Energy is power

and it is connected to everything in our lives: our jobs, our health, the food we eat, the places we live, the weather we experience, and the wars we fight. Over the past few hundred years, our energy has primarily come from fossil fuels—oil, coal, and gas. But these are causing global climate chaos—and are running out.

Until now, energy has been controlled by a small number of large corporations. And governments have been giving about US$300 billion of subsidies to these corporations every year. Thanks to this arrangement, some people have become very rich. But most people are simply dependent on these companies for the power they need—and two billion people, or one third of the world's population, are still without access to reliable energy.

We need to make a switch. We have to move quickly from our destructive, wasteful, and unfair use of fossil fuels to a new model where the production, distribution, and control of energy is clean, efficient, and affordable for everyone.

With existing technology, we can capture enough renewable energy from the sun, wind, water, and the earth to power the world six times over. This technology can bring clean energy to everyone, everywhere. All we need is the political will and determined action to make it happen.

Connect with your own power

citizens: Demand an innovative solution that gives everyone a chance to make a profit by producing, using, and selling renewable energy.

business leaders: Call for long-term incentives that stimulate investment in energy innovation and support a vibrant green energy market.

legislators: Encourage energy entrepreneurship with a policy that has been proven to be the most successful renewable-energy legislation.

Want to know how? Visit **www.power-to-the-people.net** and help make the switch.

Power to the People!

World Future Council

EARTH ACTION

With the right policy, people worldwide can profit from creating their own renewable energy.

Power to the People!

NOVEMBER 2007

SWITCH NOW!

Energy for the Future

BENEFITS A global transition to clean, green energy will mean:

- much less CO_2 in the atmosphere, reducing climate chaos
- reduced pollution of our air, water, and land
- greater energy security for communities and nations
- fewer conflicts and wars over energy resources
- affordable energy for everyone
- skilled jobs in cities and rural areas
- sustainable economies with stable fuel prices

Burning fossil fuels releases 75% of the greenhouse gases that are heating the planet. By switching to renewable energy we can cut CO_2 emissions in half by 2030 while saving $180 billion a year.

MORE THAN ENOUGH Renewable energy is available everywhere on the planet as sunlight, wind, flowing water, the biomass of plants, and as heat stored in the ground. The sun's energy that falls on the Earth's land surfaces every day is 15,000 times the world's total daily energy use. The widespread abundance and diversity of renewable energy allows for its multiple, decentralized, affordable, and efficient uses.

Energy and Security

SECURITY FROM VIOLENCE The global demand for fossil fuels is increasing faster than expected. As the world's oil-, coal-, and gas-hungry countries compete for depleting resources, there will be even more conflicts, wars, and violations of human rights. Renewable fuels, available everywhere, eliminate scarcity as the cause of conflict, and reduce dependence on nations or corporations as fuel suppliers.

ECONOMIC SECURITY Renewable energy production will lessen a community's or nation's vulnerability to fossil fuel market prices. It will encourage self-reliant economic growth and increase economic security.

HUMAN SECURITY The natural disasters triggered by climate chaos are responsible for 150,000 deaths every year, and cause millions of people to seek refuge elsewhere. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC–awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize) predicts 50 million "environmental refugees" by 2010, and 150 million by 2050. The tremendous costs of migration affect the refugees and the communities and nations that must manage their arrival and integration.

Energy and Justice

ACCESS Any group's social and economic prosperity is linked to its access to electricity. We cannot end poverty without a sufficient energy supply for all humans. We need to conserve our existing energy resources through their efficient use and distribution and rapidly build decentralized systems that produce energy where it is consumed. An energy transition needs to achieve "energy justice"—equal access to affordable, clean, renewable energy for all.

EQUITY A small part of the global population has been consuming the lion's share of the world's fossil fuels, and pumping most of the CO_2 into our common atmosphere. But the poorest people on the planet, those who have burned little or no fossil fuels, suffer the most from climate chaos, struggling to survive its devastating effects. Clearly it is morally unacceptable that the environmental and social costs of our long history of burning fossil fuels be imposed on those least able to pay. The energy transition needs to be paid for by those who have benefited most from the current system.

