

# US Perspective on the Hydrogen Economy

**Joseph B. Powell, PhD** ChemePD LLC  
Retired Shell Chief Scientist – Chemical Engineering

Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre  
Annual Conference 19-21 April 2021

# Topics to cover:

- Could hydrogen play a significant role in a decarbonized US in the future?
- Would the US be a potential importer or exporter?
- What are the key barriers (policy, technology, economic, social, etc)?

## **Disclaimer:**

Any cost information is approximate and derived from open literature and data. Do not take any observations as investment advice.

# Global Energy Demand

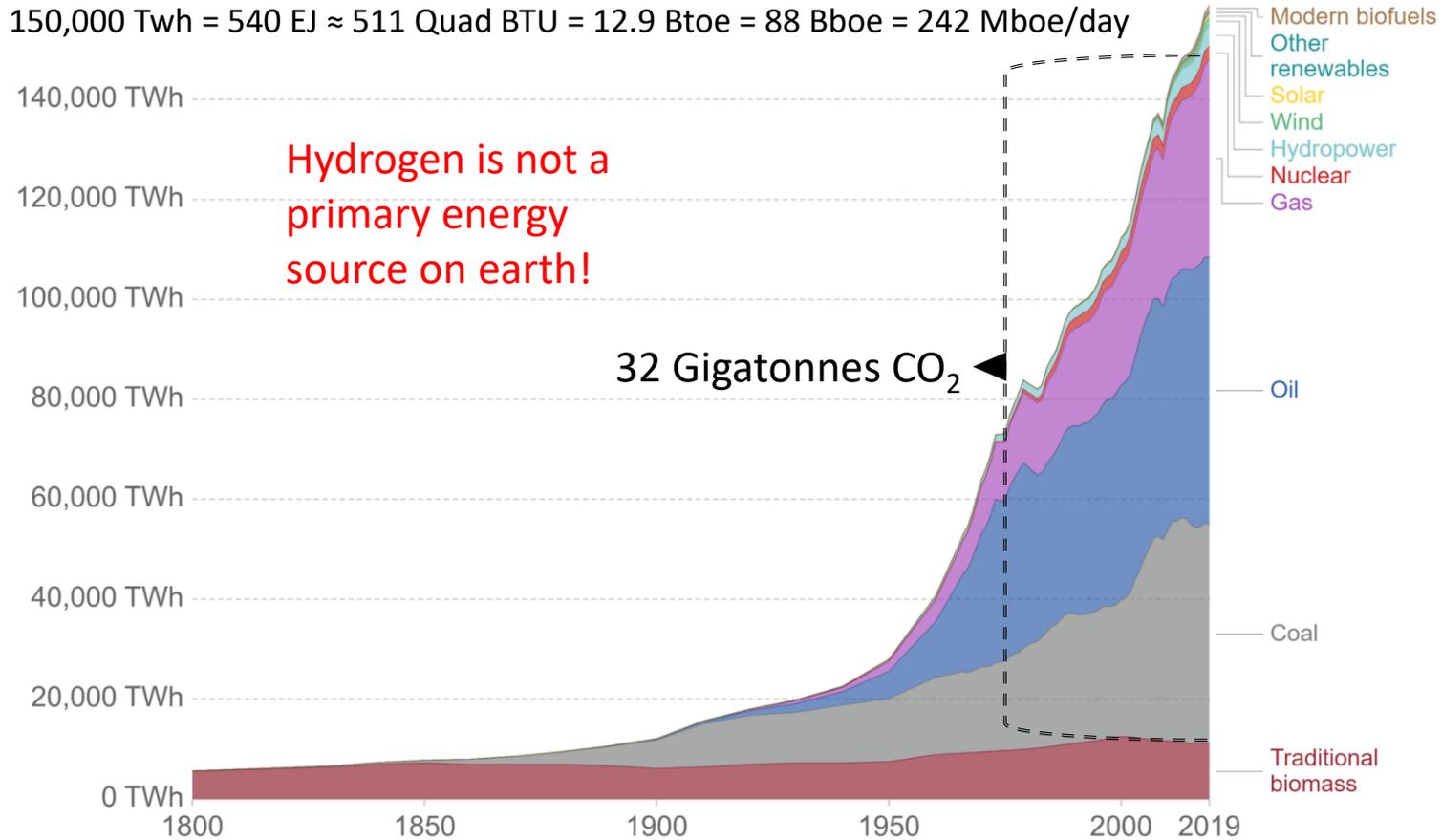
1 Petawatt	1000 Terra watts
1 Terra watt	1000 Gigawatts
1 Gigawatt	1000 Megawatt
1 Megawatt	1000 Kilowatt (kW)

## Global direct primary energy consumption

Direct primary energy consumption does not take account of inefficiencies in fossil fuel production.

Our World  
in Data

150,000 TWh = 540 EJ ≈ 511 Quad BTU = 12.9 Btoe = 88 Bboe = 242 Mboe/day



Source: Vaclav Smil (2017) and BP Statistical Review of World Energy

OurWorldInData.org/energy • CC BY

# Hydrogen History

- 1520's Discovery
- 1660's Boyle's law PV / acid-metals
- 1780's Lavoisier "Hydro" "Gene"
- 1780's Hydrogen Balloon flight "La Charliere"
- 1780's Iron – steam process
- 1789: Water electrolysis
- 1801: Fuel cell (Humphry Davy)
- 1806: Internal combustion engine
- 1874: Jules Verne "Mysterious Island"
- 1884: Airship *La France*
- 1901: hydrogenation of unsaturated fats
- 1910: Haber process (ammonia)
- 1923: Synthetic methanol (Leuna)
- 1937: Hindenburg fire
- 1943: Rocket fuel
- 1951: Salt dome storage
- 1957: Jet engine
- 1960: Forklift
- 1965: NASA Project Gemini
- 1966: General Motors "Electrovan"
- 1970's: DOE Fuel Cell R&D
- 2000: Ballard commercial fuel cell
- 2003: George Bush "Hydrogen Economy"
- 2010: Shell forecourt Aqueous Phase reforming



COLLECTION HETZEL

1970s A group of scientists and DOE managers met at Los Alamos to set the foundation for DOE fuel cell programs



Lab researchers taught scientists around the world how to fabricate fuel cell electrodes. GM relocated to Los Alamos.



[www.fchea.org/fuelcells](http://www.fchea.org/fuelcells)



[www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov)



Alkaline Fuel Cell (AFC)  
AFCs are best known for their roles in the NASA Apollo mission to provide both water and electricity to the crew. These fuel cells use porous electrolytes saturated with an alkaline solution and have an alkaline membrane as the name suggests. The AFC is one of the most efficient types of fuel cells, with a potential of 60% electrical efficiency and 80% to 90% in CHP applications. AFCs use hydrogen as a fuel source, though are highly sensitive and can fail when exposed to carbon dioxide, which is why they are primarily used in controlled aerospace and underwater applications.



Gemini 5 fuel cell.

## CNN.com/INSIDE POLITICS

SEARCH The Web CNN.com

Home Page  
Asia  
Europe  
U.S.  
World  
World Business  
Technology  
Science & Space  
Entertainment  
Travel  
Weather  
World Sport  
Special Reports

GM TV  
What's on  
Business Traveller  
Global Office  
Principal Voices  
Music Room  
Spark  
Talk Asia  
Services  
Languages

### Bush touts benefits of hydrogen fuel

Cites risk in reliance on 'foreign sources' of oil

Thursday, February 6, 2003 Posted: 4:39 PM EST (2:19 GMT)

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- The United States can change its dependence on foreign oil and "make a tremendous difference" in the world and the environment, President Bush said Thursday as he announced details of a \$1.2 billion initiative to make hydrogen fuel competitive for powering vehicles and generating electricity.

"We can change our dependence upon foreign sources of energy. We can help with the quality of the air. We can make a fundamental difference for the future of our children," the president said at the National Building Museum in Washington.

"Hydrogen fuel cells represent one of the most encouraging, innovative technologies of our era."

advertisement

President Bush vows to work with Congress to develop hydrogen fuel technologies.

President Bush vows to work with Congress to develop hydrogen fuel technologies.

Story Tools  
SAVE THIS E-MAIL THIS  
PRINT THIS MOST POPULAR

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Mysterious\\_Island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Mysterious_Island) (1875);

Satyapal 2017: <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2017/03/f34/fcto-energy-talks-2017-satyapal.pdf>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_hydrogen\\_technologies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_hydrogen_technologies)

# Hydrogen & Fuel Cells U.S.

December 2020 U.S.



>500MW

Stationary Power



>35,000

Forklifts



>60

Fuel Cell Buses



>45

H<sub>2</sub> Retail Stations



>8,800

Fuel Cell Cars



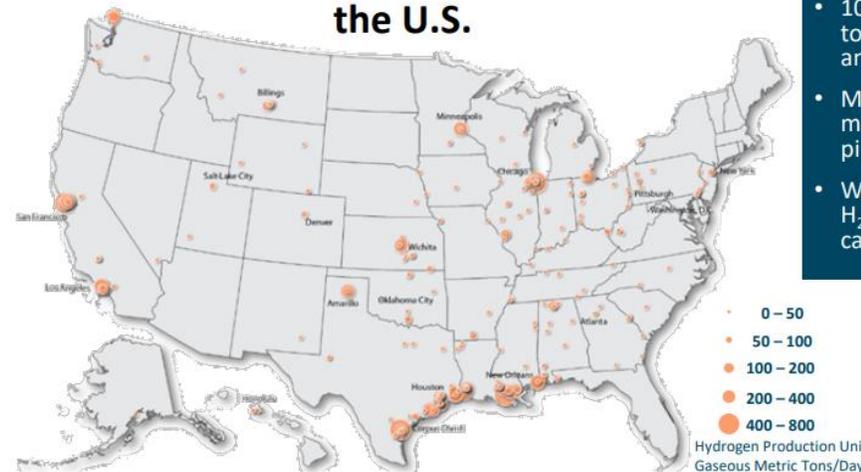
Toyota Mirai



Faster refueling = reduced labor and fewer units needed.!

More than 35,000 forklifts  
Over 20 million refuelings

## Hydrogen Production Across the U.S.

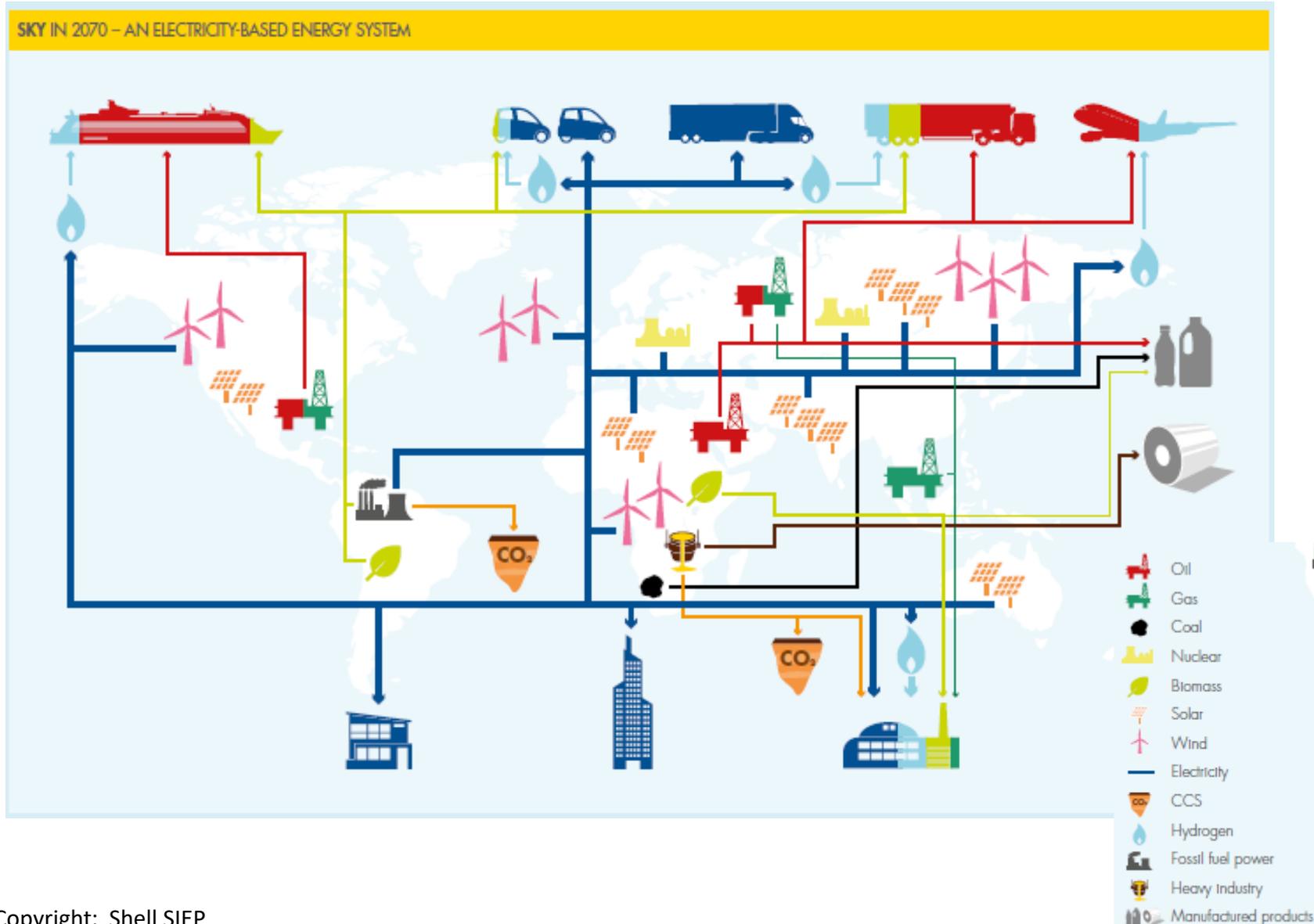


- 10 million metric tons produced annually
- More than 1,600 miles of H<sub>2</sub> pipeline
- World's largest H<sub>2</sub> storage cavern

