

On the Grid: We Stand with Ukraine 3/4/22



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Over the past week, Russia has continued to escalate its unprovoked, horrific, bombardment of Ukraine, while its dictator, Vladimir Putin, pushed false narratives to Russian citizens in a desperate attempt to justify his imperialistic Soviet-era agenda.

This is a vital turning point in world history. We're combatting multiple conflicting crises at once: a global pandemic, inflation, the rise of authoritarianism and anti-democratic forces, and now a war of aggression in Eastern Europe and the largest European conflict since World War II. We're also seeing an extraordinary display of global unity as over 100 nations—including traditionally neutral Switzerland—stand in support of Ukrainian sovereignty. The US is leading with compassion and

resilience at a time of fear and uncertainty, standing up to Vladimir Putin and his unjust and flagrant aggression in Ukraine.

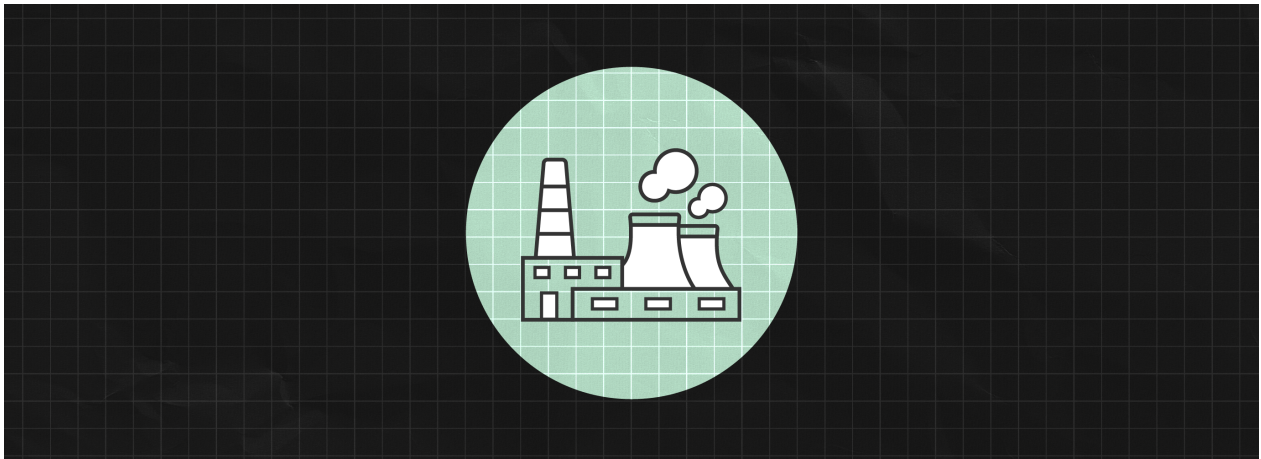
Given these unusual circumstances, today's On the Grid is longer than normal.

We'll take a look at:

- The geopolitical ramifications of the Ukraine invasion
- Rising gas and oil prices in the US
- President Biden's State of the Union address
- The latest IPCC report

Our hearts are with the Ukrainian people fighting on the ground in their country and with the refugees seeking shelter in neighboring nations. Their courage and determination in the face of tyranny stand as an inspiration to us all.

1. Reducing European Reliance on Russian Gas and Oil



The Ukrainian invasion has shifted the geopolitical landscape and left EU-member nations scrambling to secure reliable and affordable energy for their citizens while moving away from reliance on Russian gas. The US and its European allies have issued economic sanctions on Russia, targeting Putin and Russian oligarchs, but have remained cautious about sanctioning energy trade directly to avoid sending global oil and gas prices to dizzying new heights. In the meantime, the US and its allies are restricting the export of certain goods, like extraction and refinement technology, that will slowly cripple Russia's energy industry.

Russia is the world's third-largest oil producer and second-largest natural gas producer, after the US, and about 40% of the natural gas that Europe consumes is supplied by Russia.

