Potential and risks of hydrogen-based e-fuels in climate change mitigation

Dr. Falko Ueckerdt, head of National Energy Transitions Team at Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research HEC WEBINAR, January 10th, 2022

Based on:

1) Ueckerdt, F., Bauer, C., Dirnaichner, A., Everall, J., Sacchi, R., Luderer, G. (2021). Nature Climate Change, https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-021-01032-7

2) Ariadne Project Scenario Report for Germany, "Deutschland auf dem Weg zur Klimaneutralität 2045." https://ariadneprojekt.de/publikation/deutschland-auf-dem-weg-zur-klimaneutralitat-2045-szenarienreport/
3) Ariadne Project Policy Brief: "Cornerstones of an adaptable hydrogen strategy" https://ariadneprojekt.de/publikation/eckpunkte-einer-anpassungsfaehigen-wasserstoffstrategie/
4) Odenweller, A., Ueckerdt, F., Nemet, G.F., Jensterle, M., Luderer, G., in preparation. Growth of electrolysis required to make green hydrogen a substantial climate change mitigation option





Overview

*1. The debate*on hydrogen and e-fuels inGermany and the EU

• Background: climate targets

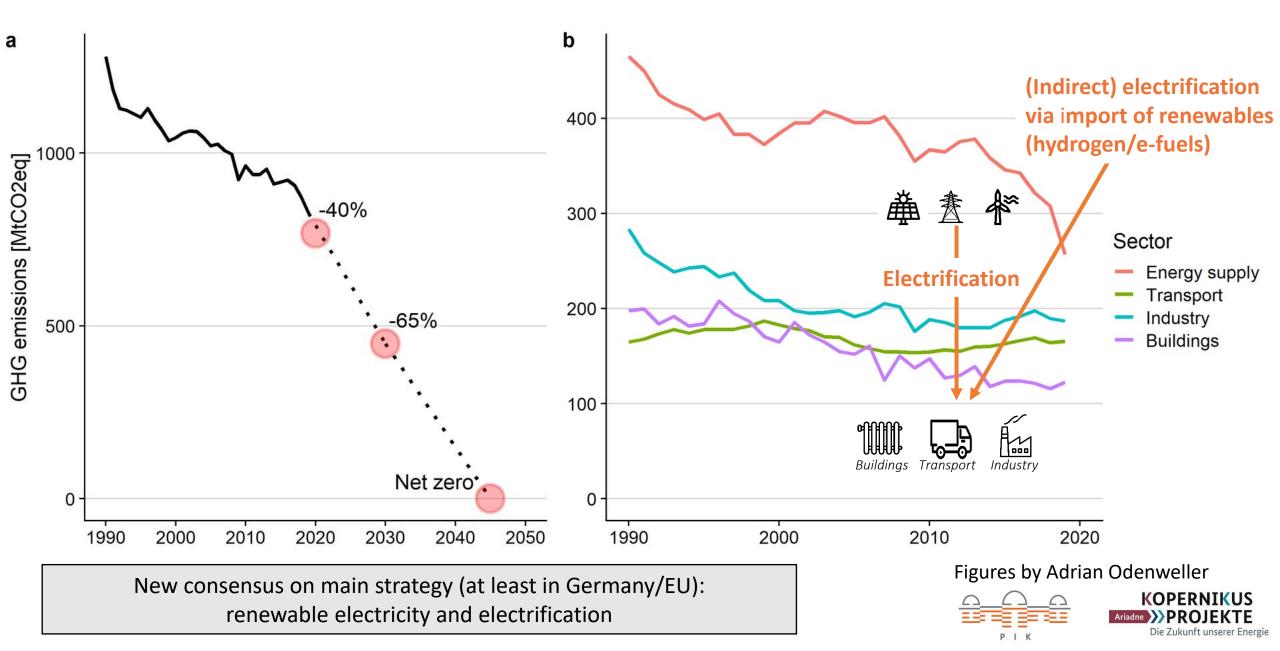
2. Evaluation of hydrogen and e-fuels for climate mitigation *3. Conclusion* an adaptable hydrogen strategy

4. Q&A, joint discussion transfer to Quebec/Canada

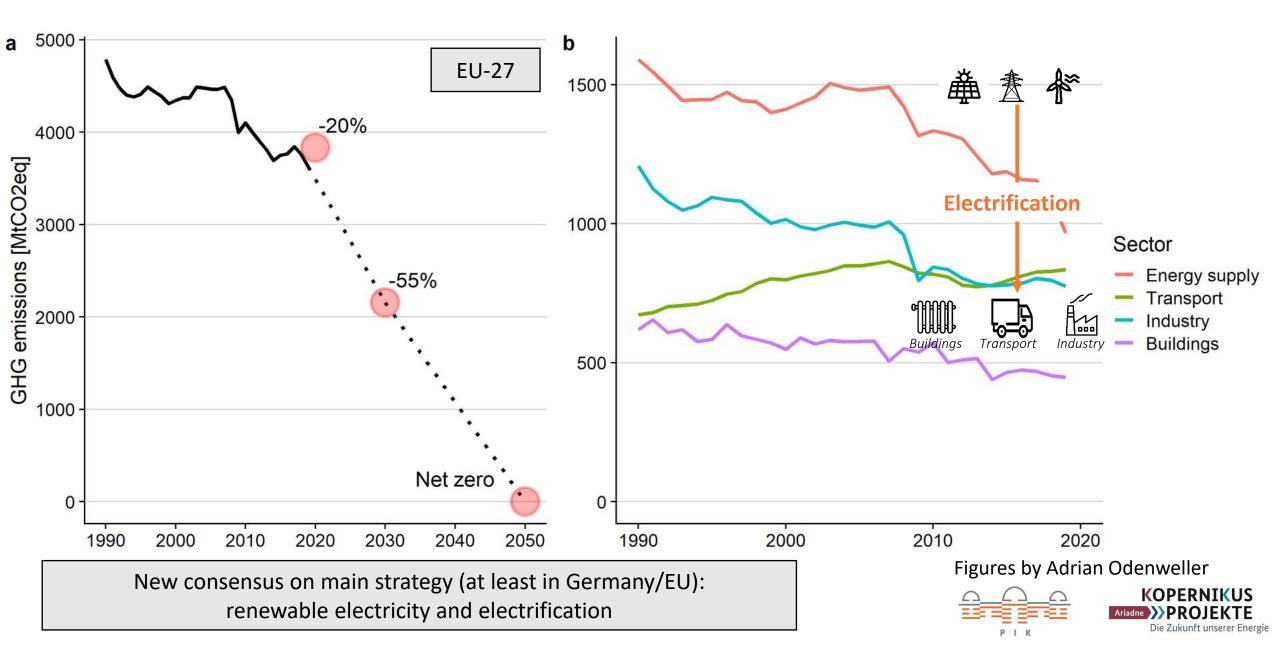




Next phase of the energy transition: rapid and deep.



Next phase of the energy transition: rapid and deep.



