

A significant portion of my job responsibilities at Economic Environmental Solutions International (EESI) is facilitating stakeholder consensus to use waste as a resource to create renewable energy. Often these stakeholders are high-level, government officials who have minimal exposure to the topic. Additionally, many stakeholders do not have the time or interest to read detailed, analytical reports. Rather, they typically only provide 15 minutes to concisely present trends and conclusions at a public meeting. As stakeholder support is a critical element to shifting any paradigm, it is essential to present complex data in a visually engaging format.

Based on my review of the Energy Production/Consumption visual presentation, it successfully transforms decades of data into a concisely presentation on macro trends (overall production versus consumption). The presentation also allows the viewer to quickly understand the patterns of various generation sources (i.e. coal, biomass) and consumers (residential, industrial), and how these patterns influence macro trends. I found the feature that allows the viewer to toggle on each year and see the relationship between annual patterns and macro trends to be of particular value. I think this presentation would be both well received and a productive decision-making tool in dialogues on US energy generation/consumption.

I do have some suggestions to make the visual presentation more effective. First, I noticed the marginal difference between energy production and consumption peaked in around 2005 and has consistently declined in subsequent years, with the difference being the lowest in 2015. I was interested to see what sources of generation versus consumption changed in those two years. The way the model is currently structured, I’m not able to see a side-by-side comparison on the screen. If I was presenting this information, it would be helpful to have the ability to show comparison on one screen.

On more minor notes, I noticed there is a one year difference between production and consumption. Based on my experience, there will be someone in the audience who has been completely disengaged during the entire presentation and that will be the only question they ask. So please double check you data fields. Also, in the energy industry, the term energy generation is more common than energy production. Finally, people who are color blind have difficulty distinguishing between red, green and blue hues. Some of these hues are used side-by-side in the visual presentation. I suggest using a different color scheme.