

# Michaël Aklin

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## Current Positions

### *Primary position*

2023-... Associate Professor of Economics and Management of Innovation  
Holder of the Chair of Policy & Sustainability  
EPFL - Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne

### *Academic administration*

2023-... Co-managing director, Enterprise for Society Center (E4S), EPFL-IMD-University of Lausanne  
2023-... Co-director, MSc in Sustainable Management and Technology, EPFL-IMD-University of Lausanne

## Former Positions

### *Former primary positions*

2019-23 Associate Professor of Political Science (and Public Policy, by courtesy), University of Pittsburgh  
2015-19 Assistant Professor of Political Science (and Public Policy, by courtesy), University of Pittsburgh  
2014-15 Postdoctoral Fellow, Browne Center for International Politics, University of Pennsylvania

### *Former administrative duties*

2021-23 Director of Graduate Admissions and Placement, Department of Political Science, Pittsburgh  
2018-21 Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Political Science, Pittsburgh

## Education

2014 PhD, Politics, New York University  
2008 MA, Political Economy, University of Essex  
2007 Licence, International Relations, Graduate Institute of International Studies

### *Additional training*

2024 IMD, Advanced Academic Leadership Program for the ETH Domain

## Books

- [2] Aklin, Michaël, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2018. *Escaping the Energy Poverty Trap: When and How Governments Power the Lives of the Poor*. MIT Press.






🗨 Reviewed by [Caitlin Robinson](#), [Elizabeth Chatterjee](#)

- [1] Aklin, Michaël and Johannes Urpelainen. 2018. *Renewables: The Politics of a Global Energy Transition*. MIT Press.

🗨 Reviewed by [Foreign Affairs](#), [Nina Kelsey](#), [Varun Sivaram](#), [Josh Busby](#), [Dustin Mulvaney](#)

## Articles

- [36] Aklin, Michaël. 2025. The Political Logic of Just Transition Policies. *Climate Policy* 25:3, 319-334  
[\[link\]](#)