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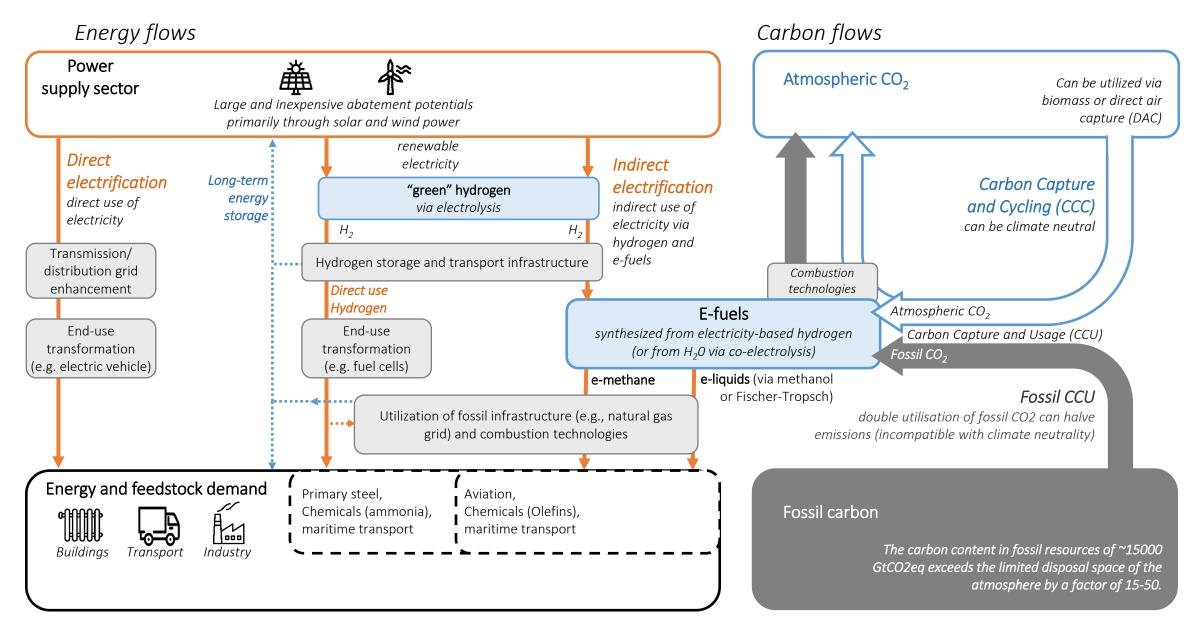
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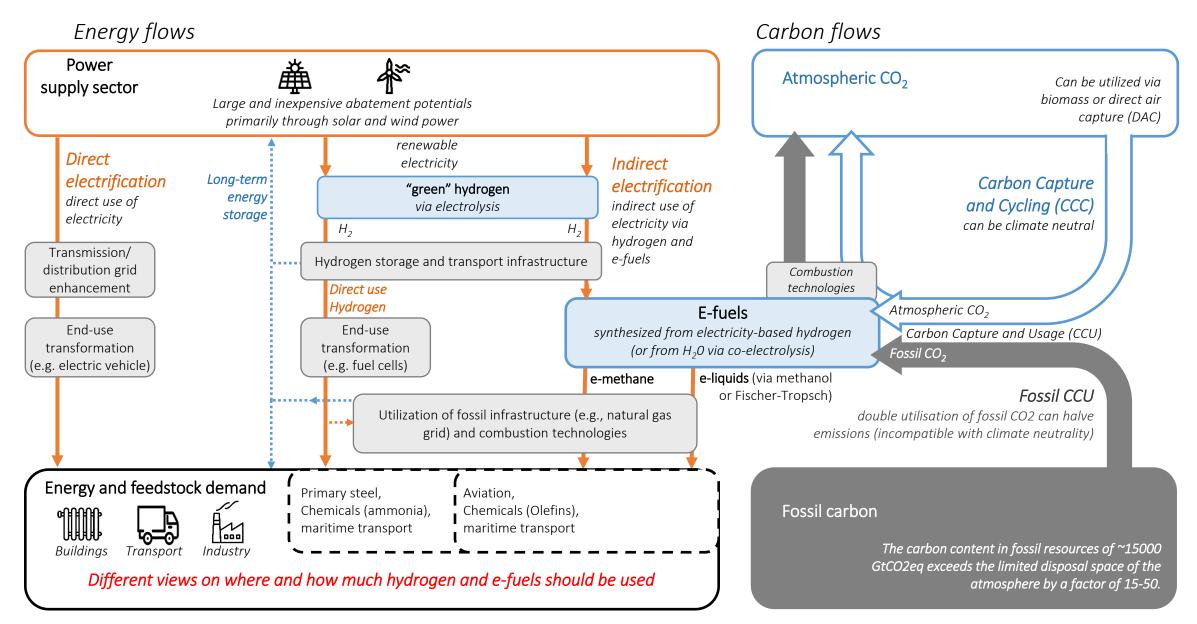


German/EU debate: New consensus "renewables and electrification", and old conflicts





German/EU debate: New consensus "renewables and electrification", and old conflicts



Two dimensions in the debate

More *domestic* renewable expansion

H2 demand side: which applications? More *direct* electrification

Focused

prioritize hydrogen for "no-regret sectors" (consensus) primary steel, ammonia, aviation, shipping, olefins (huge markets)

Grey area middleground

low-temp. heat industry
(steam making)
high-temp. heat (e.g. glass making, or cement)
long-haul freight transport
(trucks)

More renewable *imports*

More *indirect* electrification

Broad

all sectors, including passenger car, buildings

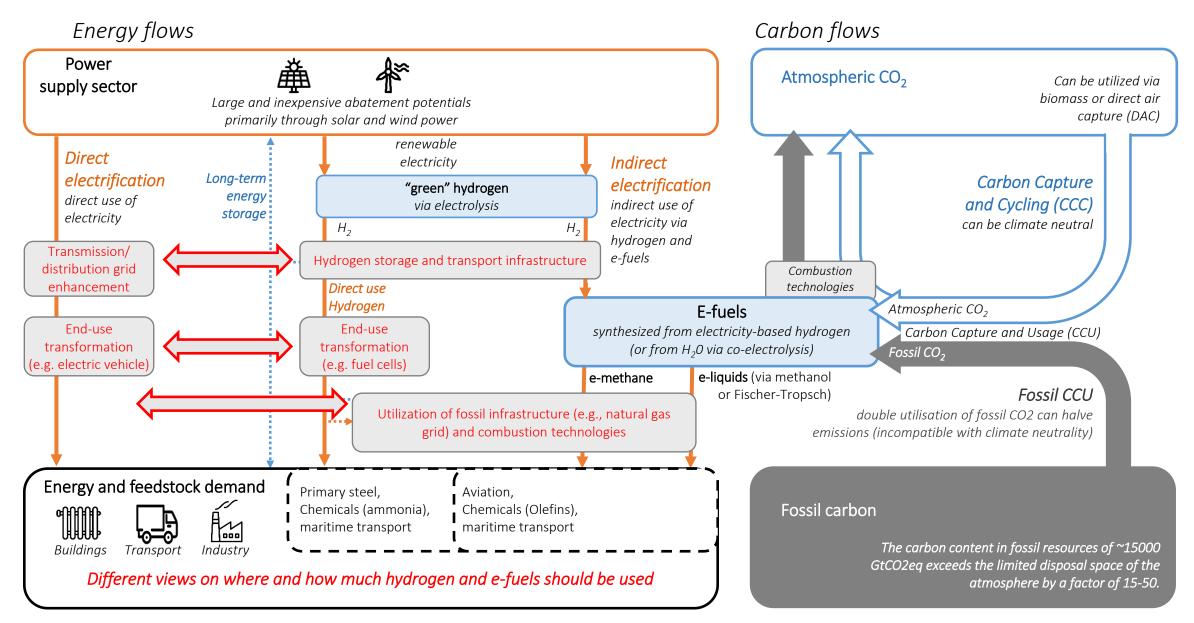




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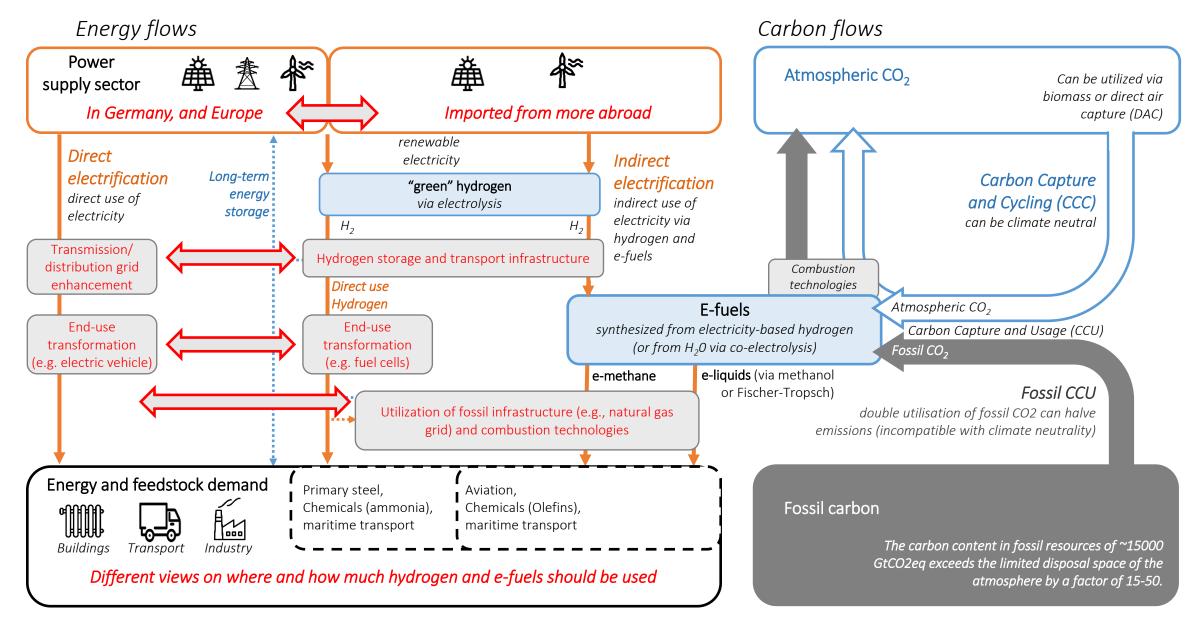
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German/EU debate: New consensus "renewables and electrification", and old conflicts





Underneath the hydrogen debate: Competing visions of the future energy system



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Two dimensions in the debate

2nd dimension of the debate?

