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Energy transition continues to be a global priority – with geopolitical shifts, the role of hydrogen, and social responsibility steering the conversation on what a truly just and sustainable energy transition should be. Our team of Energy Transition lawyers, led by Stefan Schröder, is helping clients navigate this terrain so that they can cultivate a sustainable world. Read his insights on what lies ahead, how companies should prepare, and why it's important to embrace energy transition.

What is the global outlook for energy transition in 2023?

When we talk about energy transition, often the first thing that comes to mind is renewable power – solar, wind, etc. – but when I think about energy transition, what I see is much broader than that. In its simplest sense, it's shifting away from carbon intensive fossil fuels and working towards decarbonization plans. But as the past 12 months have shown with the global energy crisis following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, energy transition in 2023 is also intrinsically connected with energy security. As continental Europe moves away from a dependency on Russian natural gas, governments and businesses need to look at securing their energy supply chains.

In many ways the events of the past year have sped up decarbonization plans and the move to net zero. Natural gas was seen as a bridge fuel and with prices escalating, we've seen clients abandon their natural gas plans and move directly from fossil fuels to hydrogen or other clean solutions.

Tell us more about your background and how you came to be a leader in the energy transition movement.

I started out as an energy lawyer in 2010 and before that I worked in the area of energy law at the University of Cologne. When I first started out I had clients across the entire energy spectrum – traditional fossil fuels, natural gas and renewables - however, especially when a client approached me in early 2019 with a hydrogen project, I could see a credible path ahead for energy transition. Seeing these hydrogen plans I knew that this was going to be the future.

I joined Hogan Lovells in early 2020 and immediately put plans in place for a worldwide hydrogen initiative. It's a real pleasure to lead the global energy transition team and work alongside the energy and manufacturing industries as they make this transition towards a

carbon neutral future. The energy industry needs a solution for its carbon footprint; there is no alternative.

When clients are developing their energy transition plans, what key goals do you help them focus on?

The key considerations for clients when considering energy transition are carbon neutrality and energy security. It's crucial that clients consider the wider political and economic context when setting their plans, as well as the commercial implications for their business in light of tariffs and taxes. In fact, when helping clients to successfully realize energy transition projects, we're advising and preparing clients for the future to create sustainable businesses.

How has your work shaped you and your vision of a net zero future?

I'm convinced the future energy outlook will be a mixture of technologies. Innovation is key, and we've yet to meet all the technologies that will be in play in 2050. We need to support energy research projects. I believe renewables and hydrogen will play a key role. Clearly, the energy mix will look different across the world and sources of energy will vary by geographic region.

What impact is our Energy Transition Group making?

We're helping clients to find global solutions to energy transition. From helping clients understand the regulatory frameworks, engaging on draft legislation, securing new supply chains, to analysing the commercial risks and opportunities and ultimately, we help our clients to realise projects for successful energy transition.

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Contacts



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