- [35] Pelz, Setu, Alexandra Krumm, Michaël Aklin, Vagisha Nandan, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2024. The spatial and economic footprint of the coal industry in rural Jharkhand, India. *Energy Policy* 186: 113973 [\[link\]](#)
- [34] Lim, Junghyun, Michaël Aklin, and Morgan Frank. 2023. Location is a major barrier for transferring US fossil fuel employment to green jobs. *Nature Communications* 14: 5711 [\[link\]](#)
-  See my column at [VoxEU](#). Featured in [Science Magazine](#), [Forbes](#), [News Wise](#), [Technology Networks](#), [Mother Jones](#)
- [33] Blankenship, Brian, Michaël Aklin, Vagisha Nandan, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2022. Jobs for a Just Transition: Evidence on Coal Job Preferences from India. *Energy Policy* 165: 112910 [\[link\]](#)
- [32] Aklin, Michaël, Julia Gray, and Eric Arias. 2022. Inflation and Mass Preferences Over Currency Policy. *Economics & Politics* 34(1): 5-40 [\[link\]](#)
- [31] Pelz, Setu, Michaël Aklin, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2022. Supply preferences and productive electricity use constraints among micro and small enterprises in Bihar, India. *Energy for Sustainable Development* 67: 151-162 [\[link\]](#)
- [30] Aklin, Michaël. 2021. Do High Electricity Bills Undermine Public Support for Renewables? Evidence from the European Union. *Energy Policy* 156: 112400 [\[link\]](#)
- [29] Aklin, Michaël. 2021. The Off-Grid Catch-22: Effective Institutions as a Prerequisite for the Global Deployment of Distributed Renewable Power. *Energy Research & Social Science* 72: 101830 [\[link\]](#)
- [28] Aklin, Michaël and Johannes Urpelainen. 2021. The Evolving Role of Solar-Based Lighting Solutions in Rural India: Global Lessons for Distributed Renewables. *Energy for Sustainable Development* 163: 113-118 [\[link\]](#)
- [27] Aklin, Michaël, Namrata Chindarkar, Johannes Urpelainen, Abhishek Jain, and Karthik Ganesan. 2021. The Hedonic Treadmill: Electricity Access in India Has Increased, But So Have Expectations. *Energy Policy* 156: 112391 [\[link\]](#)
- [26] Aklin, Michaël, Brian Blankenship, Vagisha Nandan, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2021. The Great Equalizer: Inequality in Tribal Energy Access and Policies to Address It. *Energy Research & Social Science* 79: 102132 [\[link\]](#)
- [25] Pelz, Setu, Michaël Aklin, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2021. Electrification and productive use among micro- and small-enterprises in rural North India. *Energy Policy* 156: 112401 [\[link\]](#)
- [24] Aklin, Michaël, Chao-yo Cheng, Johannes Urpelainen. 2021. Inequality in Policy Implementation: Caste and Electrification in Rural India. *Journal of Public Policy* 41(2): 331-359 [\[link\]](#)
- [23] Aklin, Michaël and Andreas Kern. 2021. The Side Effects of Central Bank Independence. *American Journal of Political Science* 57(3): 643-658 [\[link\]](#)
- [22] Aklin, Michaël and Matto Mildenberger. 2020. Prisoners of the Wrong Dilemma: Why Distributive Conflict, Not Collective Action, Characterizes the Politics of Climate Change. *Global Environmental Politics* 20(4): 4-27 [\[link\]](#)
-  Featured in [L'Actualité](#), [The Atlantic](#), [Bloomberg](#), [New York Magazine](#), [New York Times](#) (1), [New York Times](#) (2)
- [21] Bayer, Patrick and Michaël Aklin. 2020. The European Union Emissions Trading System reduced CO2 emissions despite low prices. *PNAS* 117(16): 8804-8812 [\[link\]](#)
-  Featured in [Ars Technica](#), [BBC](#), [Brookings](#), [Financial Times](#), [Washington Post](#)
- [20] Rosenberg, Meital, Daniel Armanios, Michaël Aklin, and Paulina Jaramillo. 2020. Evidence of Gender Inequality in Energy Use from a Mixed Methods Study in India. *Nature Sustainability* 3: 110-118 [\[link\]](#)
-  Winner of the [2021 Research Impact on Practice Award](#) (Academy of Management)
-  Featured in [Business Standard](#), [The Hindu](#), [Times of India](#)