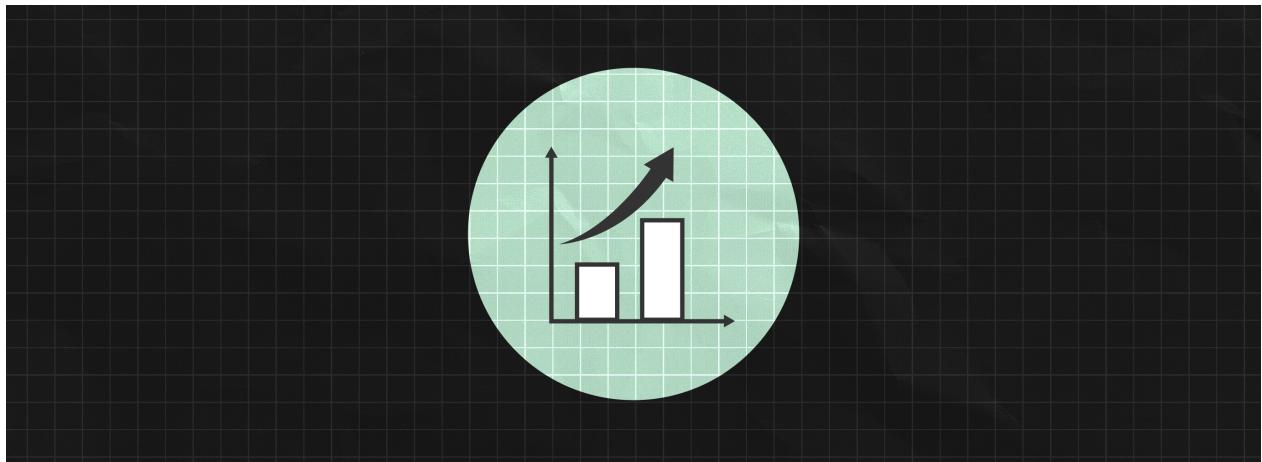
Now, Europe must completely rethink its energy strategy in an attempt to strengthen its energy autonomy and reduce its reliance on Russia for power. Even Germany – which had plans to shutter its last remaining nuclear reactors and include natural gas in its decarbonization strategy – is rethinking its approach in light of recent events.

Establishing energy sovereignty while decarbonizing the economy will be tough work, but it must be done hand in hand. And as Michael Liebreich explained in his recent piece for BloombergNEF, the urgency of this moment calls for swift action and smart planning for the future of Europe’s energy infrastructure, with a special focus on resilience, durability, and flexibility. The US has an important role to play to help Europe get there.

Right now, America is exporting liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Europe to help ease the energy crunch. But over the next several years, we must prioritize deploying and exporting next-generation clean energy technologies that Europe is eager to use to strengthen its energy independence. The US, with its reputation for high standards and reliable technology, should meet that need.

Expect a lot more from us, as well as our transatlantic sibling organization, Carbon-Free Europe, on what the future of energy sovereignty looks like in Europe and what role the US can play in helping its European allies achieve these goals.

2. Oil Prices Are Surging. But What Does It Mean For The Us Economy?

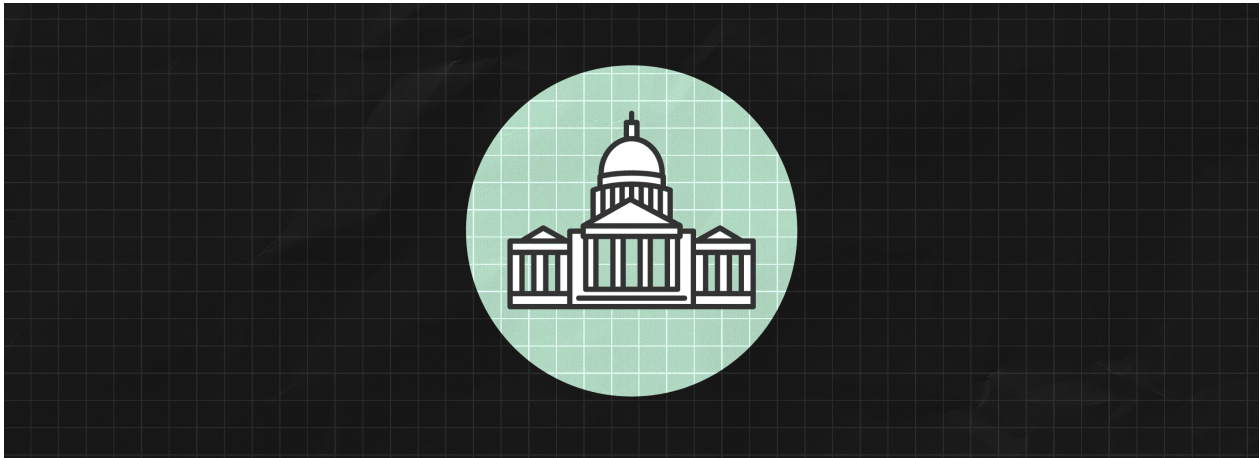


When COVID-19 lockdowns began in 2020, oil demand practically collapsed overnight. Since then, the market has made a swift recovery, so much so that oil-producing companies are failing to meet their output targets. Geopolitical tensions have also put significant pressure on oil markets amid Russian military action against Ukraine.

As a result, Americans have seen their prices at the pump skyrocket, with oil prices now breaking \$110/barrel.