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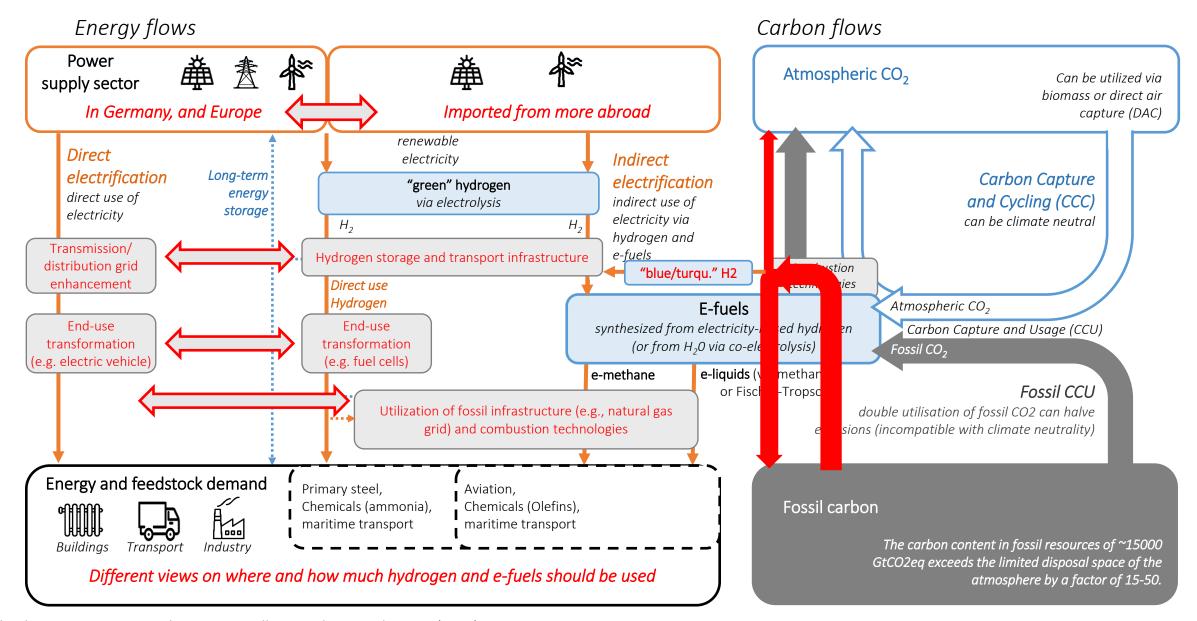




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Underneath the hydrogen debate: Competing visions of the future energy system





Two dimensions in the debate

"Hydrogen:	H2 supply side (hydrogen colors and other bridging solutions)		
the champagne of the energy transition!"	Entirely green hydrogen		
H2 demand side: which applications?			
Focused prioritize hydrogen for "no-regret sectors" (consensus) primary steel, ammonia, aviation, shipping, olefins (huge markets)	Short bridge of blue hydrogen Longer and broad	Grey area middleground - low-temp. heat industry (steam making) - high-temp. heat (e.g. glass making, or cement) - long-haul freight transport (trucks)	Broad all sectors, including passenger car, buildings
Ueckerdt. F., Bauer, C., Dirnaichner, A., Everall, J., Sacchi, R.,	contribution of blue and turquoise hydrogen		"Hydrogen: the table water of the energy transition!" KOPERNIKUS

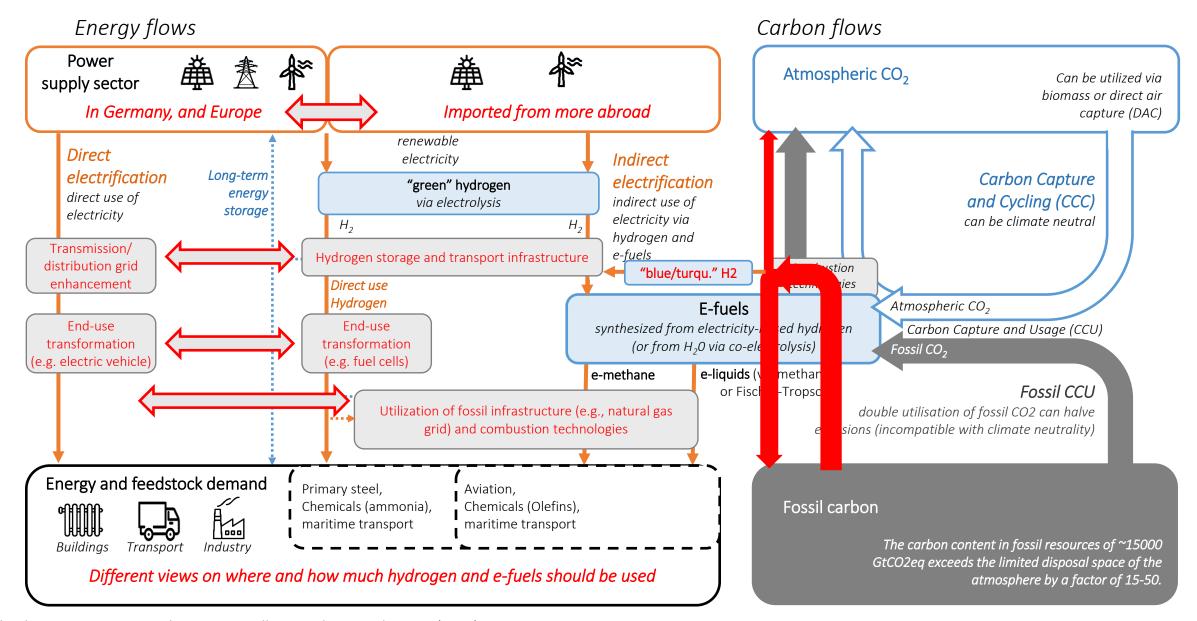
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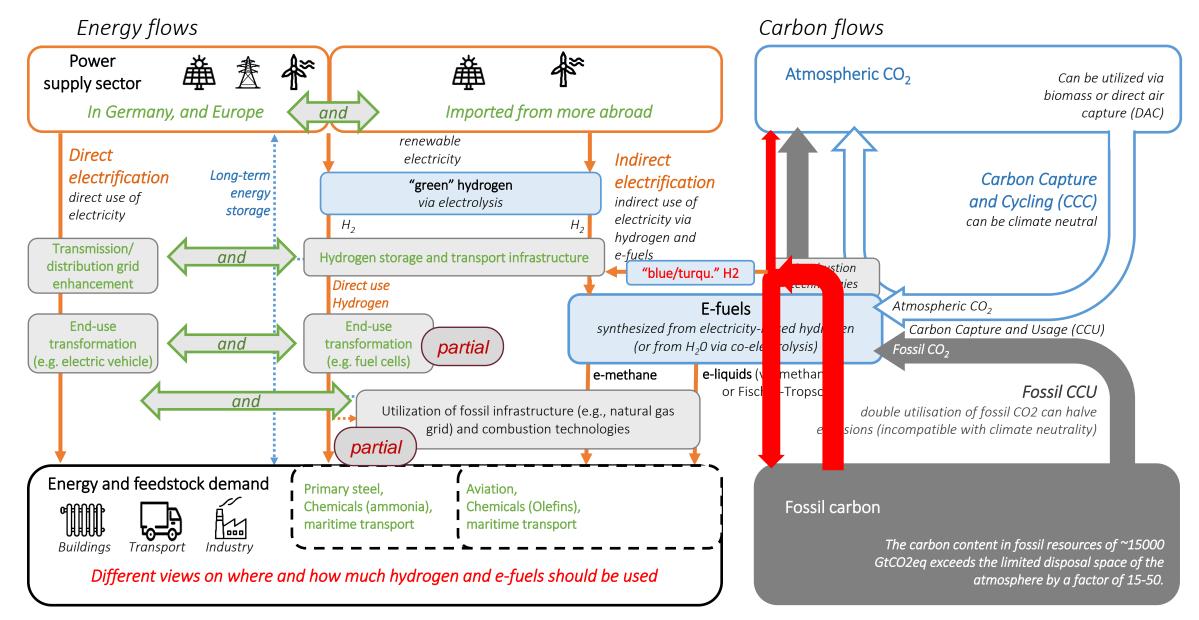
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Underneath the hydrogen debate: Competing visions of the future energy system





Many robust "no-regret" options. How to make decisions on competing options?