- [19] Aklin, Michaël and Johannes Urpelainen. 2020. Trials and Tribulations: Lost Energy Access Gains in Rural India. *Energy for Sustainable Development* 55: 190-200 [\[link\]](#)
- [18] Aklin, Michaël and Andreas Kern. 2019. Moral Hazard and Financial Crises: Evidence from American Troop Deployments. *International Studies Quarterly* 63(1): 15-29 [\[link\]](#)  
 Featured on **NPR**
- [17] Aklin, Michaël. 2018. How Robust Is the Renewable Energy Industry to Political Shocks? Evidence from the 2016 U.S. Elections. *Business & Politics* 20(4): 523-552 [\[link\]](#)
- [16] Aklin, Michaël, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2018. A Global Analysis of Progress in Household Electrification. *Energy Policy* 122: 421-428 [\[link\]](#)
- [15] Aklin, Michaël, Chao-yo Cheng, Johannes Urpelainen. 2018. Social Acceptance of New Energy Technology in Developing Countries: A Framing Experiment in Rural India. *Energy Policy* 113: 466-477 [\[link\]](#)
- [14] Aklin, Michaël, Chao-yo Cheng, Johannes Urpelainen. 2018. Geography, Community, Household: Adoption of Distributed Solar Power across India. *Energy for Sustainable Development* 42: 54-63 [\[link\]](#)
- [13] Aklin, Michaël, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2018. Economics of Household Technology Adoption in Developing Countries: Evidence from Solar Technology Adoption in Rural India. *Energy Economics* 72: 35-46 [\[link\]](#)
- [12] Aklin, Michaël, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2017. Does Basic Energy Access Generate Socio-Economic Benefits? A Field Experiment with Off-Grid Solar Power in India. *Science Advances* 3(5): 1-8 [\[link\]](#)  
 Featured in **The Economist, Reuters**
- [11] Aklin, Michaël. 2016. Re-Exploring the Trade and Environment Nexus Through the Diffusion of Pollution. *Environmental & Resource Economics* 64(4): 663-682 [\[link\]](#)
- [10] Aklin, Michaël, Chao-yo Cheng, Johannes Urpelainen, Karthik Ganesan, and Abhishek Jain. 2016. Factors Affecting Household Satisfaction with Electricity Supply in Rural India. *Nature Energy* 1(16170): 1-6 [\[link\]](#)
- [9] Aklin, Michaël, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2015. The Political Economy of Energy Access: Survey Evidence from India on State Intervention and Public Opinion. *Energy Research & Social Science* 10: 250-258 [\[link\]](#)
- [8] Aklin, Michaël, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2015. Quantifying Slum Electrification in India and Explaining Local Variation. *Energy* 80(1): 203-212 [\[link\]](#)
- [7] Aklin, Michaël, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2014. Information and Energy Policy Preferences: A Survey Experiment on Public Opinion about Electricity Pricing Reform in Rural India. *Economics of Governance* 15(4): 305-327 [\[link\]](#)
- [6] Aklin, Michaël and Johannes Urpelainen. 2014. The Global Spread of Environmental Ministries: Domestic-International Interactions. *International Studies Quarterly* 58(4): 764-780 [\[link\]](#)
- [5] Aklin, Michaël, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2014. Who Blames Corruption for the Poor Enforcement of Environmental Laws? Survey Evidence From Brazil. *Environmental Economics and Policy Studies* 16(3): 241-262 [\[link\]](#)
- [4] Aklin, Michaël and Johannes Urpelainen. 2014. Perceptions of Scientific Dissent Undermine Public Support for Environmental Policy. *Environmental Science & Policy* 28: 173-177 [\[link\]](#)
- [3] Aklin, Michaël and Johannes Urpelainen. 2013. Political Competition, Path Dependence, and the Strategy of Sustainable Energy Transitions. *American Journal of Political Science* 57(3): 643-658 [\[link\]](#)
- [2] Aklin, Michaël, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2013. Understanding

Environmental Policy Preferences: New Evidence from Brazil. *Ecological Economics* 94: 28-36 [\[link\]](#)

- [1] Aklin, Michaël and Johannes Urpelainen. 2013. Debating Clean Energy: Frames, Counter Frames, and Audiences. *Global Environmental Change* 23(5): 1225-1232 [\[link\]](#)

### Working Paper Series

Aklin, Michaël, Mark T. Buntaine, and Matto Mildenberger. 2023. Conditionality and the Politics of Climate Change. *IGCC Working Paper* [\[link\]](#)

Aklin, Michaël and Vera Z. Eichenauer. 2022. Power Shifts, Emigration, and Population Sorting. *KOF Working Papers* 502 [\[link\]](#)

Aklin, Michaël, Andreas Kern, and Mario Negre. 2021. Does Central Bank Independence Increase Inequality? *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper* 9522 [\[link\]](#)

### Book Chapters

Aklin, Michaël and Patrick Bayer. 2023. The Politics of Sustainability: Energy Efficiency, Carbon Pricing, and the Circular Economy. In Daniel Scholten (ed). *Handbook on the Geopolitics of the Energy Transition*. Edward Elgar. [\[link\]](#)