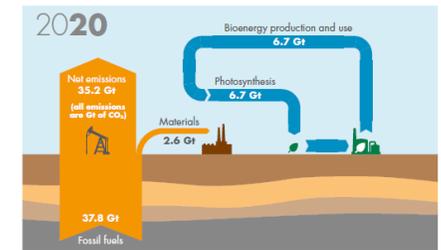


Satyapal: [www.energy.gov/eere/fuelcells/hydrogen-and-fuel-cell-technologies-office](http://www.energy.gov/eere/fuelcells/hydrogen-and-fuel-cell-technologies-office)

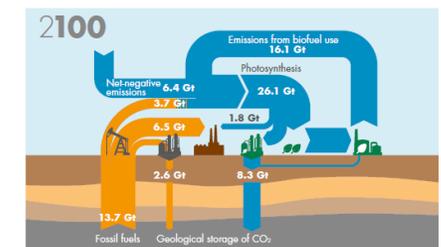
# Energy vectors to end-use customers



Important role for CCS to decarbonize existing assets + future negative emissions



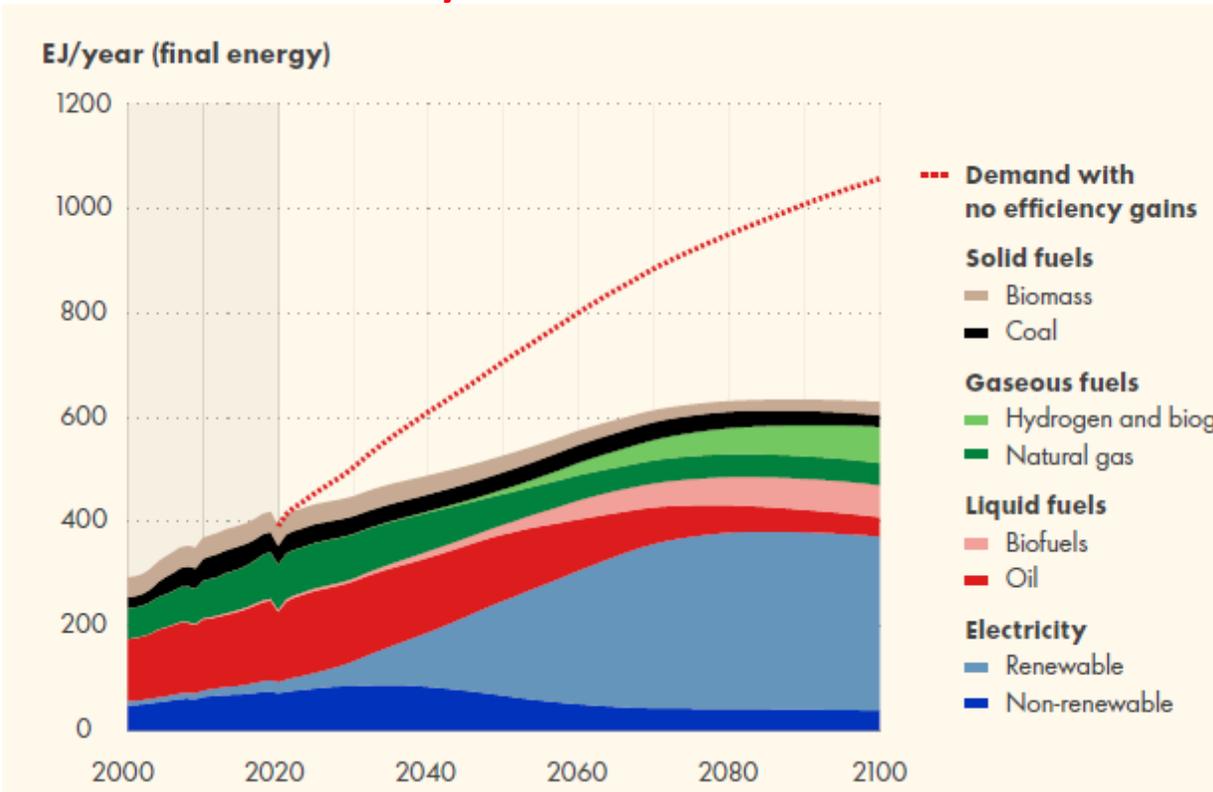
Today, most carbon in fossil energy production is burned and emitted to the atmosphere, while the CO<sub>2</sub> absorbed by wood and other plants used for energy is also returned to the atmosphere.



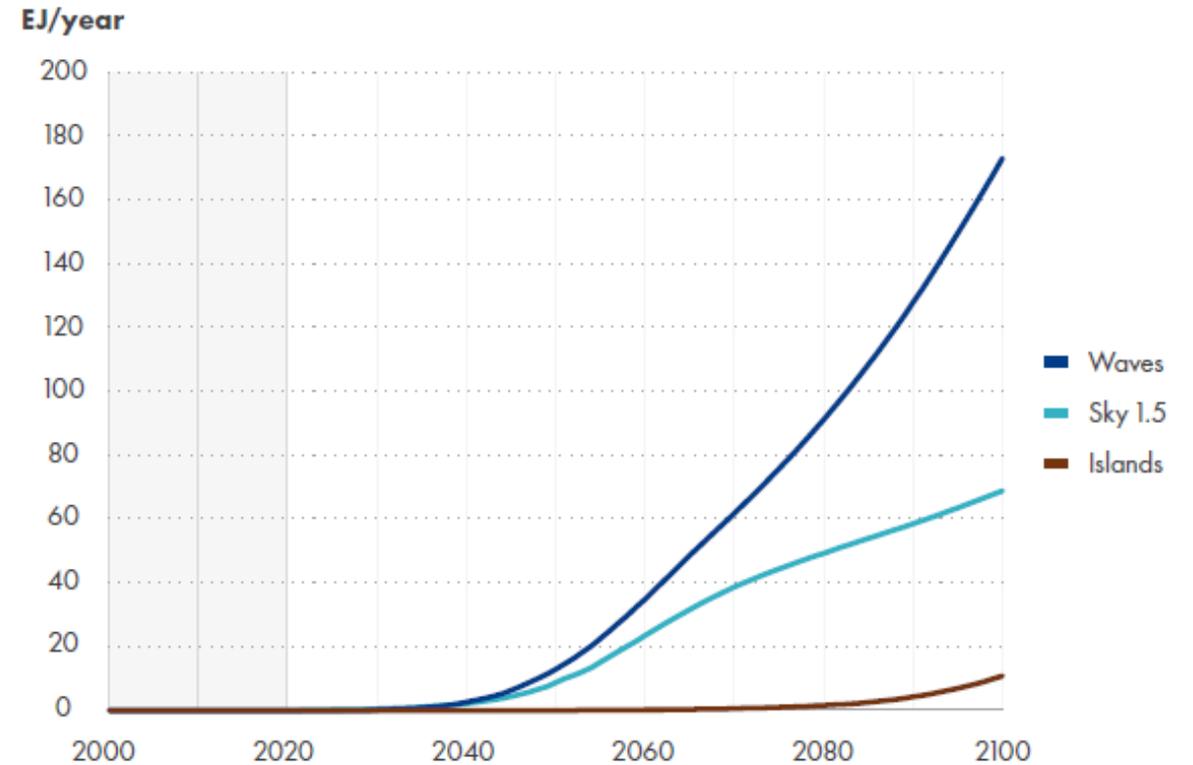
In Sky, at 2100, the bioenergy system has reached its resource base limit and is twice the size of the fossil energy system in CO<sub>2</sub> terms. The active management of CO<sub>2</sub> means that the total energy system is providing a drawdown of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere.

# Shell Scenarios 2021

## Sky 1.5



## Hydrogen demand



- [www.shell.com/scenarios](http://www.shell.com/scenarios)

Copyright: Shell SIEP

# Stakeholder Market Forces

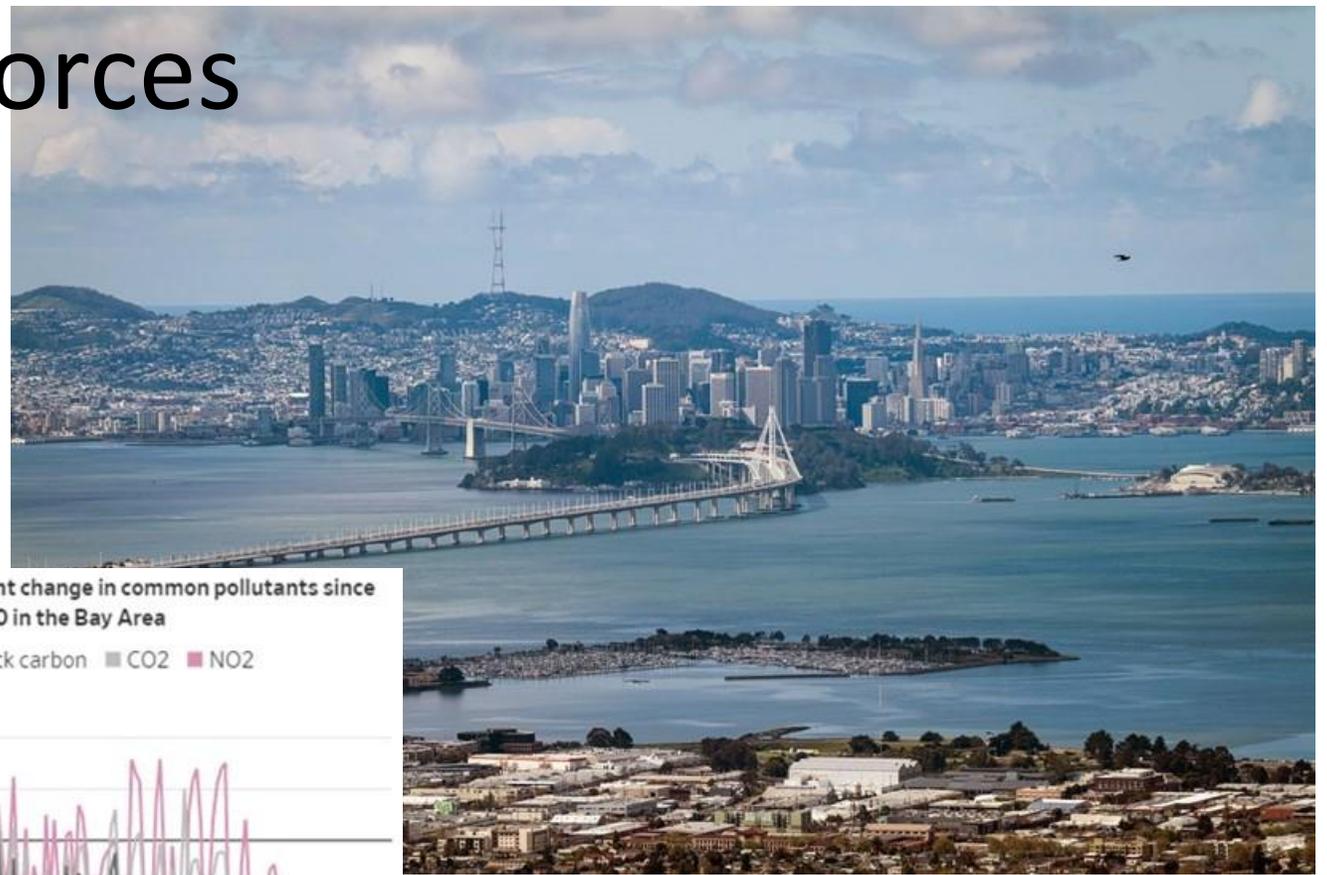


•\*Rebecca Elliott and Bradley Olson, Sept. 22, 2019 WSJ

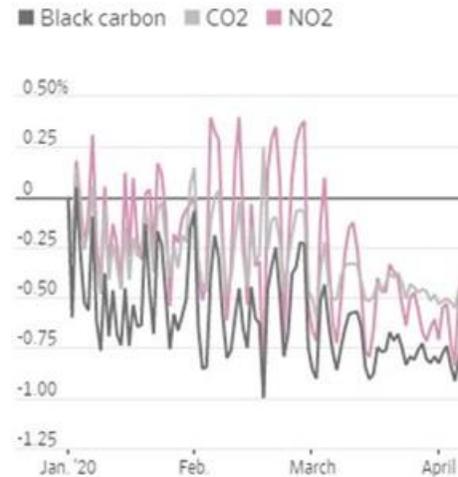
## SCOPE-3 Emissions:

“greenhouse-gas emissions from the oil byproducts they sell, such as gasoline. These releases constitute roughly 88% of major oil-and-gas companies’ greenhouse-gas footprint, according to estimates from Redburn, a London-based research firm”\*

Copyright of Shell International B.V.