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Bottleneck and indicator: Electrolysis capacity expansion

2.0 Country 2.0 Project status O EU targets 60 Concept Denmark Feasibility study France Growth rates Germany Under construction Historical growth Netherlands Operational Required growth 1.5 1.5 Spain Decommissioned Growth like solar PV ~1% of final Rest EU Growth like wind Kapazität [GW] 0 energy&feed-40 \odot 42-82%/yr stocks in EU 30% Erfolgsrate 1.0 To reach EU target (40 GW, Exponentially increasing 80 % of projects announced electrolysis project pipeline for 2023, do not have a final 2030), electrolysis capacity investment decision has to grow as fast as solar PV (in its best times) 0.5 0.5 69%/vr 22%/yr 15-39%/vr 0.0 0.0 0 2020 2020 2023 2010 2015 2023 2010 2015 2023 2025 2030

EU electrolysis capacity (per region) EU electrolysis capacity (per status) EU electrolysis capacity: required growth

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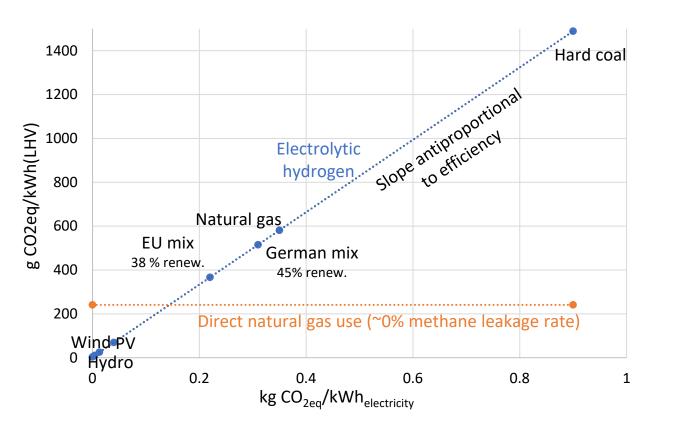
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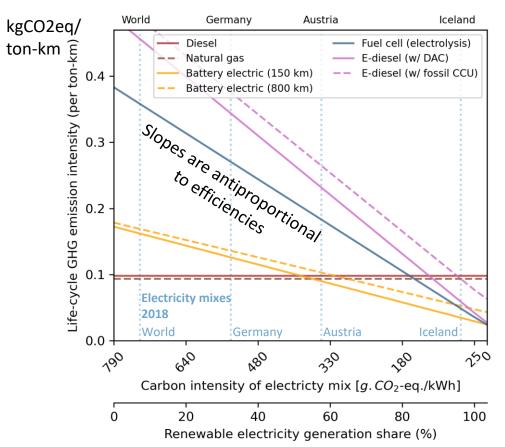


Climate effectiveness of hydrogen highly depends on the CO2 intensity of electricity

>80 % renewable electricity required to reduce emissions with hydrogen compared to natural gas (based on LHV for e.g. heating applications)



>80 % renewable electricity required to reduce emissions with a fuel-cell truck compared to diesel (semi-trailer trucks, 40t weight, 10t load)

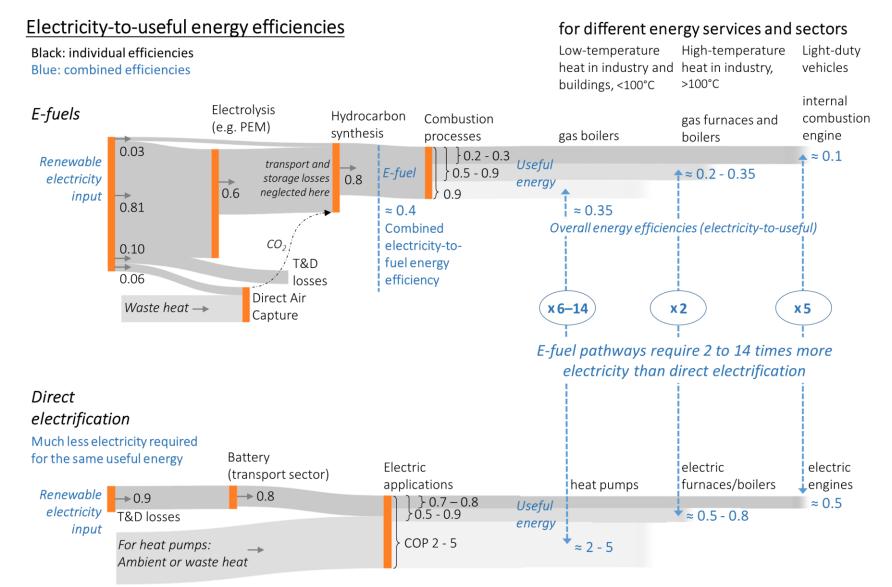




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E-fuels require two to fourteen times more electricity than a direct electrification



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Ariadne

Climate effectiveness of hydrogen highly depends on the CO2 intensity of electricity

>80 % renewable electricity required to reduce emissions with hydrogen compared to natural gas (based on LHV for e.g. heating applications)

Germany Austria Iceland kgCO2eq/ ton-km 🚊 Diesel Fuel cell (electrolysis) 1400 Natural gas E-diesel (w/ DAC) Hard coa ton-l 0.4 Battery electric (150 km E-diesel (w/ fossil CCU) Battery electric (800 km) emission intensity (per 1200 Slopes are antiproportional CO2eq/kWh(LHV) 0.3 -1000 Electrolytic hydrogen 800 0.2 Natural gas 600 GHG EU mix German mix 38 % renew ы 400 0.1 Life-cycle 45% renew. **Electricity mixes** 2018 200 Direct natural gas use (~0% methane leakage rate) World German Austria Iceland 0.0 Wind P 1990 640 180 330 280 200 Hydro 0.2 0.8 0.4 0.6 Carbon intensity of electricty mix [g. CO₂-eq./kWh] kg CO_{2eq}/kWh_{electricity}

Fierce debate around EU delegated act on RFNBOs. Environmentalists: "Additionality of renewables is required because"

i) despite substantial shares, renewable electricity is and will remain scarce

ii) diverting renewable electricity away from more efficient and thus more effective direct use increases emissions

→ trade-off between short-term mitigation and (green) hydrogen scale up. What phase-in period of strict criteria?







>80 % renewable electricity required to reduce emissions with a fuel-cell truck compared to diesel (semi-trailer trucks, 40t weight, 10t load)

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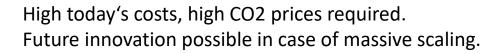
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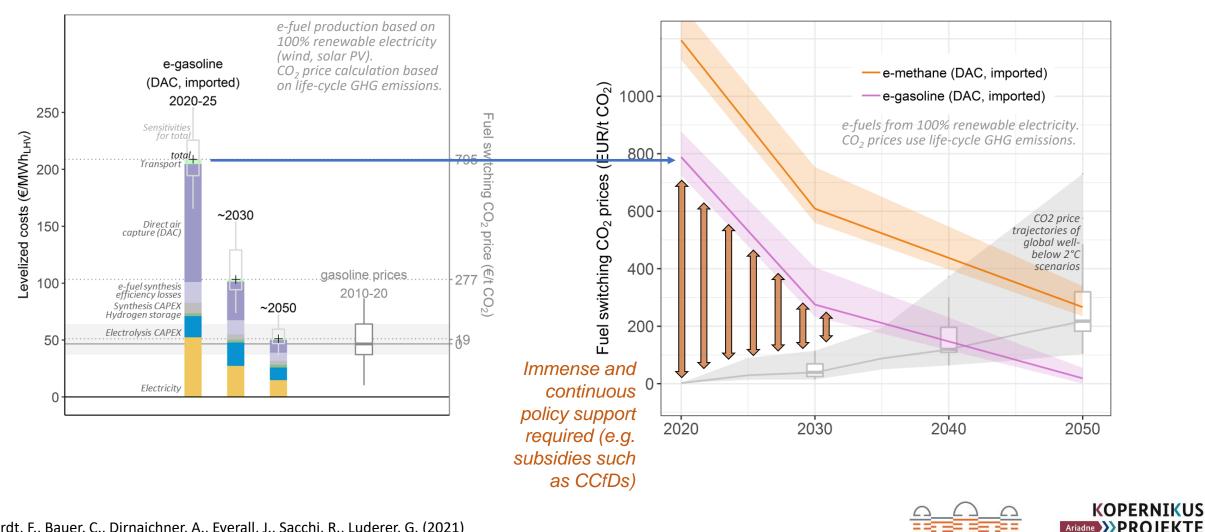


E-fuels not competitive in the next 1-2 decades. Immense policy support required.

