Trade-offs reveal no clear favorites in alternative energy market

September 12 2007

The nuclear power industry is riding the green wave back into public favor with its promise of a low-carbon solution to our growing energy needs. But even as the industry struggles to dictate what role nuclear can realistically play, it is bound by a global energy landscape—from solar to carbon sequestration—that is still predominantly shaped by the marketplace.

Veteran New York Times energy reporter Matthew Wald takes a pragmatic look at the trade-offs associated with investment in a number of alternative energy sources in "Getting Power to the People," a special in-depth feature appearing in the September/October 2007 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

Wald considers variables such as the cost of fuel inputs, capacity factor, and the price of carbon capture technology, and discusses how they affect energy prices for consumers. "There is a future on the grid for almost everything: coal, natural gas, nuclear power, gasified biomass, and probably wind and solar as well," Wald concludes. "What remains is to determine the proportions."

Additional materials include selected graphs that illustrate baseline energy concepts and a summation chart that offers energy source comparison at a glance.

Source: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

Citation: Trade-offs reveal no clear favorites in alternative energy market (2007, September 12) retrieved 26 April 2024 from
https://phys.org/news/2007-09-trade-offs-reveal-favorites-alternative-energy.html

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