Percent change in common pollutants since Jan. 20 in the Bay Area



Source: AQMIS

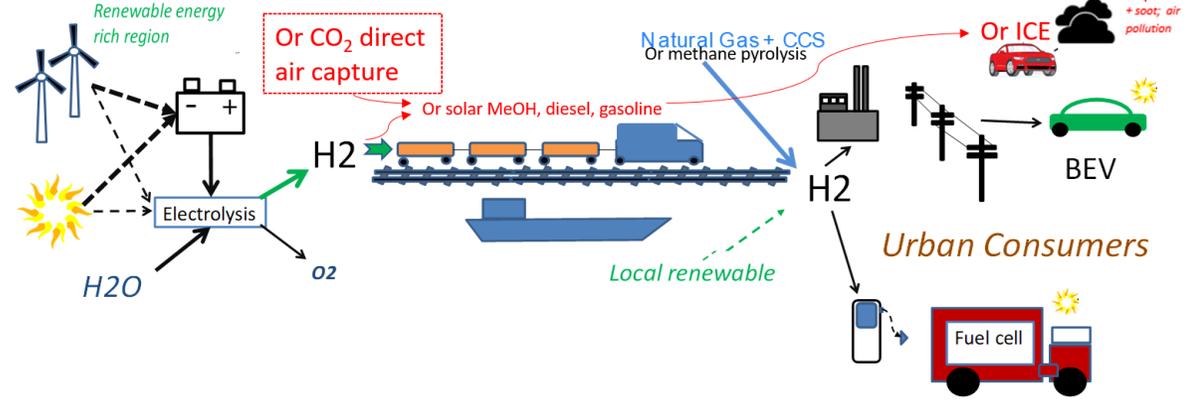
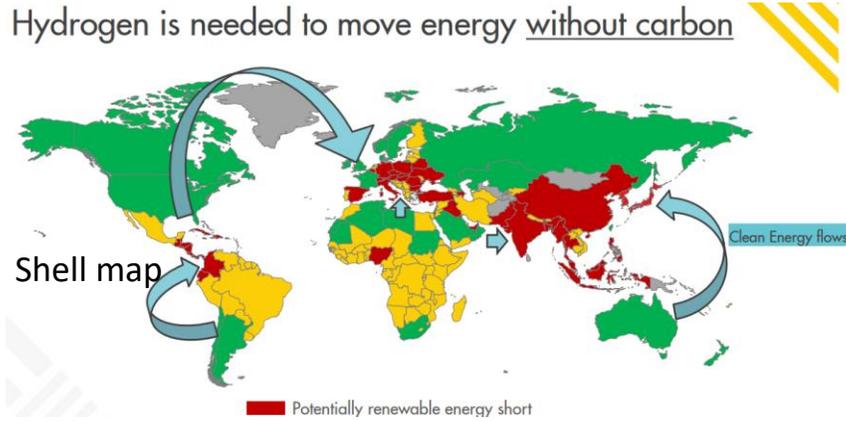
Pandemic panorama: Skies were clear above San Francisco, on March 25, about a week after California’s stay-at-home order took effect. PHOTO: DAVID PAUL MORRIS/BLOOMBERG NEWS

## Coronavirus Offers a Clear View of What Causes Air Pollution: Jim Carlton, WSJ May 3, 2020

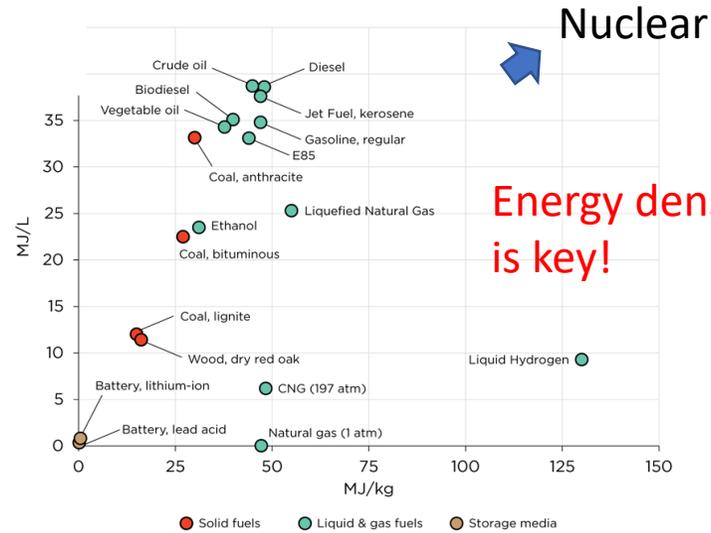
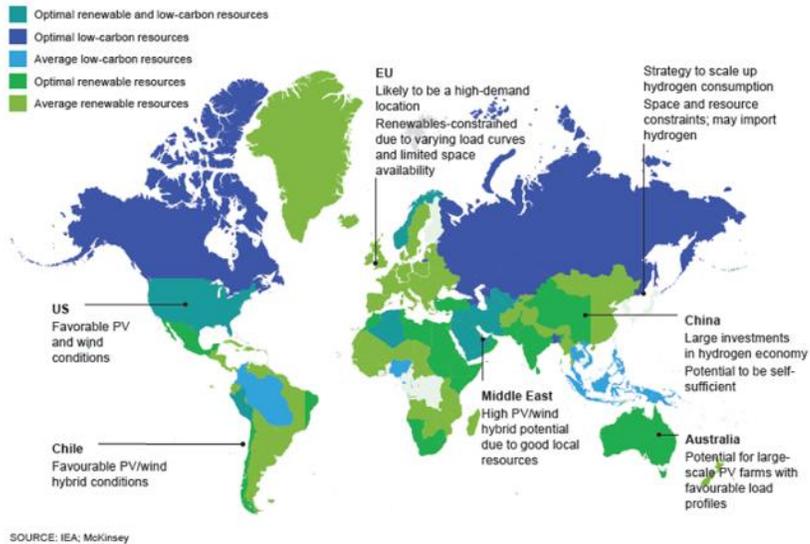
With factories and vehicles idle, nitrogen dioxide levels hit lows not seen since the early 20th century; ‘We didn’t know...how significantly it could drop’

# Hydrogen as Energy Vector

Hydrogen is needed to move energy without carbon



Best source of low carbon hydrogen:



- Improves local air quality
  - Only water vapour emissions while driving
  - Low-carbon transport if made via green or clean pathways
  - High range – up to 700 km per refuel
  - Minutes to refuel
- Copyright of Shell International B.V.

R. Heinberg and D. Fridley, *Our Renewable Future: Laying the path to One Hundred Percent Clean energy.*

Hydrogen Council: Path to Hydrogen Competitiveness (2019)

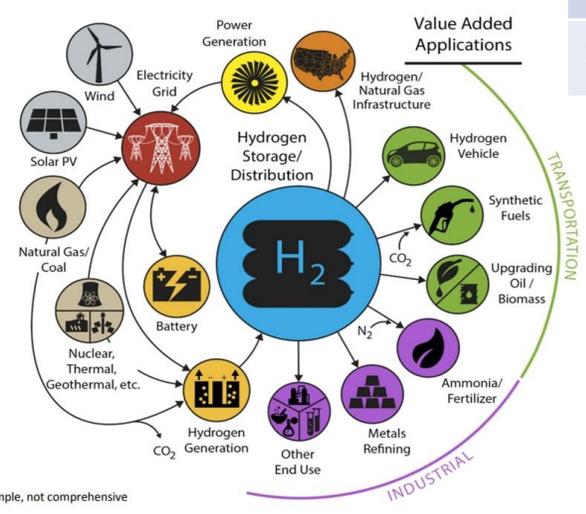
# Hydrogen: US Opportunities

- Green / clean H<sub>2</sub> from West TX renewable + SE TX (Houston GC) waste heat
  - SMR/ Methane pyrolysis / water electrolysis
- H<sub>2</sub> heavy duty trucking, industry
- Commercial ride-share (Uber fleet)?
- City lift trucks / buses?
- H<sub>2</sub> Rail transit to US States with clean energy incentives; H<sub>2</sub> + NH<sub>3</sub> pipelines
  - LH<sub>2</sub> or NH<sub>3</sub>
- Leveraged demo hub



Clean Hydrogen	(2030)
Manufacturing Cost*	< 2 USD / kg
Dispensed Cost	< 4 USD / kg
Scale (per Site)	> 1500 kg / d

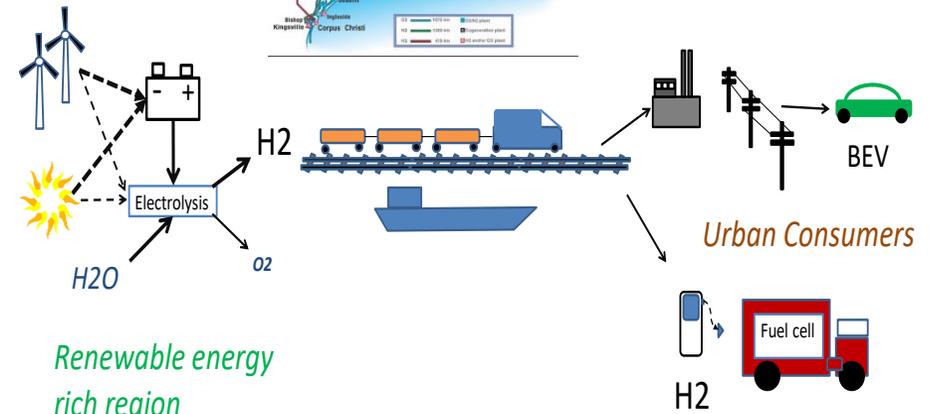
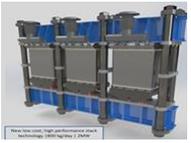
## H<sub>2</sub> at Scale Energy System



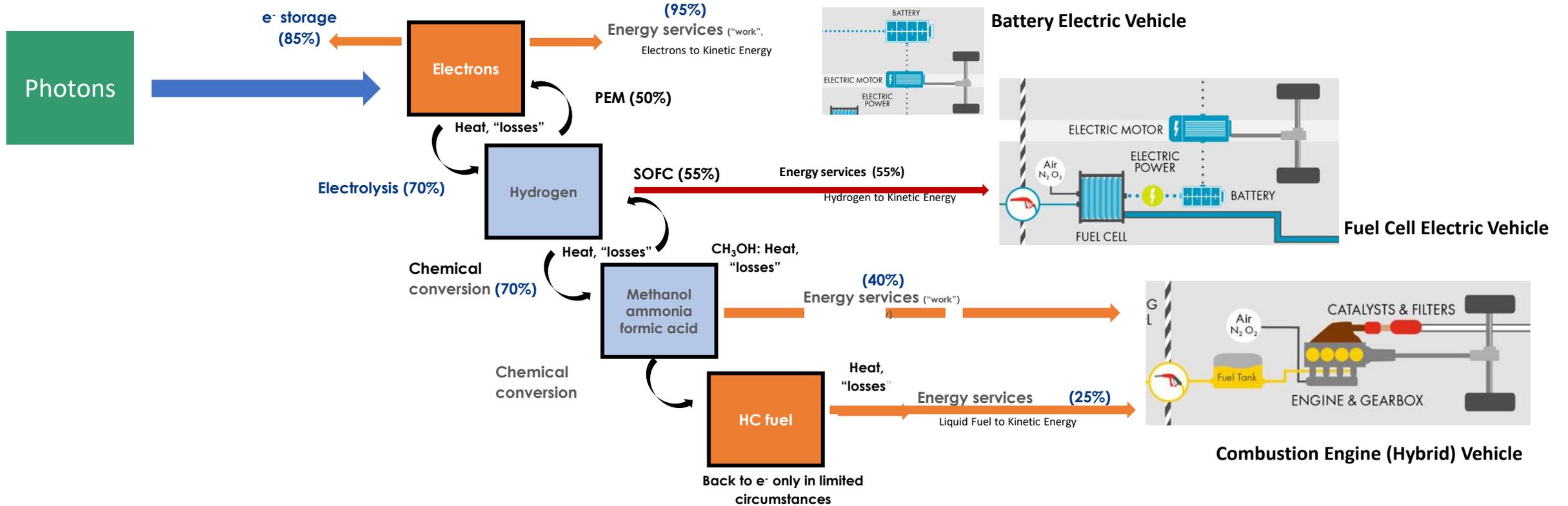
\*Illustrative example, not comprehensive  
Source: NREL