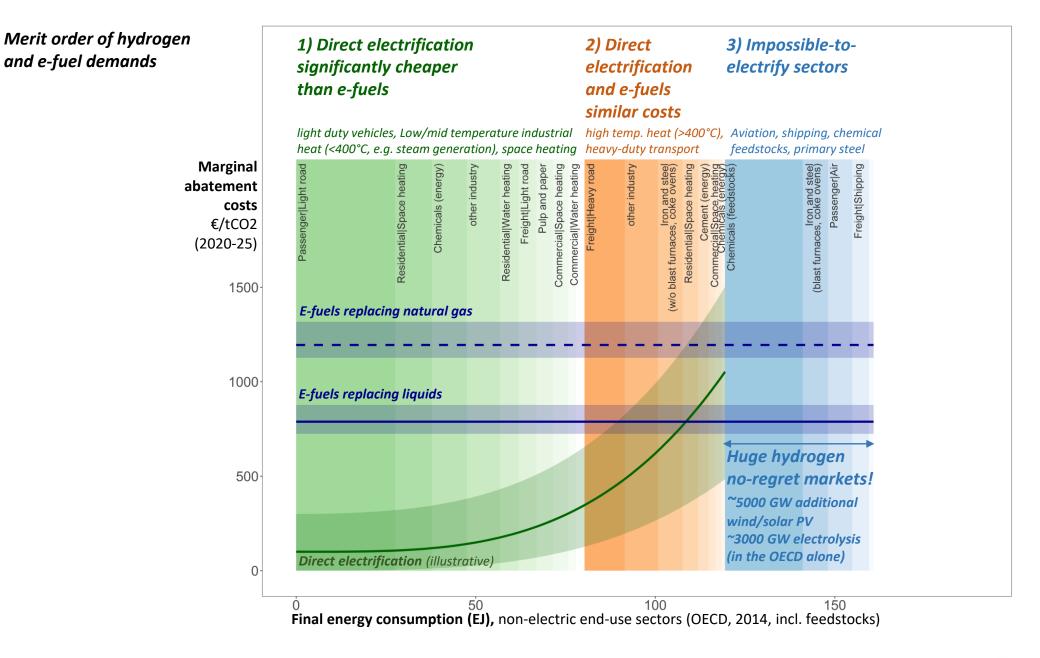


Competitiveness of e-fuels only ~2040 Massive subsidies required until then.

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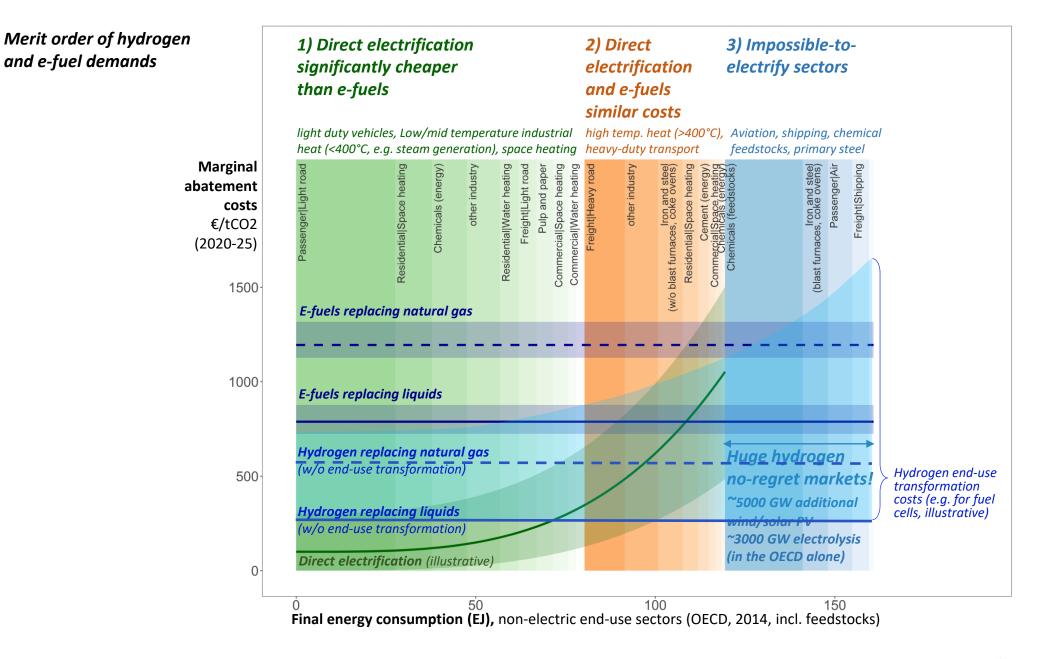
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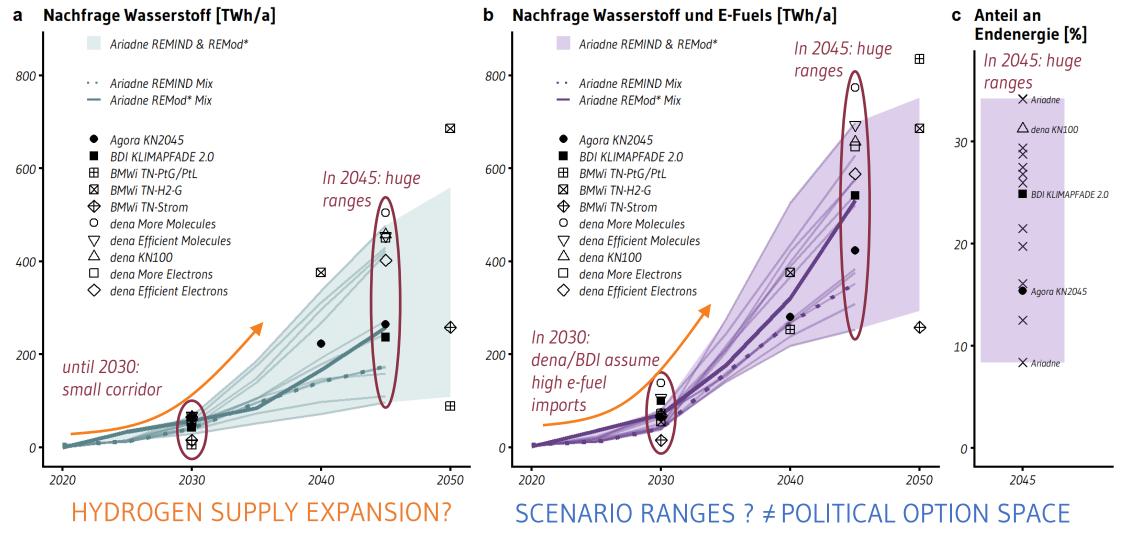
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Scenarios: What do the "big 5" say about hydrogen and e-fuels?