Energy, Wealth and Jobs

COSTS Renewable energy prices have been halved since 1990 and are expected to drop another 40% by 2020. Over time, the cost of renewable energy will continue to fall due to economies of scale and technological progress. The costs of fossil and nuclear energy, however, are expected to almost quadruple by 2050, as the world's supply of these fuels diminishes and the price of extraction, environmental protection, and cleanup increase.

STABILITY Communities that use locally produced renewable energy have more stable energy costs. Setting up renewable energy systems requires initial investment—but except for biomass, once installed, no fuel costs remain. Overall, energy costs become more predictable and controllable, increasing economic stability.

EMPLOYMENT Switching to renewable energy is already increasing economic growth and the number of high-skilled jobs in engineering, manufacturing, agriculture, electronics, and other fields. In Germany, the renewables sector created 234,000 jobs over the last 15 years, while the number of coal, nuclear, gas, and oil workers dropped from 223,000 to 94,500 in the same period.

Energy and Innovation

CLIMATE PROTECTION Worldwide, a rapid shift to clean, decentralized, renewable energy will combine climate stabilization with energy independence. It will enable each of us to take meaningful action for the long-term well-being of our families, communities, and for our shared home, the Earth.

FLEXIBILITY Green energy resources—sun, wind, water, geothermal, and biomass—can be combined depending on their availability. They can provide heating, cooling, electricity, and fuel for machinery, vehicles and other transportation. Renewable technologies can be flexibly designed to fit the landscape, architecture, machines, and vehicles—increasing efficiency and autonomy.

INDEPENDENT ACTION With the right policy support, each one of us can afford to switch to renewable energy, enabling all of us to be part of an energy renaissance. Many consumers can become producers of renewable energy and profitably share their surplus production with others.

What Not to Do

NOT CCS The long-term answer to our energy needs is not CCS (Carbon Capture & Storage), a proposed plan to capture CO_2 emissions from fossil fuels and indefinitely store these gases in cavities underground. This does not avoid, but rather hides, our CO_2 waste, which could leak out in the future. CCS is too expensive, uncertain, and potentially dangerous.

NOT NUCLEAR Nuclear power depends on limited uranium and produces hazardous wastes that remain radioactive for hundreds of thousands of years. The plutonium produced can be used to make nuclear weapons that will heighten our global insecurity. Nuclear plants need gigantic government subsidies and guarantees to investors. They could not be built fast enough for any real contribution to climate stabilization.

NOT THE LAST DROP Overall, the solution cannot be to find and burn every last bit of oil, coal, and gas on the planet. We know that this will only lead to a greater gap between the rich and poor and increase climate chaos, pollution, and wars.

All money is in U.S. Dollars. For the sources of all facts, visit WWW.POWER-TO-THE-PEOPLE.NET.

POSTER

A Solution

Targets for renewable energy are set everywhere—and need to be met. What's the best way to help people switch from burning fossil fuels to using clean renewable energy? Make it easy, affordable, and profitable.

In 1990, Germany passed what is called a "Feed In Tariff" (FIT) law. An FIT requires power companies to buy electricity at a set price for a set period of time from anyone who produces electricity from clean, renewable sources.

By guaranteeing a price for 15–20 years, FIT laws allow people to know when their solar panels or wind generators will start to pay back. By selling their electricity to the power company for a known price, they make back the cost of their equipment and then make extra income for years to come.

As a result of these FIT laws, 234,000 people have been employed in the renewable-energy industry in Germany. They have helped the country to become the biggest renewable-technology exporter in the world. And by 2006, 12% of all energy in Germany was renewable (up from 0% in 1990). This saved 100 million tons of CO_2 in 2006 alone. Germany will meet its target for renewable energy three years early and is aiming to cut 40% of its CO_2 emissions by 2020.

Over 45 countries and states have their own form of this solution. To find out what your version of an FIT law could look like, visit **WWW.POWER-TO-THE-PEOPLE.NET**

World Future Council

The World Future Council is a new global forum to protect the interests and rights of future generations. Consisting of 50 prominent personalities from the worlds of governments, parliaments, business, civil society, science and the arts, the World Future Council works with policy-makers and citizens world-wide to identify and implement the best policies for a sustainable future. For its first campaign, the World Future Council is calling for a rapid global transition from burning fossil fuels to using clean renewable energy.

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EARTH ACTION

EarthAction was launched in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. It is a global network of policymakers, citizens and over 2,600 organizations in more than 165 countries that work together for a more just, equitable and sustainable world.

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