\* Distributed small/medium scale

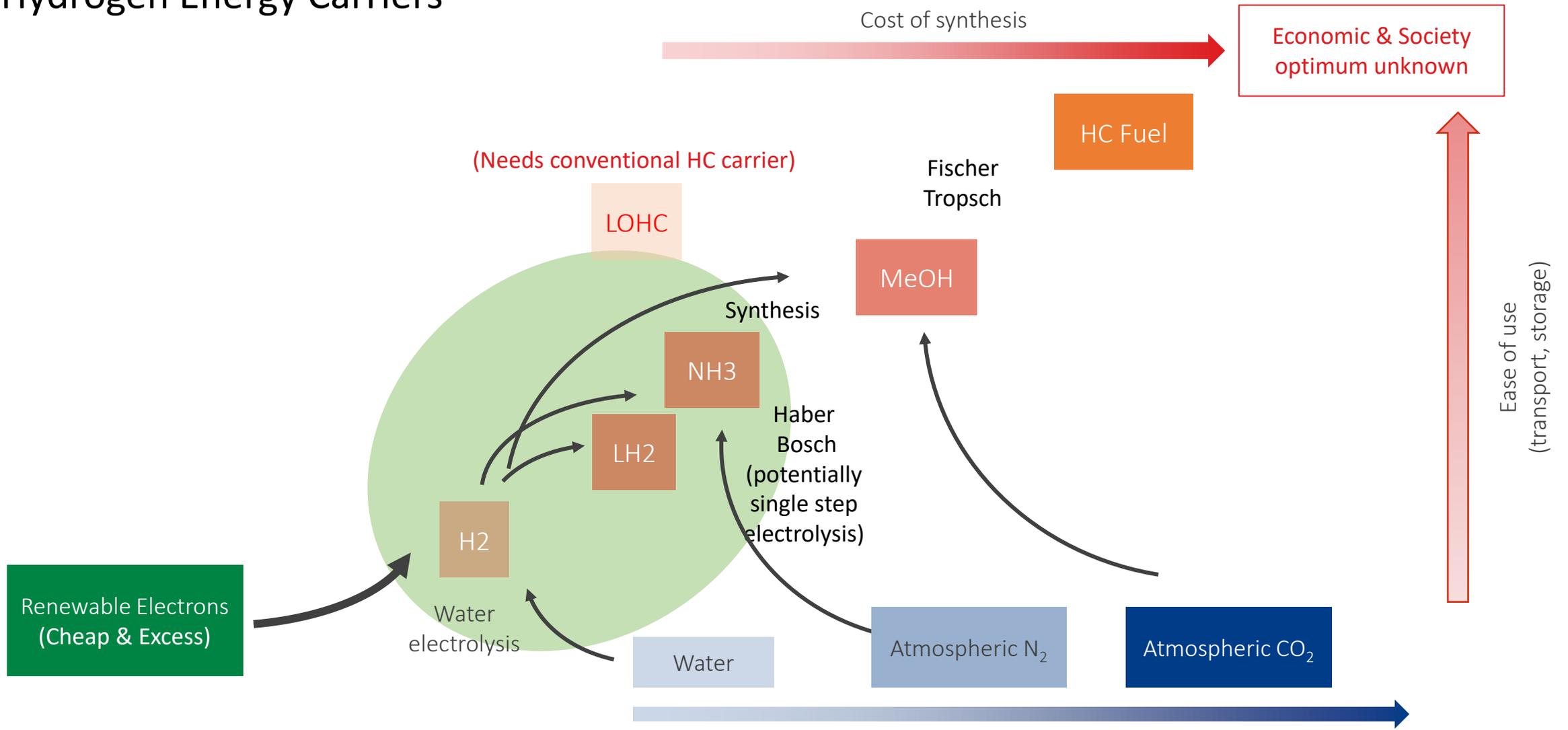


# Competitive Outlets for Electrons: Use or Store

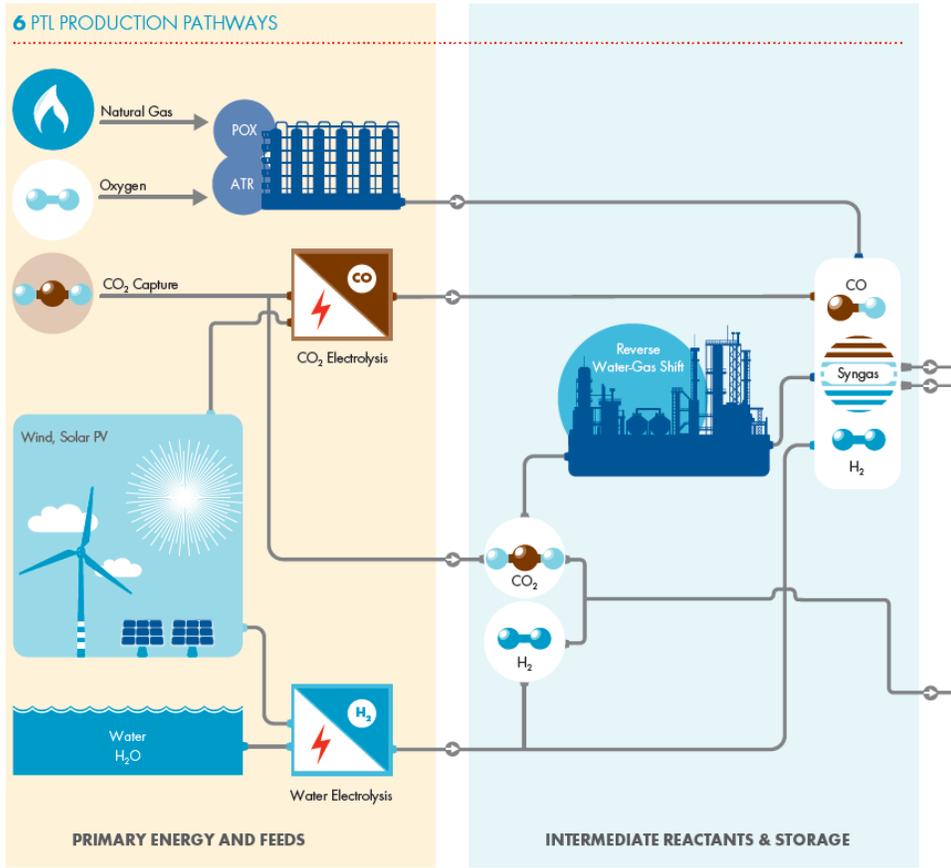


Molecular energy carriers have poorer cycle efficiency than electrochemical energy storage (Battery). The value of transport as Dense Energy Carrier plus Storage must be considered in evaluating options!

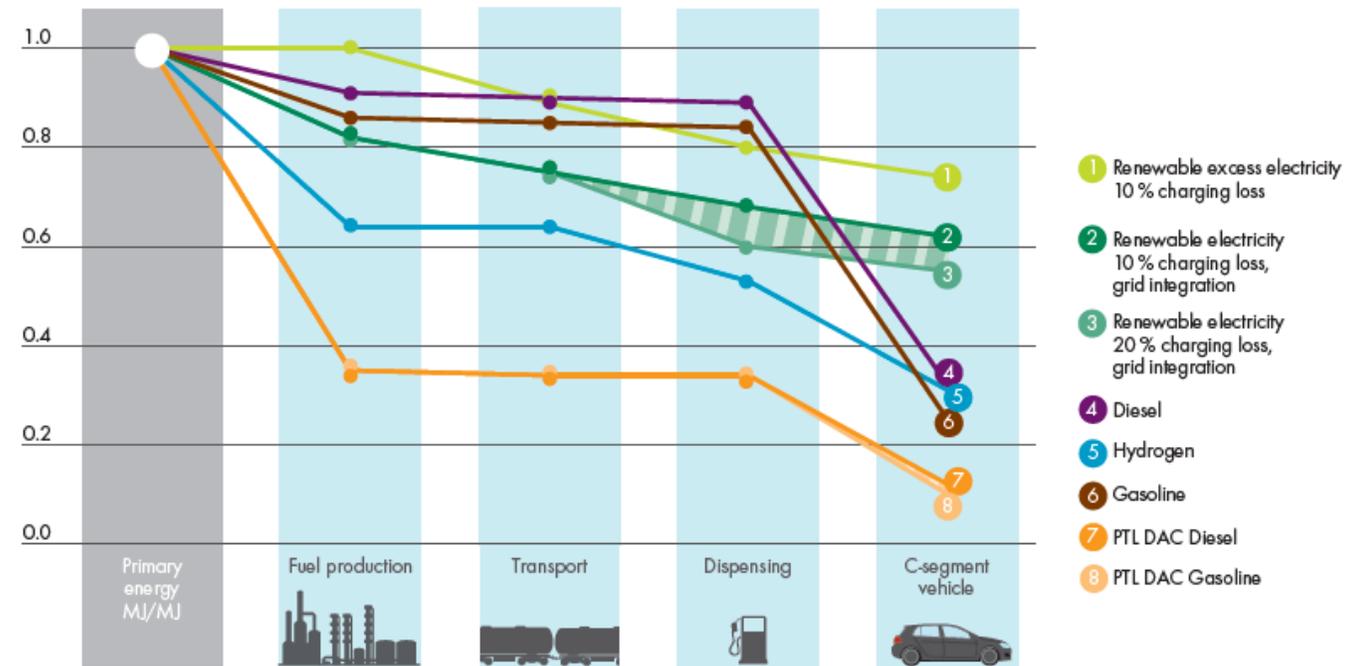
# LH<sub>2</sub> & Ammonia First Choice Hydrogen Energy Carriers



# Hydrogen vs Power to Liquids / Synthetic Natural Gas

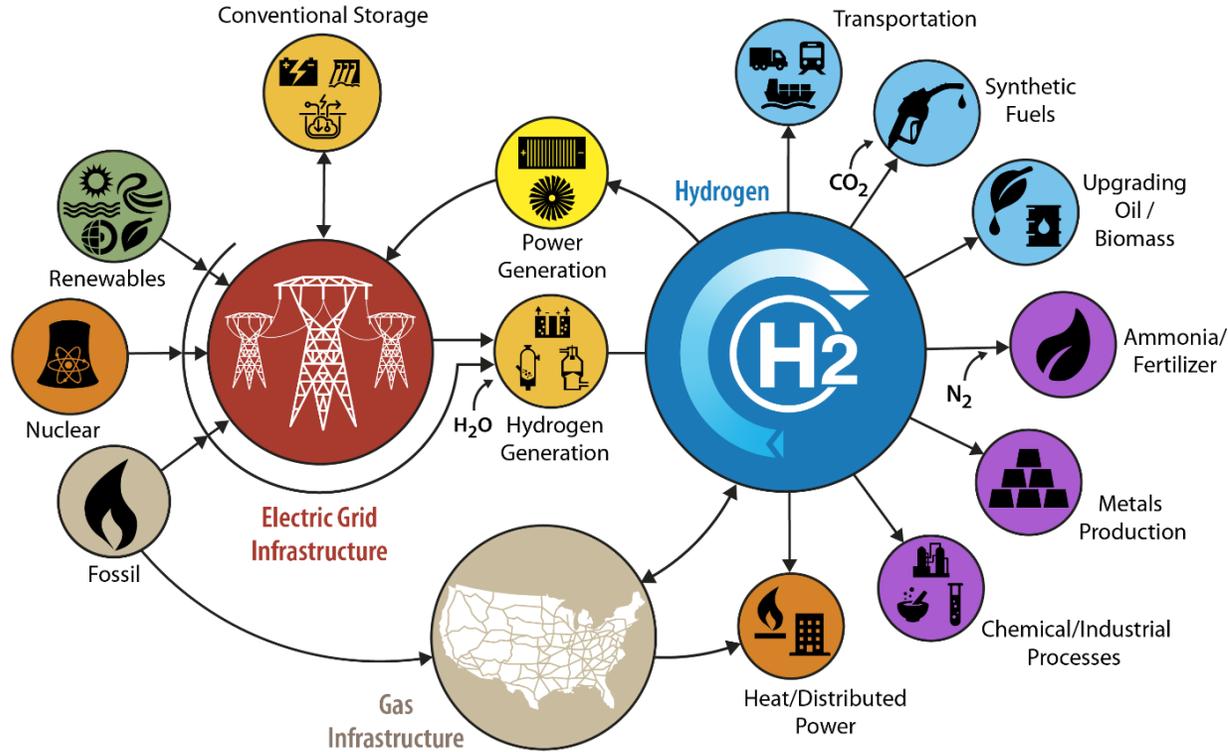


## 8 CUMULATED FUEL-POWERTRAIN EFFICIENCY FOR LIGHT DUTY VEHICLES



• W. Warnecke, et al., *The Route to Sustainable Fuels for Zero Emissions Mobility*, 39<sup>th</sup> International Vienna Motor Symposium, 2018.