Aklin, Michaël. 2022. Renewable Energy, Energy Poverty, and Climate Change: Opportunities and (Many) Challenges. In Jeannie Sowers, Stacy D. VanDeveer, and Erika Weinthal (eds). *Oxford Handbook on Comparative Environmental Politics*. Oxford University Press [\[link\]](#)

Aklin, Michaël. 2018. International Relations Theories and Climate Change Politics. In Urs Luterbacher and Detlef Sprinz (eds). *Global Climate Policy: Actors, Concepts, and Enduring Challenges*. MIT Press [\[link\]](#)

Aklin, Michaël, Eric Arias, Emine Deniz, and B. Peter Rosendorff. 2015. Domestic Politics of Trade Policy. In Robert Scott and Stephen Kosslyn (eds). *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. John Wiley and Sons [\[link\]](#)

### Book Reviews

Aklin, Michaël. 2023. Review of *Twisting in the Wind: The Politics of Tepid Transitions to Renewable Energy*, by Oksan Bayulgen. *Perspective on Politics* 21(2): 763-764. [\[link\]](#)

Aklin, Michaël. 2022. Review of *Political Economies of Energy Transition: Wind and Solar Power in Brazil and South Africa*, by Kathryn Hochstetler. *Political Science Quarterly* 137(2): 424-426 [\[link\]](#)

### Reports

Bouallou, Rita, Alejandro Nuñez-Jimenez, and Michaël Aklin. 2025. The TAPIR framework: A new tool to assess climate and energy demonstration projects. Coalition for Green Energy Storage (CGES) [\[link\]](#).

Gaudard, Ludovic, Louisa Savereide, and Michaël Aklin. 2024. Techno-Economic Evaluation of Clean Cooking Technologies in Displacement Contexts. UNHCR Report.

Viswamohanan, Anjali, Shruti Sharma, Michaël Aklin, and Tom Moerenhout. 2022. Targeting Agricultural Electricity Subsidies in Haryana. IISD/GSI Report [\[link\]](#)

Bijlani, Diksha, Michaël Aklin, Brian Blankenship, Vagisha Nanda, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2022. Jharkhand Rural Energy Access: Enduring Challenges in Quality, Affordability, and Billing. ISEP and Oak Foundation [\[link\]](#)

Sharma, Shruti, Tom Moerenhout, Michaël Aklin, and Kavya Bajaj. 2021. How to Target LPG Subsidies in India: Evaluating policy options in Jharkhand. IISD/GSI Report [\[link\]](#)

Sharma, Shruti, Tom Moerenhout, and Michaël Aklin. 2020. How to Target Residential Electricity Subsidies in India. IISD/GSI Report [\[link\]](#)

Aklin, Michaël. 2019. Global Progress in Electrification. ISEP Policy Brief 2019-2 [\[link\]](#)

Aklin, Michaël, Patrick Bayer, S.P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2017. Small off-Grid solar systems displace kerosene, but evidence for social and economic impact remain weak. ISEP Policy Brief 2017-1 [\[link\]](#)

Jain, Abhishek, Sudatta Ray, Karthik Ganesan, Michaël Aklin, Chao-Yo Cheng, and Johannes Urpelainen. 2015. Access to Clean Cooking Energy and Electricity. New Delhi: Council on Energy, Environment and Water [\[link\]](#)

## Media

La robustesse géoéconomique plutôt que la réindustrialisation (with Mathias Thoenig), *Le Temps*, March 27, 2025 [\[link\]](#)

Le casse-tête de la loi sur l'électricité, *Le Temps*, May 29, 2024 [\[link\]](#)

Green jobs for fossil fuel workers: The implications of geography and skills for the clean energy transition, *VoxEU*, December 23, 2023 [\[link\]](#)

Enable a just transition for American fossil fuel workers through federal action, *Brookings*, August 2, 2022 [\[link\]](#)

Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien: les bienfaits de la loi sur le CO2 compensent ses carences, *Le Temps*, October 20, 2020 [\[link\]](#)