Ellen Hughes-Cromwick, Senior Resident Fellow at Third Way and former Chief Economist at Ford Motors and the Obama Commerce Department, and Amy Myers Jaffe, Managing Director of the Climate Policy Lab at Tufts University, have co-authored a [blog post](#) explaining why oil prices are surging, what steps the Administration has taken to protect Americans from rising gas prices, and what it means for the US economy moving forward.

3. Third Way Statement On The State Of The Union Address



On March 1, President Biden delivered his first State of the Union address, facing Congress and the nation at a complex and harrowing moment in world history.

Third Way released the following statement from Josh Freed, Senior Vice President for Climate and Energy:

“President Biden's first State of the Union address accomplished three critical things. First, it reinforced to the world that we are united in the defense of democracy and the sovereignty of all nations. Second, our nation must and is returning to our core value of inventing and manufacturing technologies and critical resources in America and sharing them with the world. Third, that what we make, invent, and sell will be clean—clean technologies, clean fuels, and clean building materials. This is the leadership that we need at this pivotal moment in our history.”

We cataloged some of our favorite quotes from President Biden’s State of the Union address [here](#).

4. IPCC Releases New Report



On February 28, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a new report that asserts that many of the worst impacts of climate change are now irreversible and our window to act continues to rapidly shrink. The report placed an emphasis on adaptation policies that will be necessary to help cushion people from the impacts of climate change that have been locked in for the next several years.

Within the context of energy, the IPCC emphasized that we need a diverse fleet of clean options to strengthen infrastructure resilience and provide efficient power generation through smart-grid technologies, robust transmission systems, and improved capacity to respond to supply deficits.

The urgency of this moment couldn't be more clear. Our priority now should be to push governments to pursue every technological solution available & deploy them as quickly as possible. This includes technologies like advanced nuclear, carbon capture, direct air capture, geothermal, and more – all of which improve our capacity to respond to supply deficits.

Yes, our window to act is shrinking. But our efforts to build a sustainable, equitable, net-zero future are not futile—and we know what solutions we need to implement.

5. Making The Most Of Our Electric Vehicle Investments



THIRD WAY

MAKING THE MOST of Our Electric Vehicle Investments

March 10, 2022 @ 1 PM EST

At Superbowl LVI last month, we saw a record number of advertisements for electric vehicles from some of the biggest names in the auto industry. EVs are on the verge of becoming mainstream, but is the nation truly prepared for this transition?

On Thursday, March 10, you can learn about steps the federal government is taking to get the country and consumers ready, and what else Washington should be doing to help. Third Way is convening sustainable transportation experts to discuss why it's so important to build a competitive, viable EV market in the US, how we can efficiently deploy EV charging infrastructure using funds from the bipartisan infrastructure package, and how we can continue to accelerate our transition to electric vehicles by funding research and development, scaling up manufacturing, and securing the domestic supply chain for EVs.

Speakers

Michael Berube, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Sustainable Transportation, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, US Department of Energy

Heather Foster, Senior Director, National Policy Engagement, Lyft

Julia Rege, Vice President, Energy and Environment, Auto Innovators

Eric Wood, Research Engineer, Center for Integrated Mobility Sciences, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

[Register here for Making the Most of our Electric Vehicle Investments.](#)

6. We're Hiring

JOIN OUR TEAM

The clean energy policy conversation is expanding...and so are we! The Climate and Energy Program is looking for someone with talent and a passion for climate solutions to fill two new roles on our team. If you've got anyone in your mental rolodex who you think might be a fit, please send them our way. And if you wanted to circulate this job posting more broadly with your networks, we wouldn't mind that either!

Deputy Director for Innovation and Industry: This person will help set policy, advocacy, and product strategy and supervise multiple team members working on issues surrounding energy innovation, carbon management, and industrial decarbonization. *(5+ years of experience in clean energy policy)*

7. What We're Reading



- The [Atlantic Council](#) released a succinct memo detailing the short, medium, and long-term impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and what it means for the future of European energy security. The report also emphasizes the need to diversify Europe's energy capacity by investing in next-generation technologies, including advanced nuclear.

- Coral Davenport reports for the *New York Times* on the biggest climate case the Supreme Court has heard in decades. SCOTUS began hearing oral arguments this week for *West Virginia v. EPA*, a case that will likely decide the fate of the EPA's ability to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from the power sector. Here's the interesting thing about the case: it doesn't examine an existing regulation, but rather will set precedent for whether the EPA can issue new regulations for power plant emissions in the future.
- Camille Bond reports for *Politico* on new polling from Pew Research Center that finds that the majority of Americans do not back a complete phase-out of fossil fuels. Their analysis found that 69% of US adults believe the United States should prioritize alternative sources of power, and 72% back the federal government's encouraging the production of wind and solar power.