# H2@ Scale

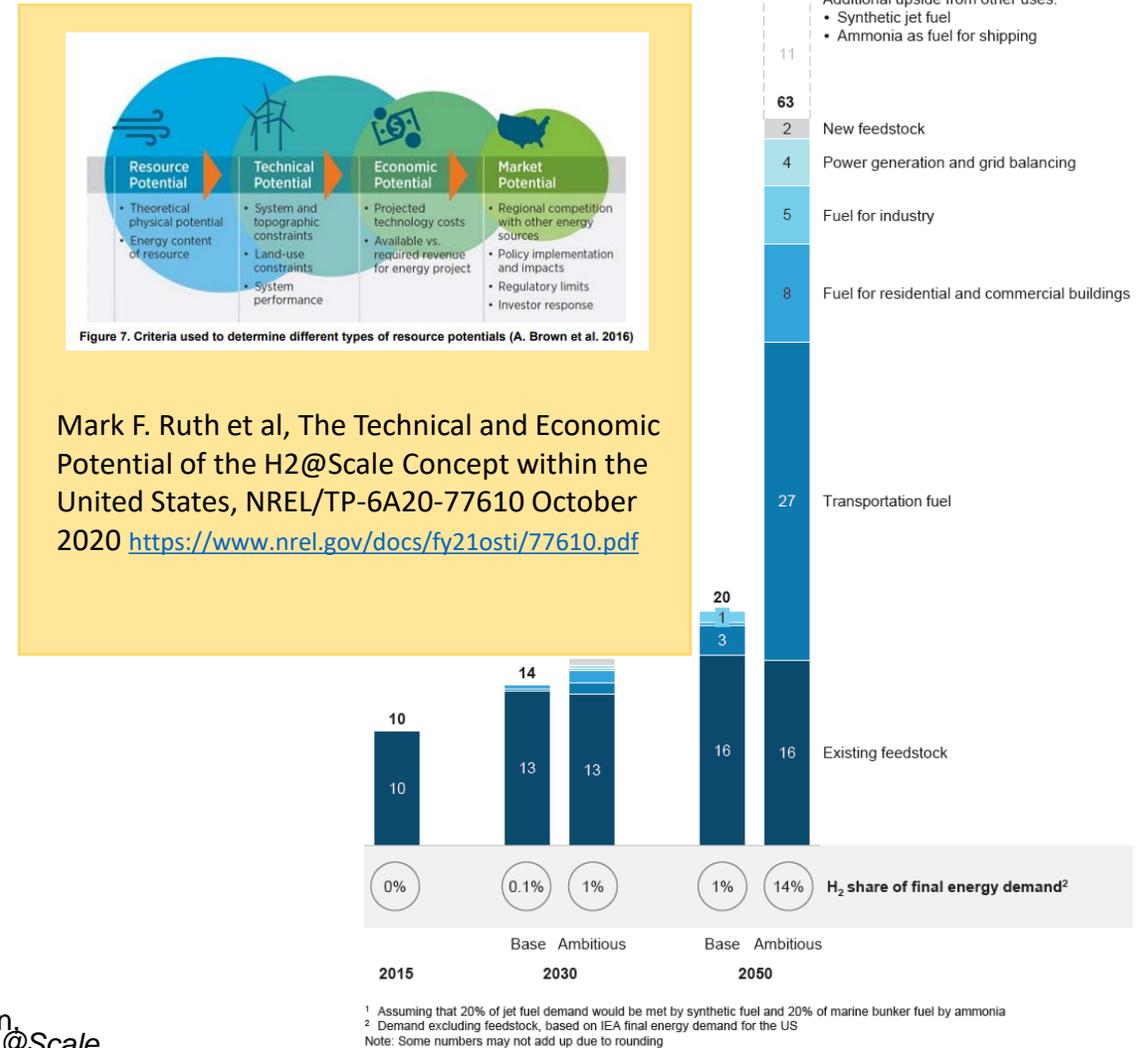


Rustagi and Satyapal (2018), in

Ruth, Mark, Paige Jadun, Nicholas Gilroy, Elizabeth Connelly, Richard Boardman, A.J. Simon, Amgad Elgowainy, and Jarett Zuboy. 2020. *The Technical and Economic Potential of the H2@Scale Concept within the United States*. Golden, CO: National Renewable Energy Laboratory. NREL/TP-6A20-77610. <https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy21osti/77610.pdf>.

Exhibit 2  
Hydrogen demand potential across sectors – 2030 and 2050 vision

Million metric tons per year



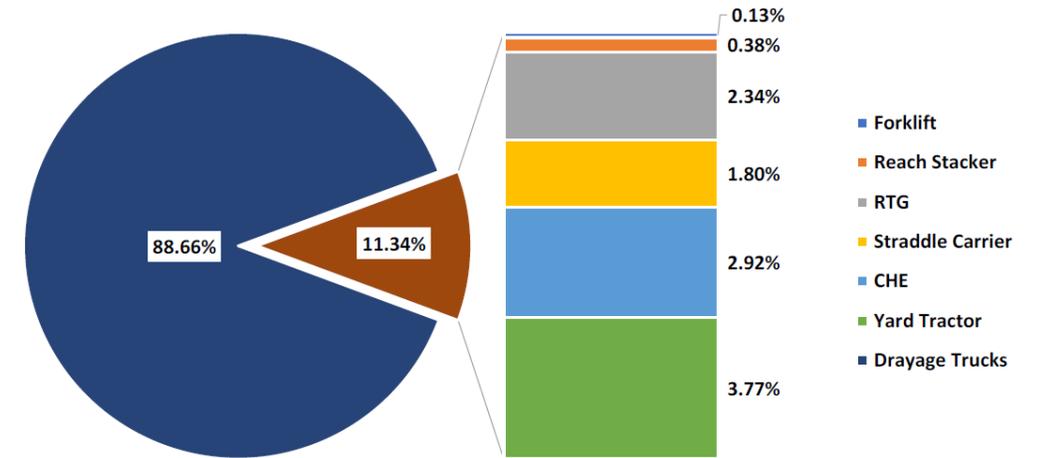
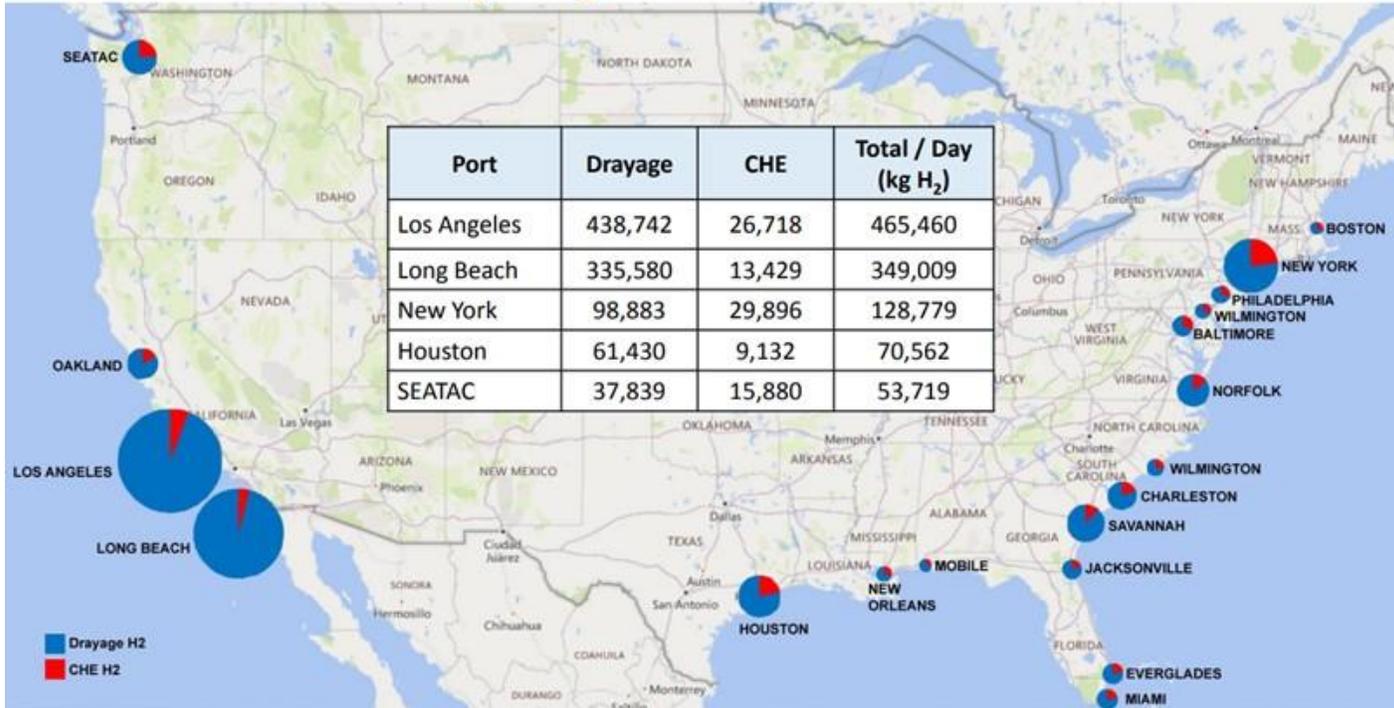
US Hydrogen Roadmap (FCHEA, 2020):

<http://www.fcchea.org/us-hydrogen-study>

# H2@Port

- Clean air, low CO<sub>2</sub>, rapid refuel: leverage warehouse forklift roll out.

## Potential Hydrogen Demand at U.S. Ports



Total Potential H<sub>2</sub> Demand = 1,385 tonnes per day (19 U.S. Ports)

## Port Terminal Equipment kg/day H<sub>2</sub>



RTG Crane  
45 kg/day



Forklift  
5 kg/day



Straddle Carrier  
46 kg/day



Container Handler  
56[L] 25[E] kg/day



Reach Stacker  
33 kg/day

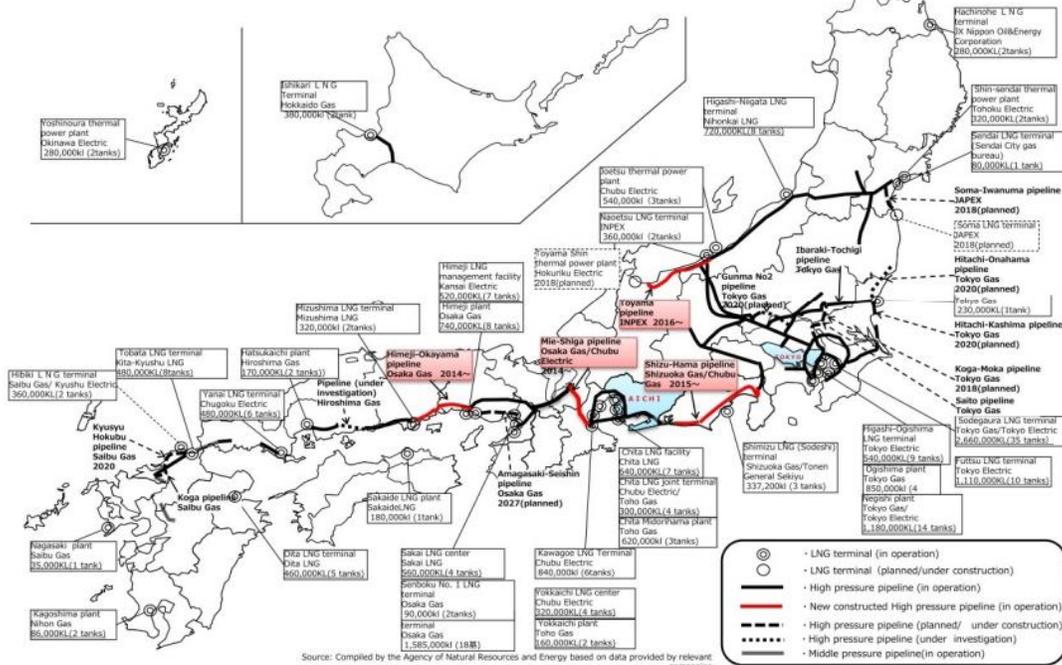


Yard Tractor  
21 kg/day

Lindsay M. Steele (PNNL), Charlie Myers (ORNL), PNNL-SA-147032 H2@Ports International Workshop San Francisco, September 2019. <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2019/10/f68/fcto-h2-at-ports-workshop-2019-viii3-steele.pdf>

# Japan: Ports

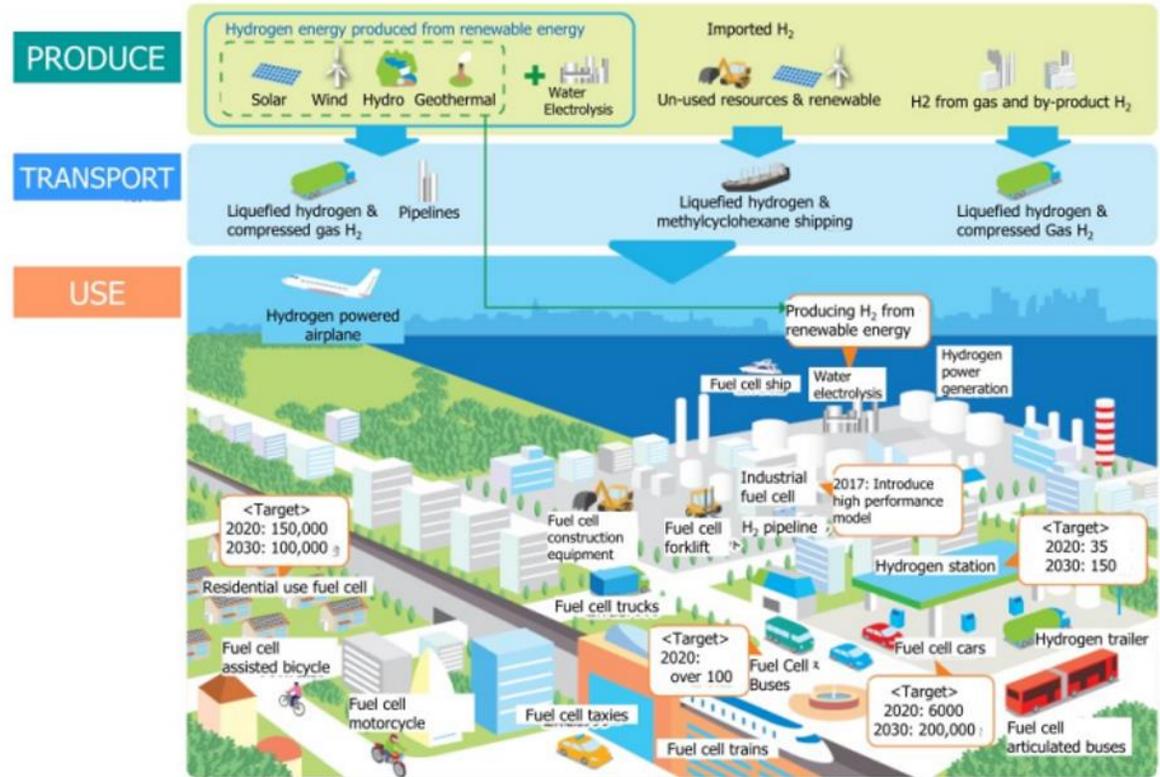
## Gas Pipelines and LNG terminals in Japan