Middle-Income Countries Big Winner from Off-Grid Energy. Who's Next? Power for All, November 22, 2018 [\[link\]](#)

Six Nuclear Reactors Worth of Off-Grid Renewable Energy Deployed in Last 10 Years – But Sub-Saharan Africa Lagging, Power for All, November 20, 2018 [\[link\]](#)

How India's impressive electrification compares with South Asian nations, *The Print*, September 13, 2018 [\[link\]](#)

Off-grid power not a silver bullet for rural India, *Swissinfo*, August 16, 2017 [\[link\]](#)

Off-grid solar power and the future of rural electrification in India, *Ideas for India*, July 17, 2017 [\[link\]](#)

Can solar micro-grids deliver basic electricity access in Indian villages? *Ideas for India*, April 17, 2015 [\[link\]](#)

La Suisse doit reprendre l'initiative en Europe avec une politique énergétique proactive, *Le Temps*, October 31, 2014 [\[link\]](#)

How (not) to talk about climate change, *Washington Post* (Monkey Cage), May 22, 2014 [\[link\]](#)

## Grants

External funding since 2010 (as PI, co-PI, or team member) (total: about \$2m): *Swiss National Science Foundation*, *Carnegie Corporation of New York*, *Heinz Endowments*, *International Growth Centre* (2x), *Oak Foundation*, *Shakti Foundation*, *ClimateWorks*, *Browne Center*, *British Academy*.

## Talks & Guest Lectures

†: research presentation   §: guest or public lecture

2025 Graduate Institute<sup>†</sup>, University of Pittsburgh<sup>†</sup>, Petralia<sup>†</sup>, Universität St.Gallen<sup>§</sup>

2024 Stockholm School of Economics<sup>†</sup>, University of Bern<sup>†</sup>, ETHZ/University of Lausanne<sup>†</sup>, UCSB<sup>†</sup>, Petralia<sup>†</sup>, University of Geneva<sup>†</sup>, UNHCR<sup>§</sup>, UNCTAD<sup>§</sup>, Deep Climate Conversations<sup>§</sup>, AGAP/ASOU<sup>§</sup>, Beyond the Lab<sup>§</sup>, Sapienza<sup>§</sup>

2023 UCSB<sup>†</sup>, UT Austin<sup>†</sup>, Petralia<sup>†</sup>, ETHZ<sup>†</sup>, Teaching and Learning for Change/HE-Sustainability<sup>§</sup>

2022 IDB<sup>†</sup>, Petralia<sup>†</sup>, Columbia<sup>†</sup>, IIT Kanpur<sup>†</sup>, Environmental Politics & Governance<sup>†</sup>, University of Toronto<sup>§</sup>, Université de Montréal<sup>§</sup>, University of Pennsylvania<sup>§</sup>, University of Lucerne<sup>§</sup>, Pitt-Carnegie Mellon University<sup>§</sup>, APSA

2021 University of British Columbia<sup>§</sup>, University of Lucerne<sup>§</sup>

2020 World Bank (CPLC)<sup>†</sup>, University of Lucerne<sup>§</sup>

2019 ETHZ<sup>†</sup>, NYU<sup>†</sup>, University of Lucerne<sup>†</sup>, EPFL<sup>§</sup>, MPSA

2018 UCSB<sup>†</sup>, ETHZ/KOF<sup>†</sup>, NYU<sup>†</sup>, University of Pennsylvania<sup>†</sup>, Strathclyde<sup>†</sup>, MPSA, APSA

2017 Sciences Po<sup>†</sup>, NYU<sup>†</sup>, MPSA, APSA

2016 Heidelberg<sup>†</sup>, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign<sup>†</sup>, Princeton<sup>†</sup>, Environmental Politics & Governance

