



News Release

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IEA initiates dialogue on the energy-security impacts of climate change

A select group of companies from the energy and manufacturing sectors met with officials from the [International Energy Agency](#) (IEA) today for the first time for an exploratory discussion on the threats to energy systems from climate change.

The meeting, which had been scheduled for several months, comes a week after Hurricane Sandy caused tens of billions of dollars' worth of damage along the East Coast of the United States. The storm's aftermath highlighted the vulnerability of even the most well-developed economies and energy systems to environmental impacts.

Such extreme weather events threaten electricity transmission, delivery of gasoline, as well as heat, transport and communication systems that rely on energy. Climate change may affect how energy is produced and consumed in the future. Warmer regions may be exposed to rising electricity demand for cooling in the summer. Warming can also affect electricity supply as plants that need water and air for cooling face new challenges. At the same time, sea level rise and flooding pose challenges for energy infrastructure and the transport of energy goods.

"Much has been said about the ways in which our energy system is affecting the climate, yet very little has been said about the opposite: the effects of a changing climate on our energy system. As the IEA's core mission is enhancing energy security, we think it's imperative to jump-start a conversation about this issue," said IEA Executive Director Maria van der Hoeven, who participated in the talks. "Our discussions today showed that active dialogue between industry and governments around this issue can improve our future resilience to climate impacts."

The IEA is initiating immediate, modest steps to support countries in strengthening the resilience of their energy systems. First, the Secretariat will host additional forums as an opportunity for businesses and governments to exchange views and experience; there is a growing wealth of analysis and thinking in this area which we want to help promote and disseminate. Second, it will establish a database of policies that enhance resilience of the energy sector as a platform for countries to share experience. Third, it will better incorporate into its model-based projections more analysis regarding the potential impact of climate change on energy supply and demand. In addition, the IEA is exploring the establishment of an ad hoc working group to develop stronger policies to enhance the resilience of energy systems to climatic events and to prepare for potential climate change induced impact on energy demand and supply.

"These represent initial steps which we feel can help to push the climate/energy resilience agenda forward. Of course, further action, including by governments and businesses, will be needed," said Ms. Van der Hoeven. "The challenge is real; our actions must be up to the task."

For further information, please contact ieapressoffice@iea.org.