At MIT, we are committed to solving the world’s greatest challenges. With its wide-ranging environmental, economic, political, and social impacts, climate change is arguably the most pressing issue of our time. The Institute’s interdisciplinary expertise in subjects such as technology, engineering, science, and business make it well-positioned to lead the effort to change the planet’s climate trajectory.

MIT has announced the launch of the Climate Project at MIT, an Institute-wide initiative to develop, deliver, and scale up climate solutions as quickly as possible. MIT Sloan will play a critical role in this initiative. The school recently announced a $25M investment to jump-start the MIT Climate Policy Center, which will utilize the Climate Project at MIT’s research and technologies to help inform and support policymakers.

**THE CLIMATE PROJECT AT MIT**

The Climate Project at MIT will facilitate collaboration among students, faculty, and staff across the Institute to combat climate change. The goal for MIT is to become, within the next decade, one of the world’s most prolific and collaborative sources of technological, behavioral, and policy solutions for the global climate challenge. The Climate Project at MIT currently has the following focal areas, or Climate Missions:

- **Decarbonizing Energy and Industry**: Decarbonizing the world’s industries with affordable low-emissions electricity and fuels in addition to climate-relieving industrial innovation.
- **Restoring the Atmosphere, Protecting Land and Oceans**: Removing, managing, and storing greenhouse gases. Protecting ocean and land ecosystems.
- **Empowering Frontline Communities**: Supporting the world’s most vulnerable populations with technologies, finance, and policies for climate relief and resilience.
- **Building and Adapting Healthy, Resilient Cities**: Designing, building, and adapting habitable, resilient cities.
- **Inventing New Policy Approaches**: Inventing new institutions and incentives in addition to policies/systems for rapid scaling.

**THE MIT CLIMATE POLICY CENTER**

Situated within MIT Sloan, the MIT Climate Policy Center will be key in helping all five MIT schools and the college address the above Climate Missions. The MIT Climate Policy Center will be led by Christopher Knittel (Associate Dean; Faculty Director, MIT Climate Policy Center; George P. Shultz Professor of Energy Economics) and Bethany Patten, EMBA ’13 (MIT Climate Policy Center Executive Director; Senior Lecturer, Sustainability). Initial affiliated faculty and researchers include John Sterman, PhD ’82 (Jay W. Forrester Professor of Management; Co-Faculty Director, the MIT Sloan Sustainability Initiative; Director, MIT System Dynamics Group), Catherine Wolfram, PhD ’96 (William F. Pounds Professor of Energy Economics; Professor,
Applied Economics), and Florian Berg (MIT Sloan Research Scientist; Co-Founder, The Aggregate Confusion Project).

Mission

The MIT Climate Policy Center’s mission is to serve as a trusted non-partisan resource for policymakers who wish to advance evidence-based climate policy in the next decade. It will facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration among the various MIT academic departments, centers, and initiatives spread across the Institute that address the climate crisis and determine how their research can be used to educate and support policymakers. It will also incentivize academics to form relationships with policymakers. Its core goals are to:

- Serve as MIT’s “front door” for policy makers, coordinating and enhancing MIT’s current, disparate climate research efforts;
- Amplify the efforts of the Climate Project at MIT’s Climate Missions and work across all faculty, departments, centers, and initiatives engaged in climate-policy research and outreach; and
- Be a two-way street, deepening relationships between MIT and relevant policy makers to stay abreast of policy makers’ needs.

Strategy

The MIT Climate Policy Center will achieve its mission through a comprehensive three-pronged strategy informed by MIT’s accomplishments in the climate space. Below are the components of this strategy and examples of current and previous MIT projects that employ these strategies.

1. Heighten Awareness of MIT Expertise and Tools: The MIT Center for Climate Policy will heighten awareness of MIT expertise, tools, and scenario analysis capabilities among the global policy community. En-ROADS and the Climate Pathways Pathways Project serve as examples of work that elevated MIT’s reputation as a trusted resource for policymakers. Building on decades of work originated in the MIT Sloan System Dynamics group by John Sterman, the En-ROADS climate policy simulator is a collaboration between MIT Sloan and the think tank Climate Interactive. En-ROADS is a publicly available computer simulation tool that models how different policies affect elements such as the cost of energy, global temperatures, air quality, and rising sea levels. Over 11,000 leaders in business, government, and civil society have participated in climate policy workshops using En-ROADS, including heads of state, legislative leaders, state agencies, and leaders in the global business community. The Climate Pathways Project team has run workshops for government leaders in 165 countries.

2. Convene, Inform, and Recommend: The MIT Climate Policy Center will convene leaders in government, industry, academia, and the nonprofit sector to exchange knowledge and ideas around climate policy. In 2018, MIT held a workshop that included stakeholders from oil and gas companies, credit rating agencies, investment firms, nongovernmental organizations, academics, and others who influence worldwide climate scenarios. The following year, MIT released a report entitled “Climate-Related Financial Disclosures: The Use of

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Scenarios,” which was informed by the discussions that took place at this workshop. The report contains recommendations about how oil and gas companies can use scenario analysis to transparently communicate the risks and opportunities they encounter due to climate change.

3. **Analyze and Translate Climate Policy Research:** Knittel worked with Juan Senga (Postdoctoral Associate, MIT Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research) to respond to a request from U.S. Senator John Hickenlooper’s office. Knittel and Senga worked to model potential outcomes of the Big WIRES Act, a proposed piece of legislation from Senator Hickenlooper and Representative Scott Peters that would update the U.S. energy transmission system. Using an existing model at MIT, Knittel and Senga completed the research within three weeks and shared it with Senator Hickenlooper’s staff, who began using the research results in their promotional materials to get others to sponsor the bill. This project also resulted in the publication of a working paper entitled “Research Commentary: Evaluating the Impact of the BIG WIRES Act” that was co-authored by Audun Botterud (Principal Research Scientist, MIT Laboratory for Decisions and Information Systems), Knittel, John Parsons (MIT Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research Deputy Director; MIT Sloan Senior Lecturer) and Senga. The research was cited in the Senator’s press release. Subsequent work analyzing similar legislation in Texas has resulted in national media coverage in *The Hill*, *E&E News*, and *The Economist*.

**CREATING A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER**

By bringing together the brightest minds in academia and government policy, the MIT Climate Policy Center will be instrumental in the fight against climate change. Its activities will include raising awareness of MIT research, facilitating conversations among diverse climate policy stakeholders, and responding to the research needs of policymakers. These efforts will build the relationships with policymakers that are needed to amplify the interdisciplinary work of the MIT Climate Project across the country and the world.

Bridging the gap between climate research and policy will enable the MIT Climate Policy Center to contribute to climate innovation in a unique and impactful way. We invite you to support the MIT Climate Policy Center and join us in creating a healthier and more sustainable future for all.

“The MIT Climate Policy Center seeks to become a primary trusted non-partisan resource for policy makers, connecting them with faculty and students who want to make the greatest possible contribution to advancing evidence-based climate policy in the next decade.”

**Bethany Patten, EMBA ’13, Executive Director, MIT Climate Policy Center**