TECHNO-ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTIES! WITH BOTH INDIRECT AND DIRECT ELECTRIFICATION

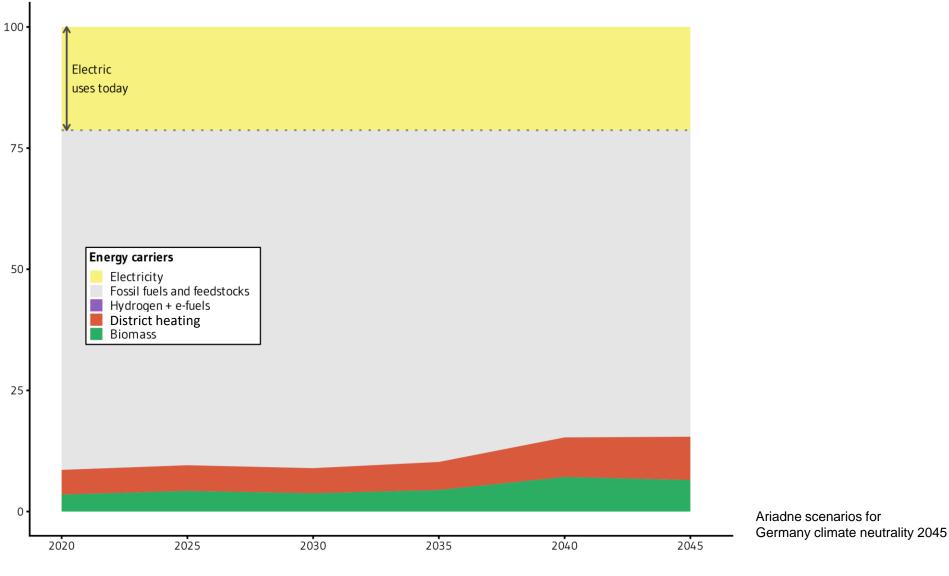
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Final energy shares [%]

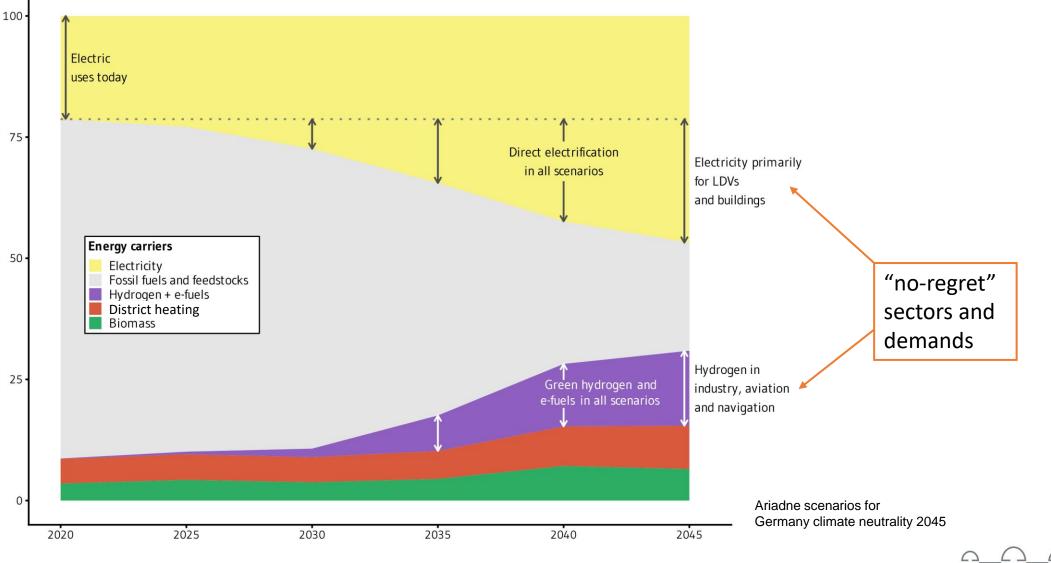








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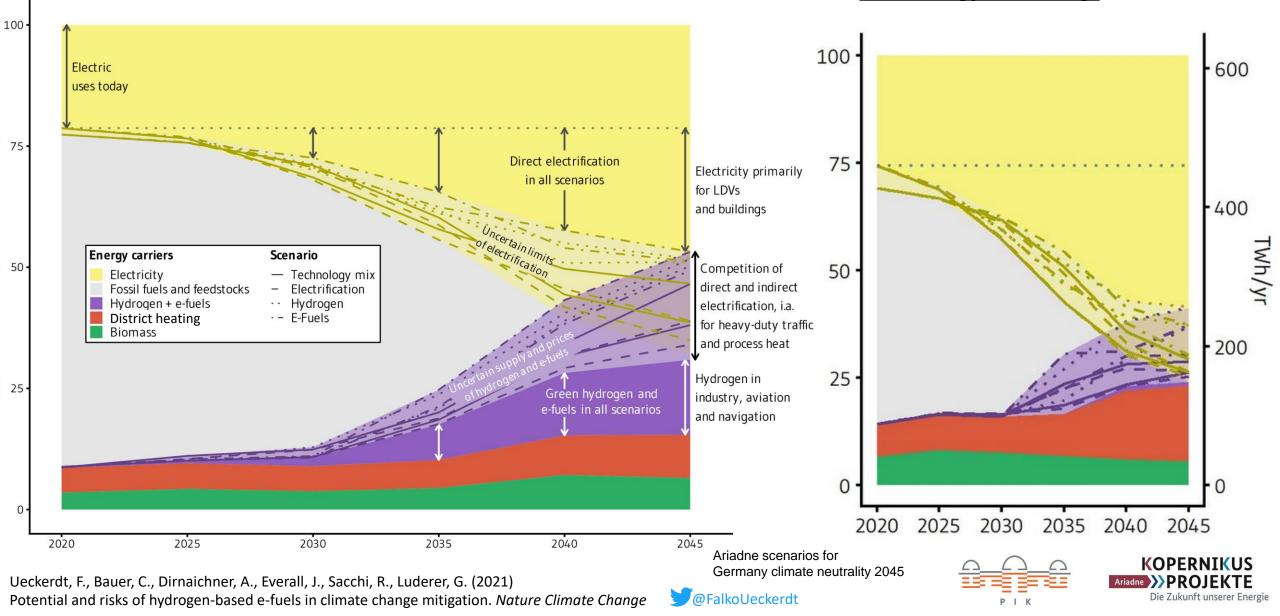


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Final energy shares [%]

Final energy in buildings



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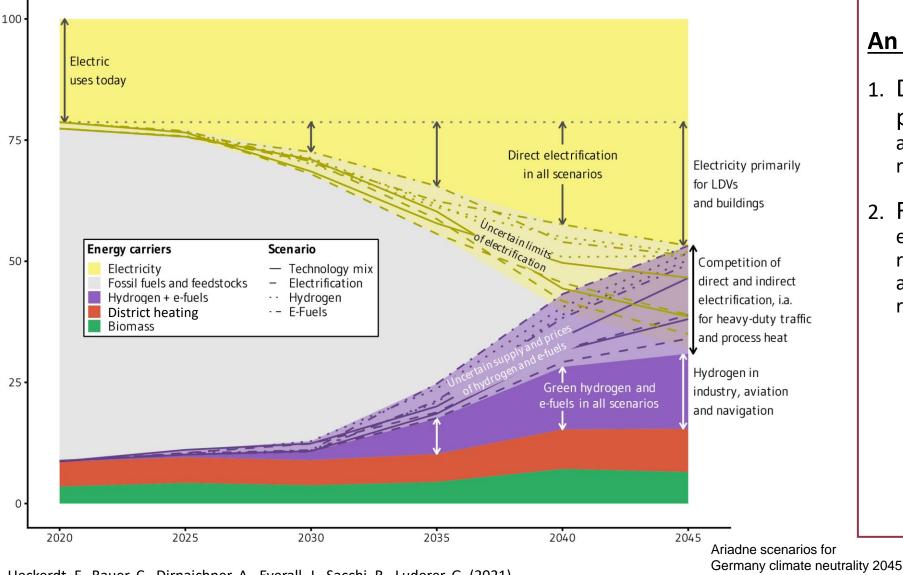
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Final energy shares [%]



An adaptive hydrogen strategy

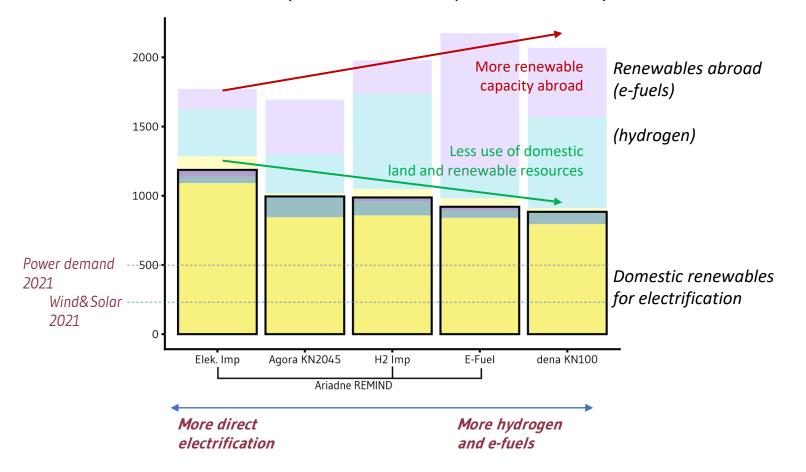
- 1. Do not pick and impose one pathway. e.g. no betting on broad availability of low-cost hydrogen, as it risks to lockin fossil fuel dependence
- 2. Foster robust options: efficiency/electrification, domestic renewables, hydrogen supply (imports) and backbone infrastructure for leastregret applications

