is fully open.

I write as an energy system modeler and participant in the **Open Energy Modelling Initiative** (openmod) community. I have worked with open source energy system models since 2003. And in 2018, I published on the need for fully open energy system modeling for reasons of open science and transparent public policy (Morrison 2018). More recently, I have been promoting open data and open data standards — the latter being at least of equal importance.

I was also instrumental in helping organize the **open letter to the IEA** (Schäfer *et al* dated 8 December 2021) from the openmod community seeking open data — as recorded here (my handle is @robbie.morrison):

- <https://forum.openmod.org/t/2949>

Please give this matter urgent consideration. The next IEA member country meeting is apparently scheduled for 02 February 2022.

yours sincerely, Robbie Morrison

References

IEA (30 March 2021). [European Commission and IEA pull together for net zero — Press release](#). *International Energy Agency (IEA)*. Paris, France.

Morrison, Robbie (April 2018). "[Energy system modeling: public transparency, scientific reproducibility, and open development](#)". *Energy Strategy Reviews*. **20**: 49–63. ISSN 2211-467X. doi:[10.1016/j.esr.2017.12.010](#). Open access.

Ritchie, Hannah and Max Roser (6 January 2022). [The IEA wants to make their data available to the public — now it is on governments of the world's rich countries to make this happen](#). *Our World in Data*. Open access.

Schäfer, Malte *et al* (8 December 2021). *Open letter to the International Energy Agency and its member countries: please remove paywalls from global energy data and add appropriate open licenses*. Schäfer is the coordinating author. [Online copy](#). Open access.

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