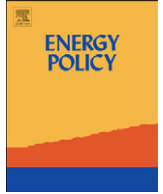


Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Energy Policy

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/enpol

Introduction to Section 9—The economy and business

Does improved economic prosperity mean higher energy use? If it does, climate change itself becomes politically as well as technically problematic because of the importance of rising living standards.

In this section, we assemble a broad selection of views on the connection between energy and the economy. At one extreme, as Barrett and colleagues point out, are those who believe that economies in the developed world could be twice as large while consuming half as much fuel and other raw materials. They point to the past experience of developed world economies, which have grown faster than their energy consumption has risen, and at new technologies which could allow this trend to intensify. However, Ockwell points here to the work of analysts who consider that the improved energy economy of advanced nations is mainly attributable to the replacement of old-style fuels such as coal with higher-grade ones such as electricity and oil.

Regardless of how this debate is resolved, there is general agreement that we need greener decision taking in business. Gouldson discusses research which suggests that the pressures on many businesses are already so severe that green decision-making may be one thing too many for them to consider. It may be down to smaller businesses with a base in the community or in family ownership to show the way.

But there can be little doubt that the era of climate change requires new technology as well as new business models. Clarke and colleagues explore the possibilities. We also consider the barriers to innovation in the UK. Does adaptation to climate change have to be a drag on the economy, or can it be an opportunity for the UK to develop new products that will be in demand in years to come? Fisk takes up this vital issue.