Source: METI

- Sources: Meti, Tokyo Metropolitan Gov

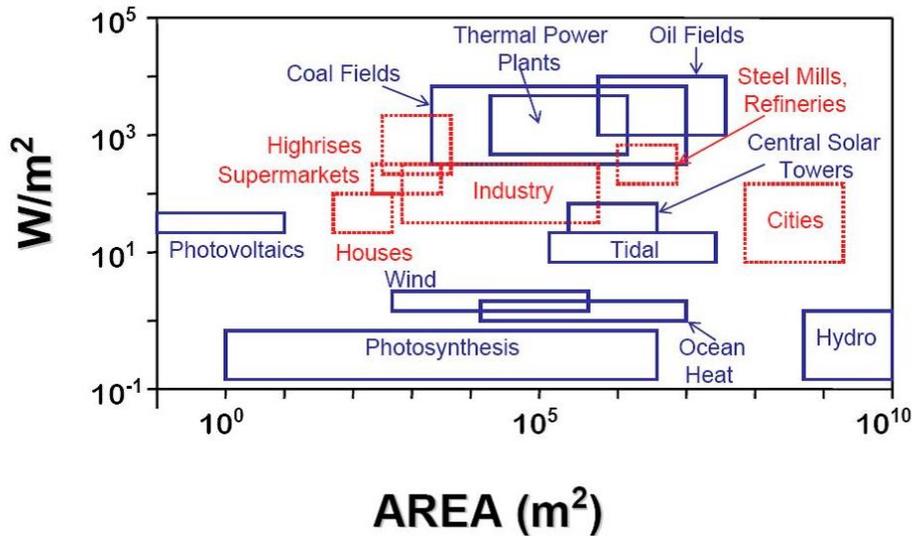
## An Image of a Hydrogen Powered Society



# Power density and storage

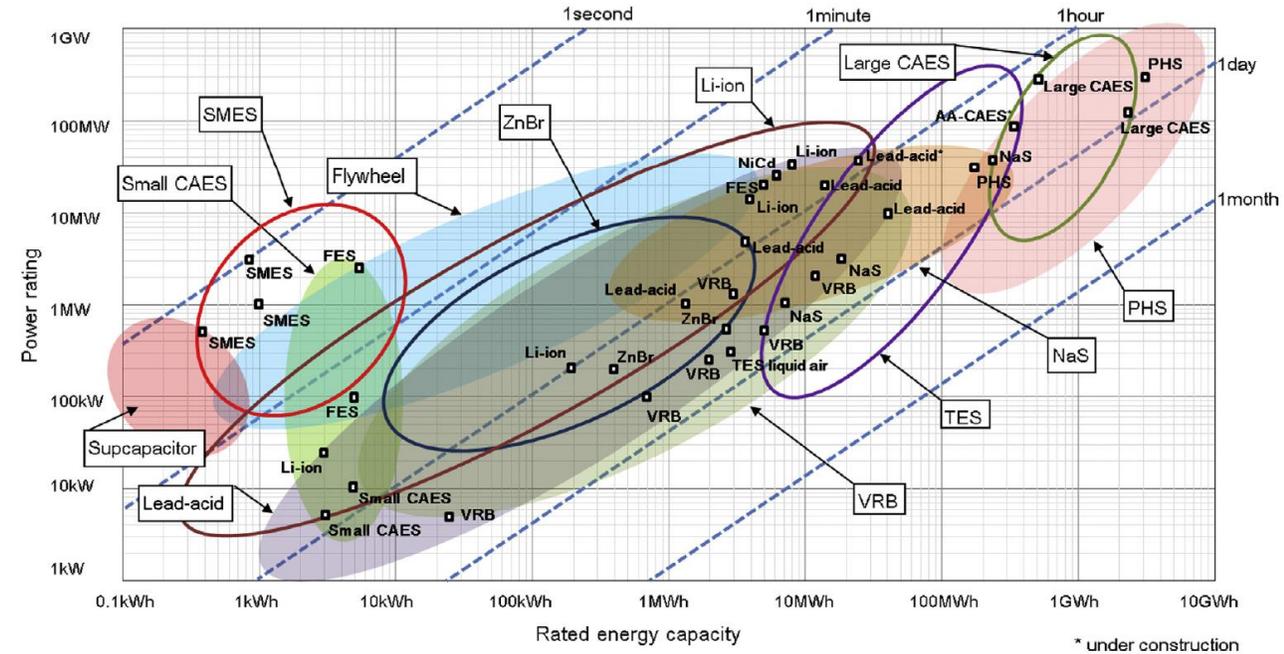
## Power Densities for Energy Sources and End Uses

Source: Smil (1991)



Nuclear

## Grid storage



X. Luo et al. / Applied Energy 137 (2015) 511–536



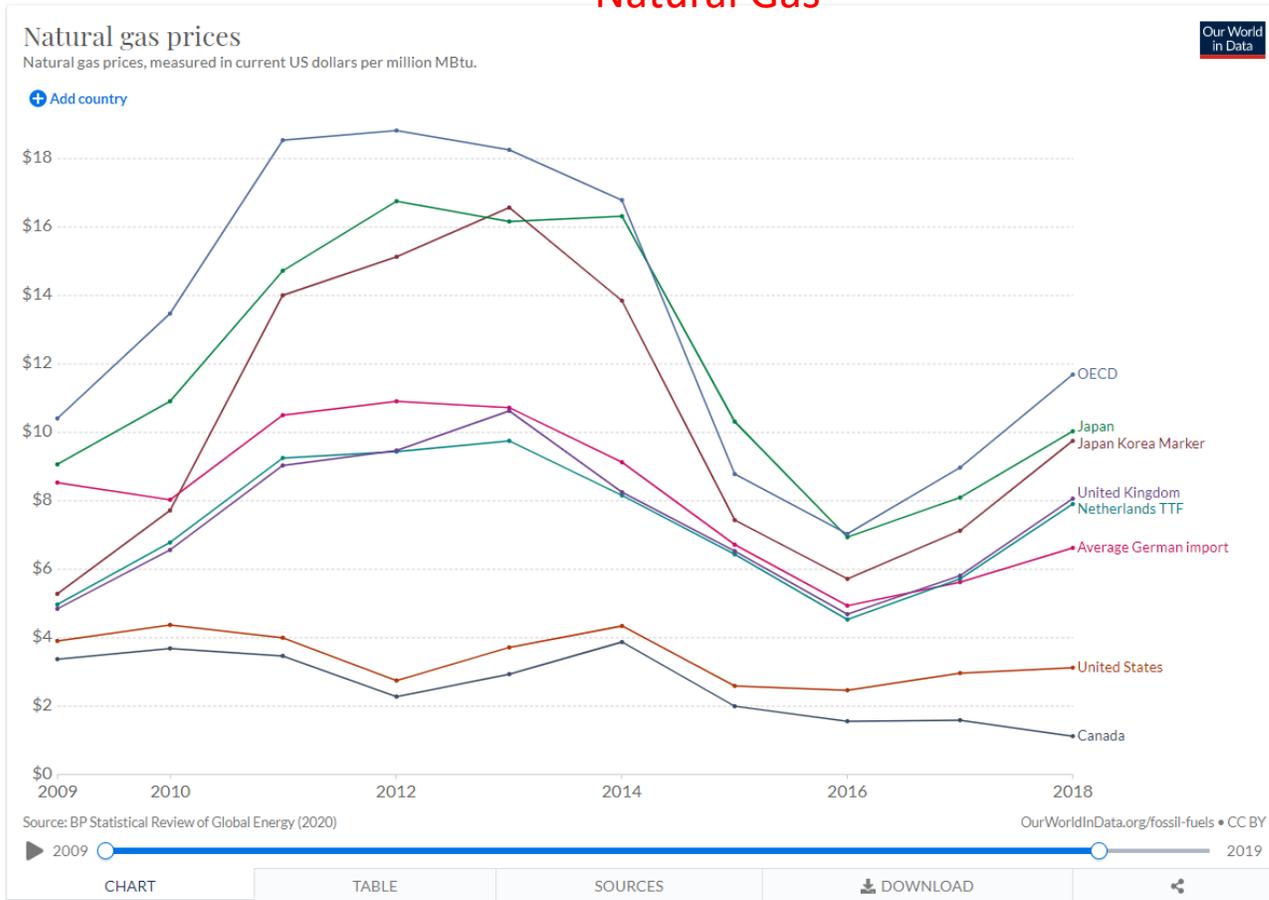
**Solar PPA (US):** \$0.03/kwHr (2020)  
 \$1/kg-H<sub>2</sub> or \$1/gallon equivalent energy as electrons.

- Cannot produce H<sub>2</sub> this cheaply.
- Hydrogen must provide “service” in energy transport or storage to be valuable.

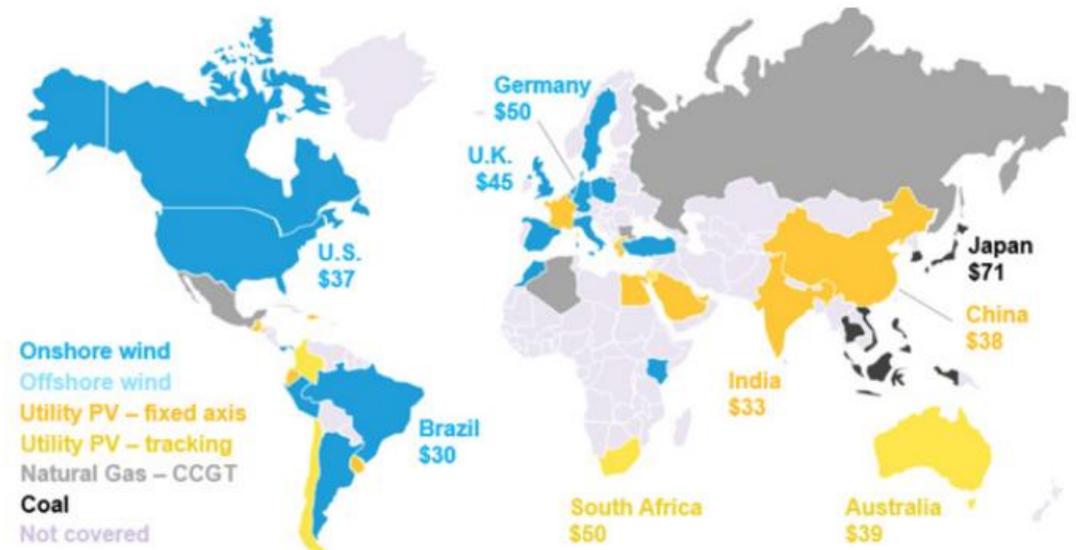
Vaclav Smil, **Power Density: A Key to Understanding Energy Sources and Uses**, MIT Press 2015; *General Energetics Energy in the Biosphere and Civilization*. John Wiley, New York,(1991)

# Renewable PPA vs. Natural Gas

## Natural Gas



## LCOE



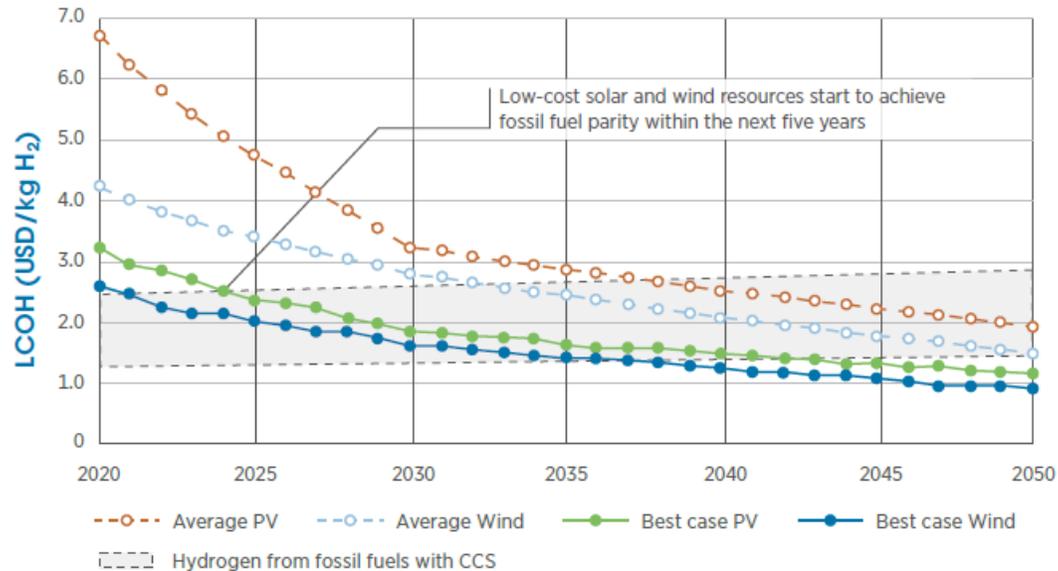
Source: BloombergNEF. Note: LCOE calculations exclude subsidies or tax-credits. Graph shows benchmark LCOE for each country in \$ per megawatt-hour. CCGT: Combined-cycle gas turbine.

BNEF 2020b. "Scale-up of Solar and Wind Puts Existing Coal, Gas at Risk." BloombergNEF (blog). April 28, 2020. <https://about.bnef.com/blog/scale-up-of-solar-and-wind-puts-existing-coal-gas-at-risk/>.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/263492/electricity-prices-in-selected-countries/>

BP statistical review of global energy

# Hydrogen costs: Blue vs Green & Infrastructure vs. BEV



Note: Remaining CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are from fossil fuel hydrogen production with CCS.  
 Electrolyser costs: 770 USD/kW (2020), 540 USD/kW (2030), 435 USD/kW (2040) and 370 USD/kW (2050).  
 CO<sub>2</sub> prices: USD 50 per tonne (2030), USD 100 per tonne (2040) and USD 200 per tonne (2050).