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No-regrets: all scenarios show 1) dramatic expansion of domestic renewables & 2) substantial hydrogen/e-fuel imports

2045 climate neutrality: renewable electricity demands Germany

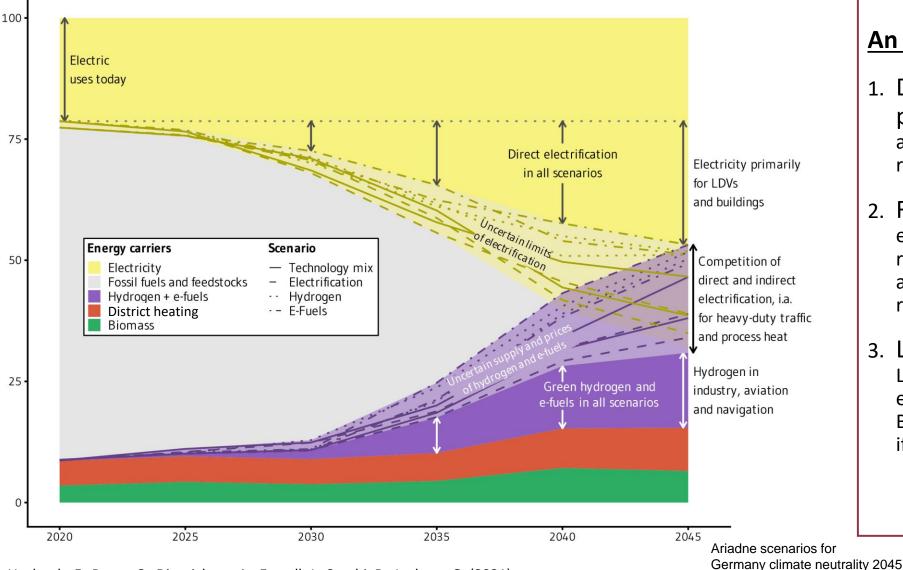




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An adaptive hydrogen strategy

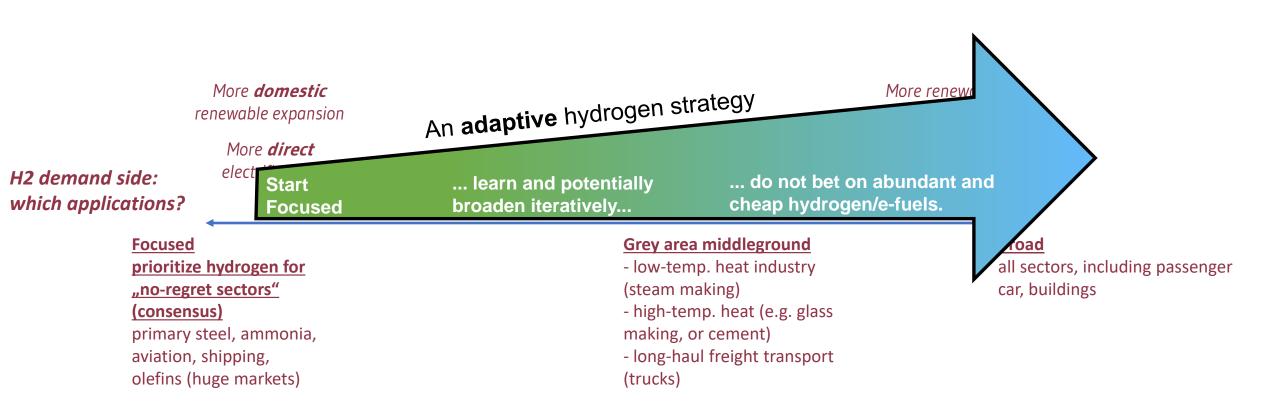
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- 3. Learn and adapt strategy: Learn about limits of direct electrification and hydrogen supply. Broaden the application of hydrogen, if availability and costs get more clear







Two dimensions in the debate







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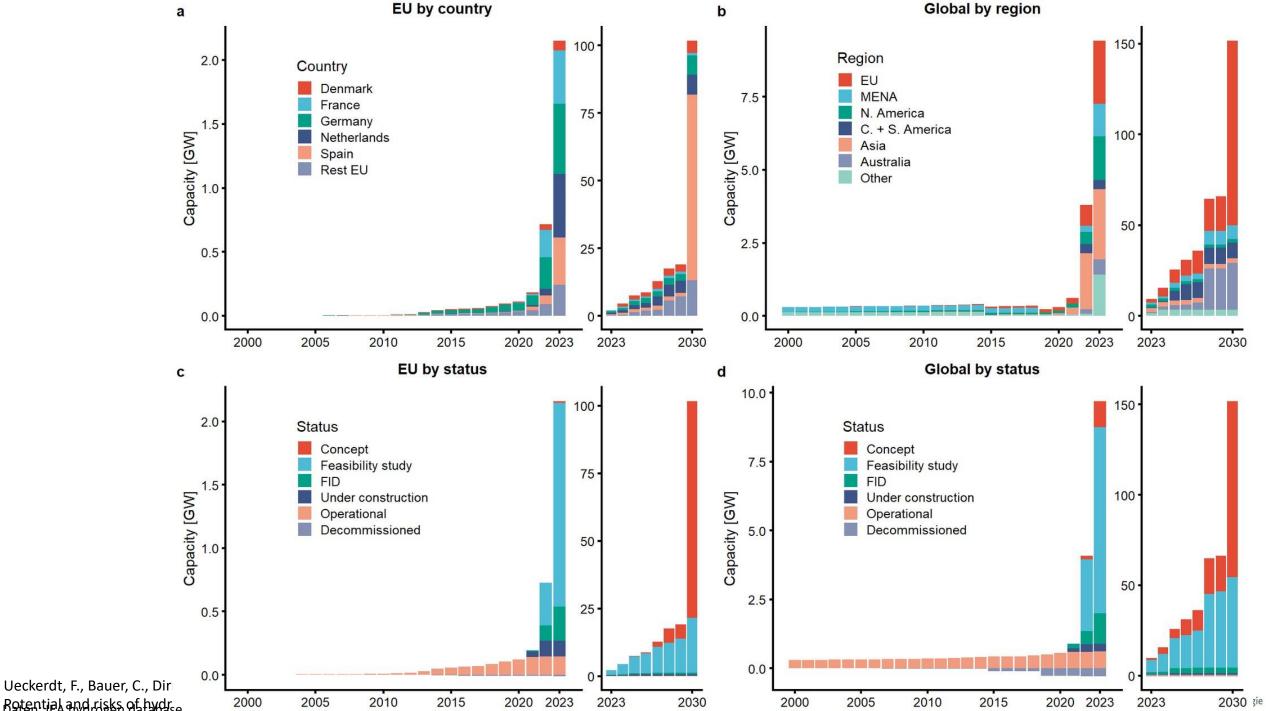
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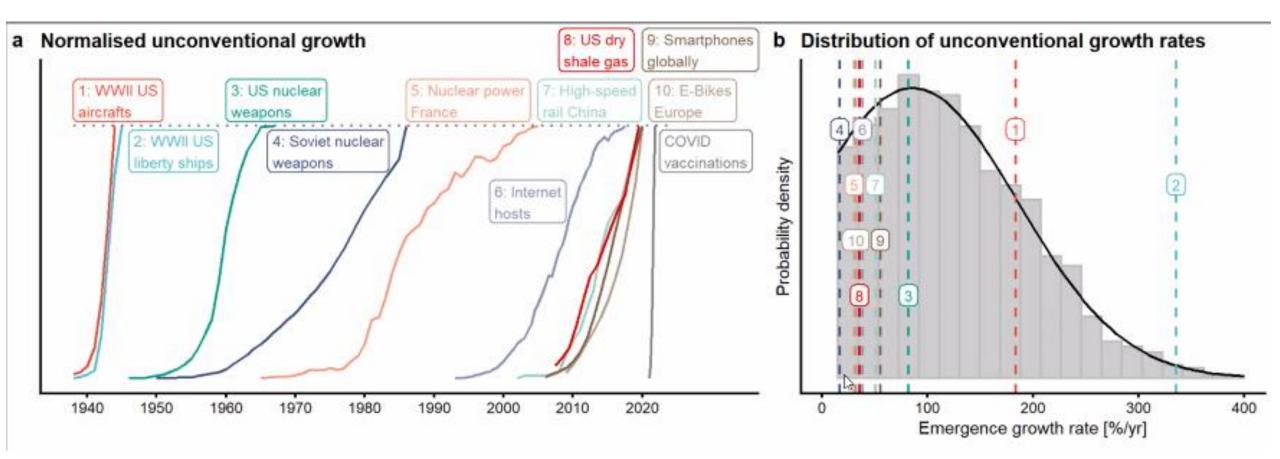
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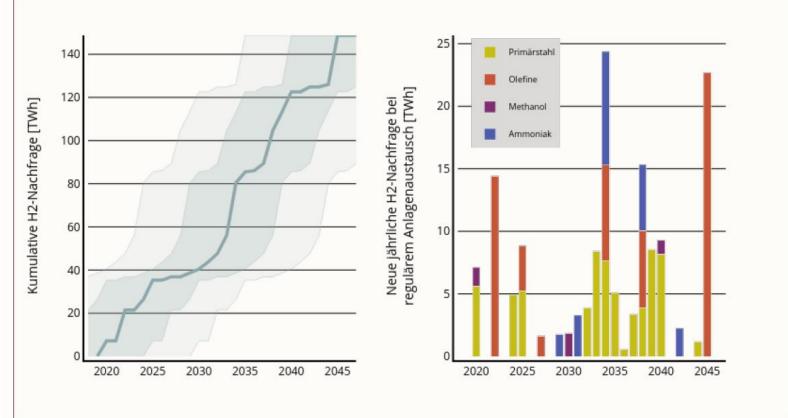
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NACHFRAGE IN INDUSTRIE UND FLUGVERKEHR IST BIS MINDESTENS 2030/35 GRÖBER ALS DAS ANGEBOT AN GRÜNEM WASSERSTOFF

