



Sustainable Transportation Energy Pathways: A Research Summary for Decision Makers

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Sustainable Transportation Energy Pathways: A Research Summary for Decision Makers (334 pages, black & white figures)

We stand at the beginning of a revolution in transportation and energy. Over the next several decades, a convergence of growing demand, resource constraints, and environmental imperatives will reshape our energy system. These forces will change the way we travel and the kinds of vehicles we drive, and will challenge the century-long primacy of petroleum and the internal combustion engine. This transformation will unfold over many decades. But it poses urgent questions today because of the long time horizon inherent in developing new technologies and changing the energy system.

This book is written to help inform decision makers in industry and government about the potential costs and benefits of different fuel/vehicle pathways, and illuminates viable transition strategies toward a sustainable transportation future.

It focuses on characterizing and comparing four fuel pathways: hydrogen, biofuels, electricity, and fossil fuels. Technical aspects, cost, market issues, environmental implications, and transition issues for each individual pathway are explored, creating a strong basis for the development of integrative scenarios to address policy goals such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions or oil dependency. Case studies are presented that inform carbon and alternative fuel policies in California, the United States, and beyond.

The book addresses four "big picture" questions in a series of 13 chapters written by researchers at the Institute of Transportation Studies, University of California, Davis:

- What do individual fuel/vehicle pathways look like for biofuels, electricity and hydrogen?
- How do these pathways compare?
- How could we combine pathways and approaches to meet societal goals for carbon reduction, energy security, etc.?
- What policy measures and tools are needed to encourage progress toward sustainable transportation?

The authors find that there is no single "fuel or vehicle of the future," expecting instead to see a diverse mix of fuels and vehicle types that could vary by region and application. A portfolio approach incorporating efficiency, alternative fuels and travel demand reductions will produce the best chance of meeting societal goals.

The book draws heavily on insights gained from the Sustainable Transportation Energy Pathways (STEPS) research program at the University of California, Davis. STEPS began in 2007, with a goal of performing robust, impartial comparative analyses of different fuel/vehicle pathways drawing on engineering, economics, environmental science, and consumer behavior. An interdisciplinary team of 15 Ph.D.-level researchers and 25 graduate students was formed, with support coming from 23 diverse sponsoring organizations, each of which contributes to the STEPS consortium.

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