IRENA (2019), *Hydrogen: A renewable energy perspective*, International Renewable Energy Agency, Abu Dhabi

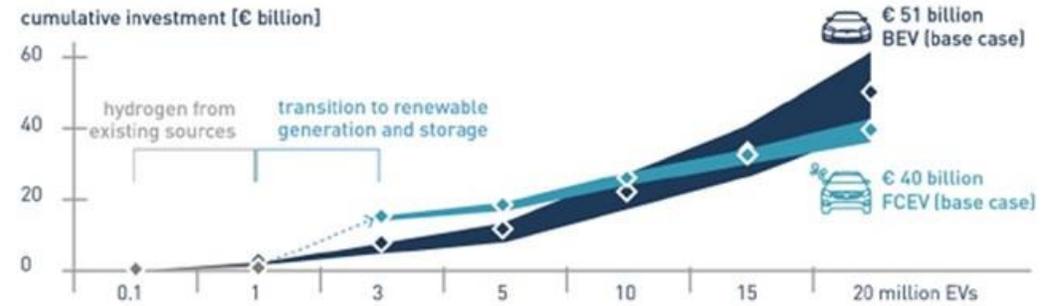


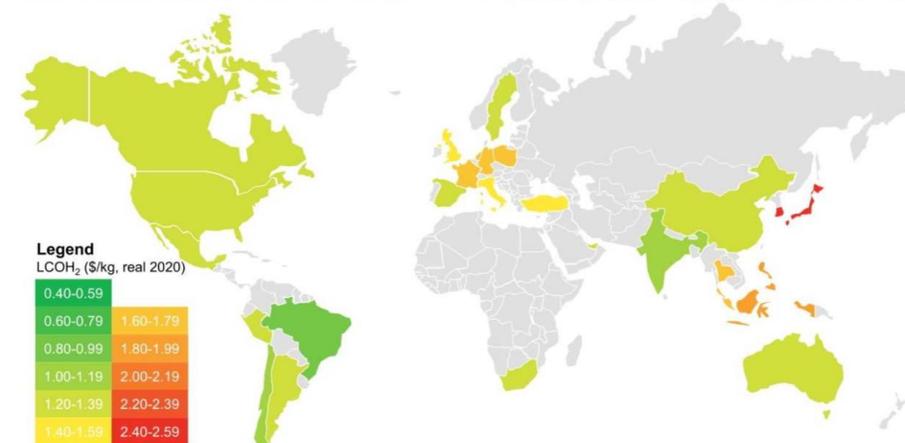
Figure 0-2: Comparison of the cumulative investment of supply infrastructures.

**H2 Mobility Comparative Analysis of Infrastructures: Hydrogen Fueling and Electric Charging of Vehicles**, Martin Robinius, Jochen Linßen, Thomas Grube, Markus Reuß, Peter Stenzel, Konstantinos Syranidis, Patrick Kuckertz and Detlef Stolten, Energie & Umwelt / Energy & Environment Band / Volume 408 ISBN 978-3-95806-295-5: **Forschungszentrum Jülich Research Centre and the H2 Mobility**

1H 2021 renewable LCOH<sub>2</sub> forecast

## LCOH<sub>2</sub> from renewable electricity 2030, alkaline electrolysis

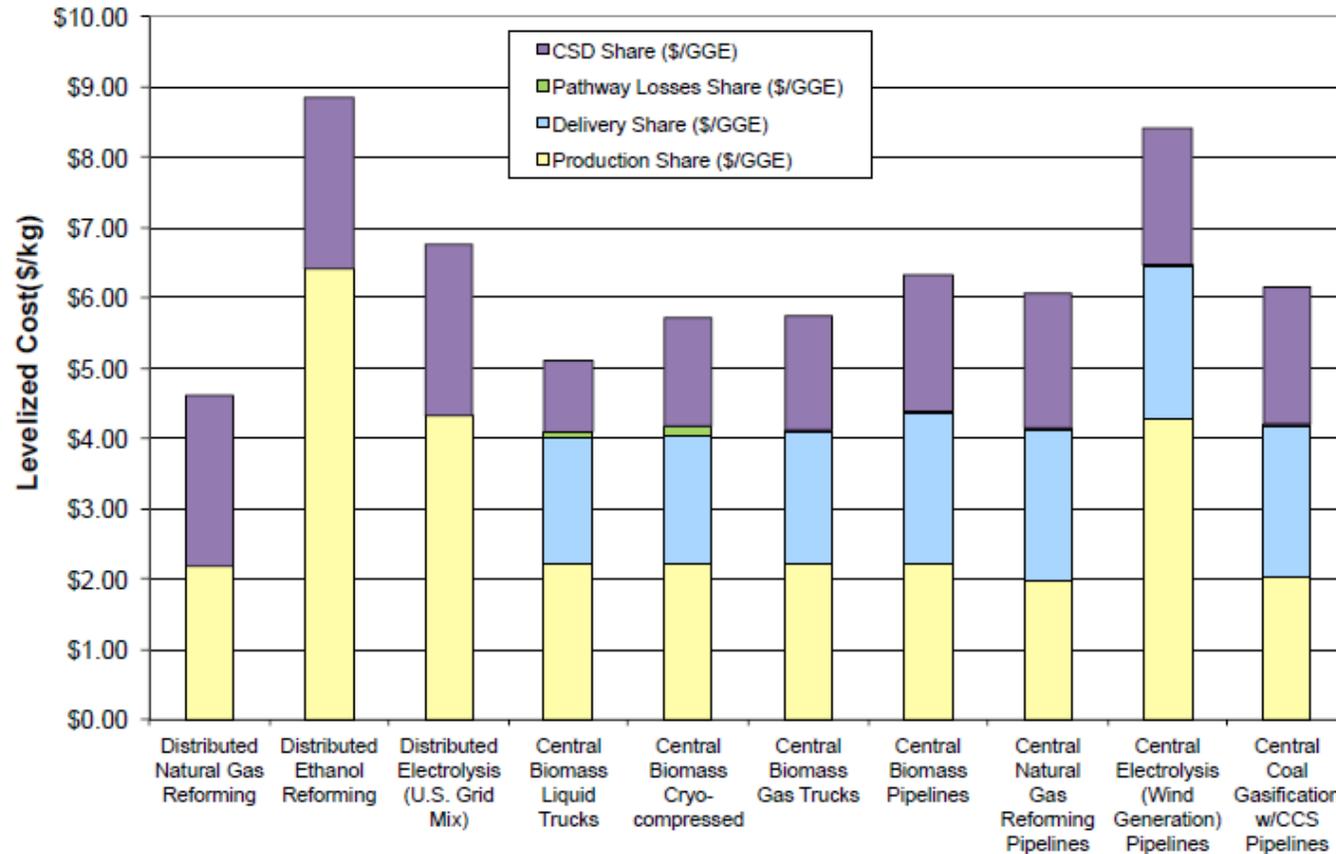
By 2030, most modeled markets could produce renewable H<sub>2</sub> at well under \$2/kg when using alkaline electrolyzers, assuming scale-up continues.



Source: BloombergNEF. Assumes our optimistic alkaline electrolyzer cost scenario published in *Hydrogen: The Economics of Production From Renewables* ([web](#) | [terminal](#)). We selected the renewable electricity source that provides the lowest LCOH<sub>2</sub> for each country.

<https://insideevs.com/photo/5735195/green-hydrogen-will-be-cheaper-than-blue-hydrogen-by-2050-says-bnef/>

# Hydrogen Dispensed Cost



- Hydrogen Pathways Updated Cost, Well-to-Wheels Energy Use, and Emissions for the Current Technology Status of Ten Hydrogen Production, Delivery, and Distribution Scenarios** T. Ramsden, M. Ruth, V. Diakov *National Renewable Energy Laboratory*  
 M. Laffen, T.A. Timbario *Alliance Technical Services, Inc.* **Technical Report NREL/TP-6A10-60528**, March 2013

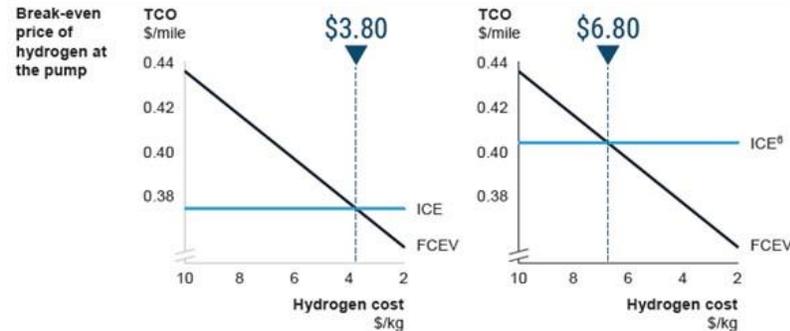
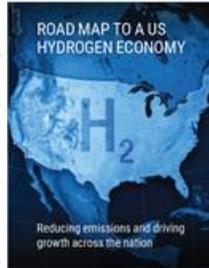
# Viability of Hydrogen Economy?

## Price paid for energy services

<http://www.fchea.org/us-hydrogen-study> (2020)

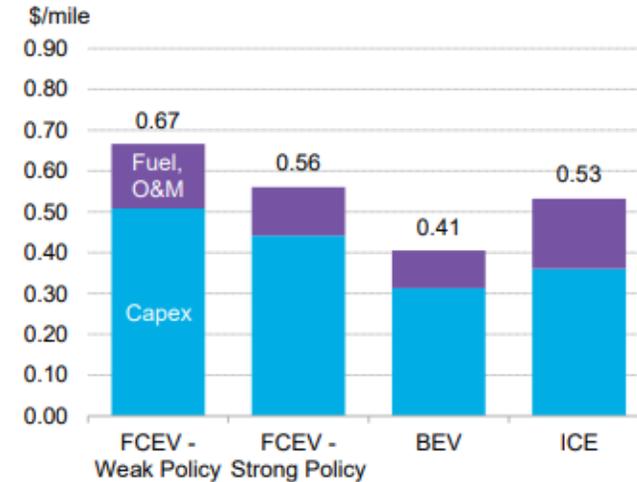
Exhibit 38  
SUV TCO analysis  
TCO per mile (\$/mile) in 2030

	Assumption 1 ICE efficiency of 39 mpg	Assumption 2 ICE efficiency of 29 mpg
Capex <sup>1,2</sup>	FCEV: Hyundai Nexa – 39K ICE: Honda Pilot – 32K	FCEV: Hyundai Nexa – 39K ICE: Honda Pilot – 32K
Lifetime	200,000 miles ~35 miles/day	200,000 miles ~35 miles/day
Efficiency	FCEV: 5 kWh battery 0.015 H <sub>2</sub> kg/mile (67 GGE <sup>3</sup> ) ICE: 39 mpg <sup>4</sup>	FCEV: 5 kWh battery 0.015 H <sub>2</sub> kg/mile (67 GGE <sup>3</sup> ) ICE: 29 mpg <sup>5</sup>



## Total cost of ownership SUV

Figure 9: Total cost of ownership of SUVs in the U.S., 2030



Source: BloombergNEF. Note: FCEV – fuel cell electric vehicle, BEV – battery electric vehicle, ICE – internal combustion engine.

<https://data.bloomberglp.com/professional/sites/24/BNEF-Hydrogen-Economy-Outlook-Key-Messages-30-Mar-2020.pdf>

IEA (2019). <https://www.iea.org/reports/the-future-of-hydrogen>

Figure 55. Parameters contrast of different drayage trucks

**Kenworth T680** <sup>206</sup>



- Prototype launch: 2018.02
- Purpose: proof of concept <sup>207</sup>
- Drivetrain capacity: 420 kW and 1,850 pound-feet (2,507 Nm) torque
- Fuel cell system: 85 kw
- Hydrogen tank storage capacity: 30 kg
- Battery capacity: 100 kWh
- Gross combined weight capacity: ~36.3 metric tons <sup>201</sup>
- Driving distance: ~209km

**Toyota Beta**



- Prototype launch: 2018.07 (for deployment in Q4 2019)
- Purpose: proof of commercial viability
- Drivetrain capacity: 670-plus horsepower (500 kW) and 1,325 pound-feet (1,796 Nm) of torque
- Fuel cell system: 2x Mirai fuel system <sup>201</sup> each rated at 114 kW <sup>202</sup>
- Fuel cell tank storage capacity: 60kg <sup>200</sup>
- Battery capacity: 12kWh
- Gross combined weight capacity: ~36.3 metric tons <sup>201</sup>
- Driving distance: ~480km <sup>201</sup>

**BEV**



- Drivetrain capacity: 340-740 horsepower (250-550 kW) and 2,000-4,000Nm of torque
- Battery capacity: 200-600kWh <sup>203</sup>
- Gross combined weight capacity: 20-47 metric tons
- Driving distance: 150-300km <sup>203</sup>

**ICEV**



- Drivetrain capacity: 400 horsepower (around 300 kW) and 1,200-1,800 pound-feet (1,600-2,500Nm) of torque <sup>204</sup>
- Gross combined weight capacity: ~40 metric tons <sup>204</sup>
- Driving distance: >1,000km <sup>205</sup>

Figure 59. TCO break down (USD/100km)