2015 Washington University in St Louis<sup>†</sup>, University of Pennsylvania<sup>†</sup>, IPES, MPSA

2014 ETHZ/University of Zürich<sup>†</sup>, Université de Montréal<sup>†</sup>, APSA, IPES, MPSA

2013 University of Pittsburgh<sup>†</sup>, Columbia University<sup>†</sup>, Yale<sup>†</sup>, APSA, IPES, MPSA

2012 IPES, MPSA

2011 Princeton University<sup>†</sup>, IPES, MPSA

2010 University of Potsdam<sup>†</sup>

2009 International Scientific Conference on Climate Change, Copenhagen

### **Languages**

English (fluent), French (native speaker), Swiss German (native speaker), German

### **Teaching**

*Undergraduate (BSc and BA)*

Climate Change and Public Policy [Pitt]

Global Environmental Politics [Penn, Pitt]

Politics of COVID (course coordinator) [Pitt]

Politics and Financial Crises [Pitt]

Sustainability (one week) [EPFL]

*Graduate (MSc and PhD)*

Econometrics [EPFL, Pitt]

Technology, Sustainability, and Public Policy [EPFL]

International Political Economy of Developing Countries [Pitt]

Political Economy of Growth [Pitt]

*Executive education/EMBA*

Innovation and Public Policy [EPFL]

Sustainable Innovation [EPFL]

### **PhD Advising**

2024 Valentina González-Rostani: University of Southern California (AP)

2024 Qing Chang (chair): University of Pittsburgh SCI (postdoc)  
 2023 Junghyun Lim: Princeton (postdoc) → UNC Chapel Hill (AP)  
 2022 Maxfield Peterson: ANU (postdoc) → Washington State Department of Ecology  
 2021 Ignacio Mamone: Nielsen → Accenture  
 2021 Josh Counselman: ACA Group  
 External examiner: ETH Zurich (2023), NTNU (2022), Aalto (2022)

### MSc Advising

\*: academic master's thesis

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Thesis host</i>
	Olivier Dallemagne	EPFL*
2025	Victoria Gentile	Nestle
	Sven Mahon	Zephyre
	Shara Vigneswaran	Romande Energie
	Shiqi Yang	Solar Impulse
	Marc Chavanne	Leclanché
2024	Jingqi Liu	Hilti
	Noé Lopez	Persistent
	Francesco Tripoli	MIT*

### Service

*Policy and industry*

2025-... Canton of Vaud's *Economic Strategy 2050*, Steering Committee

*Academia*

2025 Uni Basel, recruitment committee (external member)  
 2025 11th Annual Environmental Politics & Governance (EPG) conference, co-organizer  
 2018-... Environmental Politics & Governance (EPG), International Steering Committee  
 2023 EPSA, chair of the Public Policy and Public Administration track  
 2022 IPES, co-organizer  
 2018-21 Virtual IPES, committee member  
 2018 APSA, committee member for best book award, *International Collaboration* section

*EPFL*

2025-... Board member, EPFL Advisory Board for Impact  
 2024-... Academic advisor, Science and Policy Action Network (SPAN)  
 2024-... Sustainable Energy Systems Engineering, Academic leadership of the System Modelling module  
 2023-... College of Management, Direction committee  
 2023-... College of Management, Doctoral committee  
 2023-... Constellation on energy, sustainability and climate (C-ESC), committee member  
 2023-... College of Management, faculty search committee (2x)  
 2023-... Forum on Sustainable Economy (E4S-UBS), steering committee

- 2025 School of Basic Sciences, faculty search committee (statistics)
- 2023-2025 Coalition for Green Energy and Storage (CGES), working group on technology assessment
- 2024 AVP-SAO, public engagement officer, search committee
- 2023-24 European Society for Engineering Education (SEFI), International Scientific Committee

*University of Pittsburgh*

- 2022-24 Arts & Sciences tenure council
- 2020-23 Arts & Sciences promotion and tenure committee (ad hoc)
- 2021-23 Arts & Sciences undergraduate council
- 2016-19 Arts & Sciences grant committee

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