Abbildung 8: Kumulativer Wasserstoffbedarf aus Produkten der Grundstoffindustrie (links) und zusätzlicher jährlicher Wasserstoffbedarf (rechts) aus der Produktion von Primärstahl, Olefinen (wie Ethylen), Ammoniak und Methanol bei regulärem Anlagenaustausch, gemäß Alter und Modernisierungszyklus bestehender Anlagen.



Industrie: Bei regulären Anlagenaustausch entstehen Wasserstoffbedarfe von 40 TWh in 2030 und 80 TWh in 2035.

Um 5 bis 10 Jahre vorgezogene Investitionen erhöhen diese Menge auf **80 bis 120 TWh in 2030**

Instrumente: IPCEI + CCfDs (nur für Industrie)

Im Fernflugverkehr können bis zu 120 TWh E-Kerosin verwendet werden. Dafür können E-Fuel-Quoten angehoben werden.

Instrumente: (erhöhte) E-Fuel-Quoten im Flugverkehr

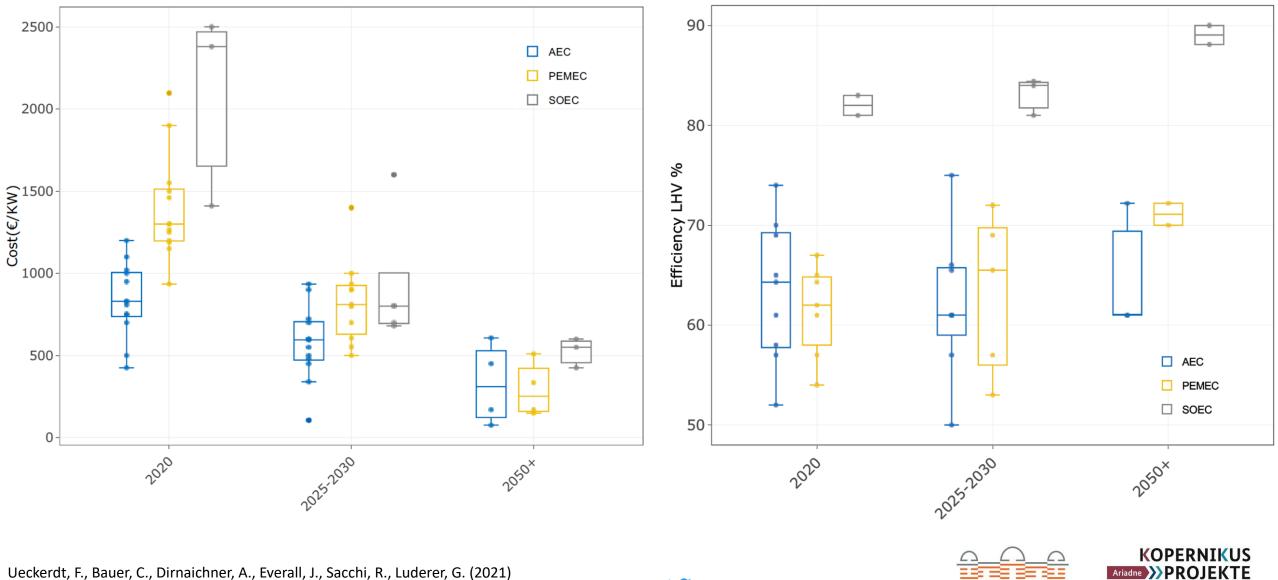


Betrachtet werden jährliche Gesamtkapazitäten von 30,7 Mt Primärstahl, 5,2 Mt Ethylen (und daran gekoppelt 6,2 Mt weitere Olefine) sowie 1,8 Mt Methanol und 3,1 Mt Ammoniak. Weitere Annahmen: 60 Jahre Lebensdauer für chemische Anlagen, Modernisierungszyklus Hochöfen 25 Jahre (ähnlich Agora, 2020). Schattierter Bereich links: Änderung bei Verschiebung des Anlagenaustausches (früher/später) um 5/10 Jahre.

Literature: Electrolyser CAPEX 2020-2050

Literature: Electrolysis Efficiency 2020-2050

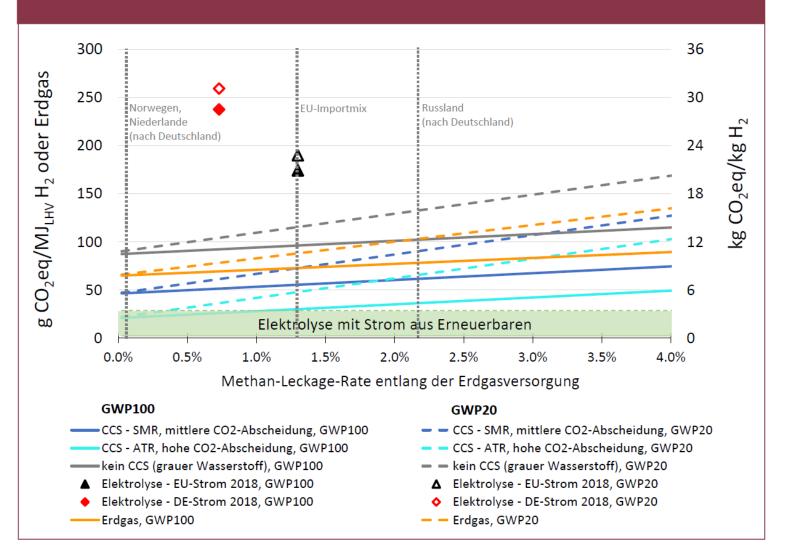
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Abbildung 9: Lebenszyklus-THG-Emissionen von blauem, grünem und grauem Wasserstoff im Vergleich zu Erdgas - als Funktion der Methan-Leckage-Rate bei Extraktion und Transport von Erdgas, und für GWP100 und GWP20²⁵.



Für blauen Wasserstoff werden zwei Technologien gezeigt: 1) CCS – SMR (CO₂-Abscheideraten insgesamt 55 %, im Capture-Schritt 90 %) und 2) CCS –ATR (CO₂-Abscheideraten insgesamt 93 %, im Capture-Schritt 98 %). Adaptiert von Bauer et al., 2021



Ueckerdt, F., Bauer, C., Dirnaichner, A., Potential and risks of hydrogen-based (