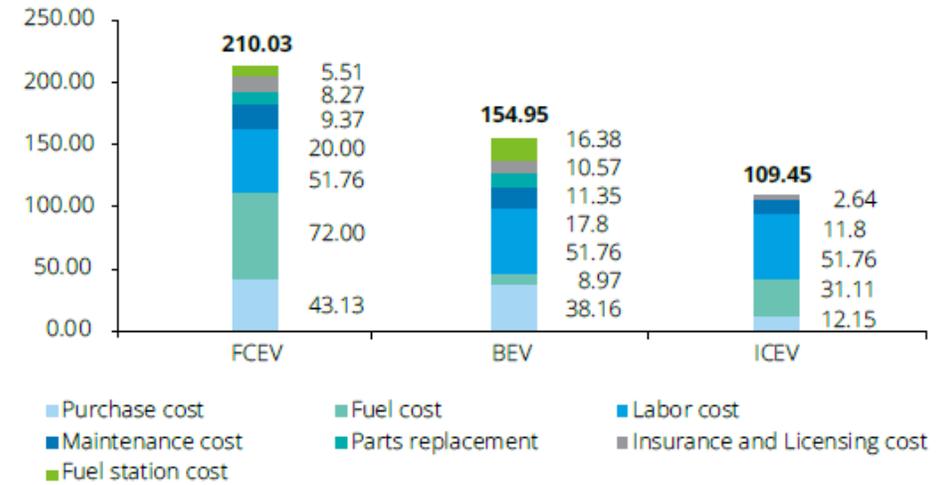
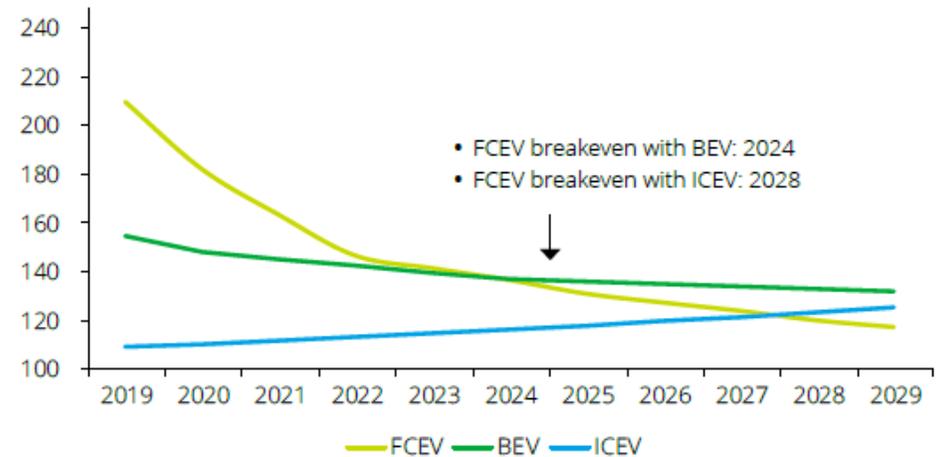
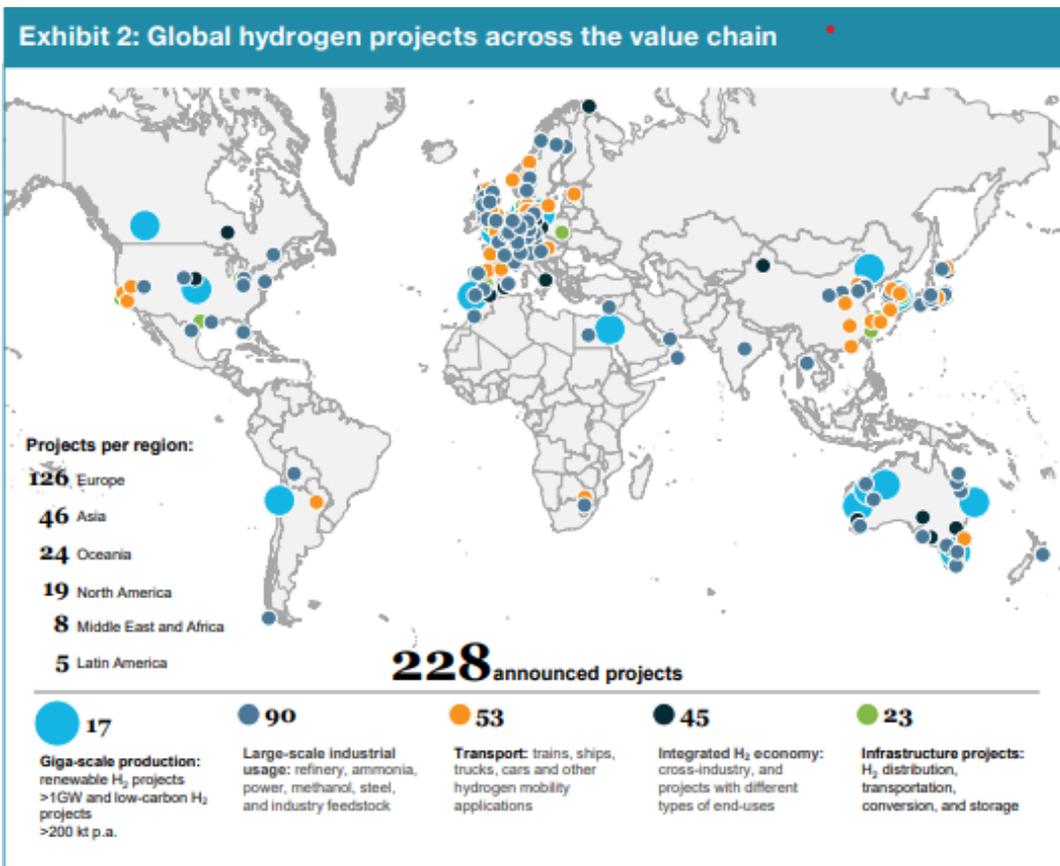


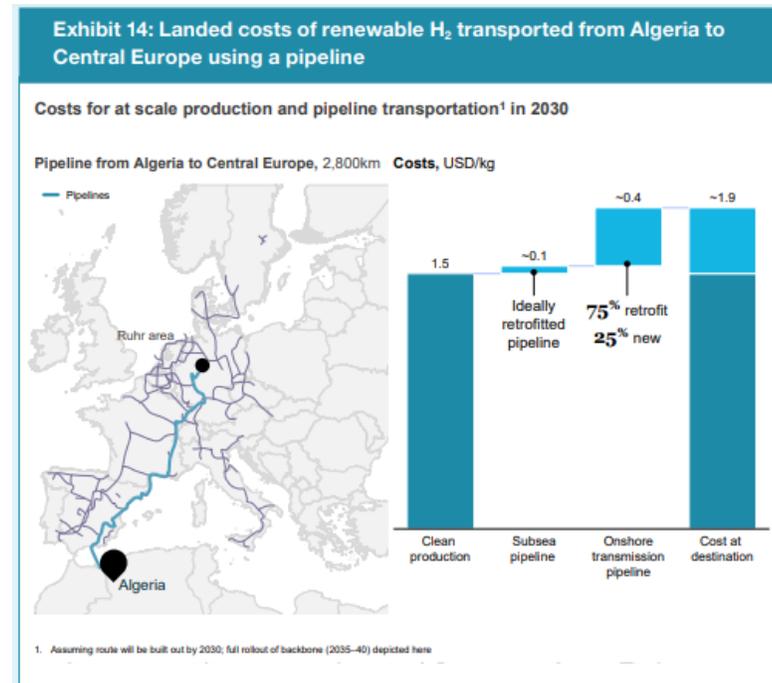
Figure 60. Total cost of ownership/ USD per 100km



# Where is hydrogen economy emerging?

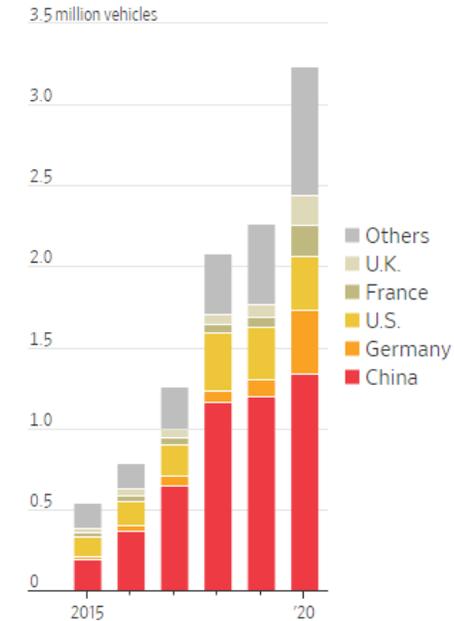


- Far east (Japan, China, Korea with sourcing from Australia); Europe
- Policy incentives important



Hydrogen Council / McKinsey % Co. (Feb 2021)  
 Hydrogen Insights on hydrogen investment, market development and cost competitiveness  
<https://hydrogencouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Hydrogen-Insights-2021-Report.pdf>

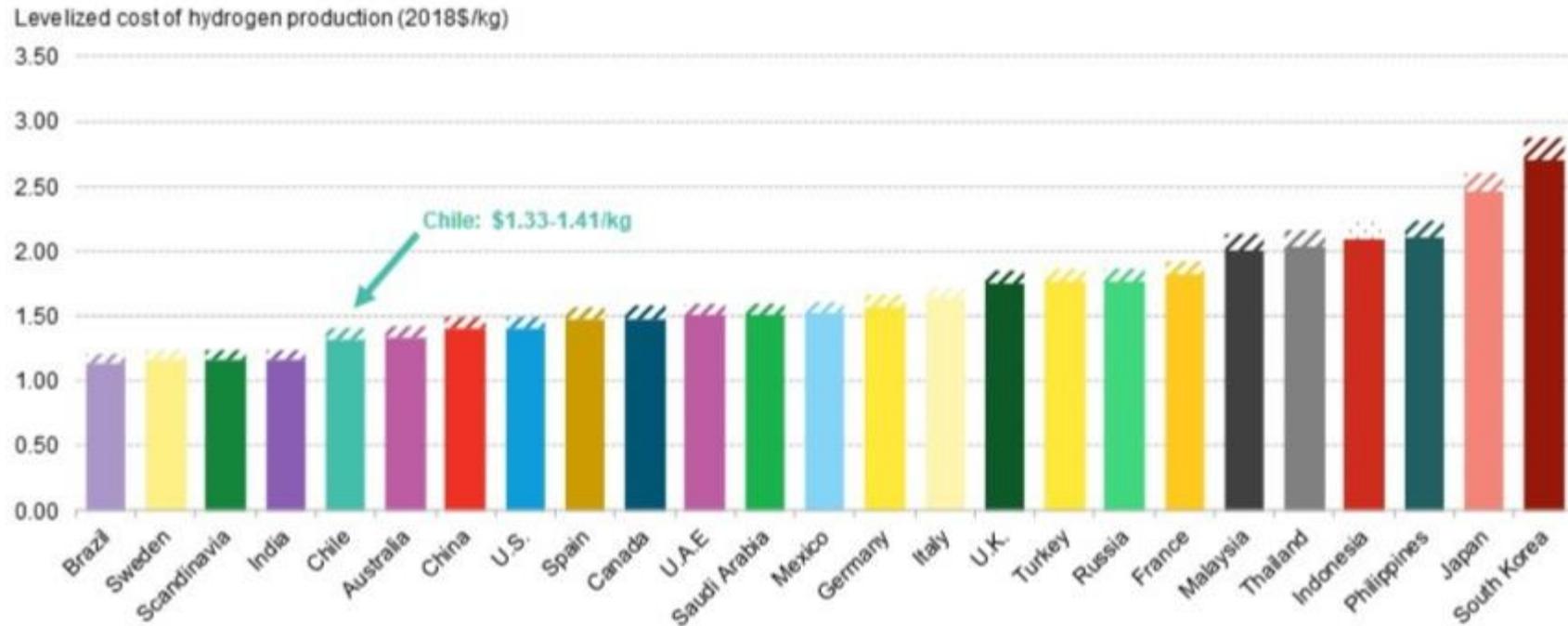
Global electric-car sales by top markets



Source: EV-Volumes

WSJ 2/26/2021: BEV sales driven by subsidy  
[https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-europe-became-the-worlds-biggest-electric-car-market-and-why-it-might-not-last-11614508200?mod=hp\\_lead\\_pos8](https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-europe-became-the-worlds-biggest-electric-car-market-and-why-it-might-not-last-11614508200?mod=hp_lead_pos8)

# Cost of hydrogen, global



<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-03-10/investors-lining-up-for-hydrogen-subsidies-in-top-copper-miner?sref=w5YUJnwX>

# Conclusions / Q&A / Follow-up

Hydrogen is an energy vector, not a primary energy source

- Electrification will occur as the world decarbonizes.
- Electricity is efficient for direct generation from wind / solar

Is Hydrogen Necessary?

- Benefits:
  - Higher energy density
  - **Storage and transport** (% uptime; lower cost sources)
  - Faster refuel
- Challenges
  - Infrastructure cost, lower cycle efficiency (1/2 e<sup>-</sup>)
  - Roll out lagging vs. electrification

Utilization:

- Long-distance energy carrier
- Medium to long-term energy storage
- Zero-emission / air quality vs. hydrocarbon fuels
- Commercial fleets requiring high % uptime & fast refuel
- High energy density services:
  - Industry
  - Residential heating and power
  - Heavy duty transport

## Joe Powell

Joseph B. Powell, PhD -- Chemepd LLC

NAE, Fellow AIChE retired Shell Chief Scientist – Chemical Engineering

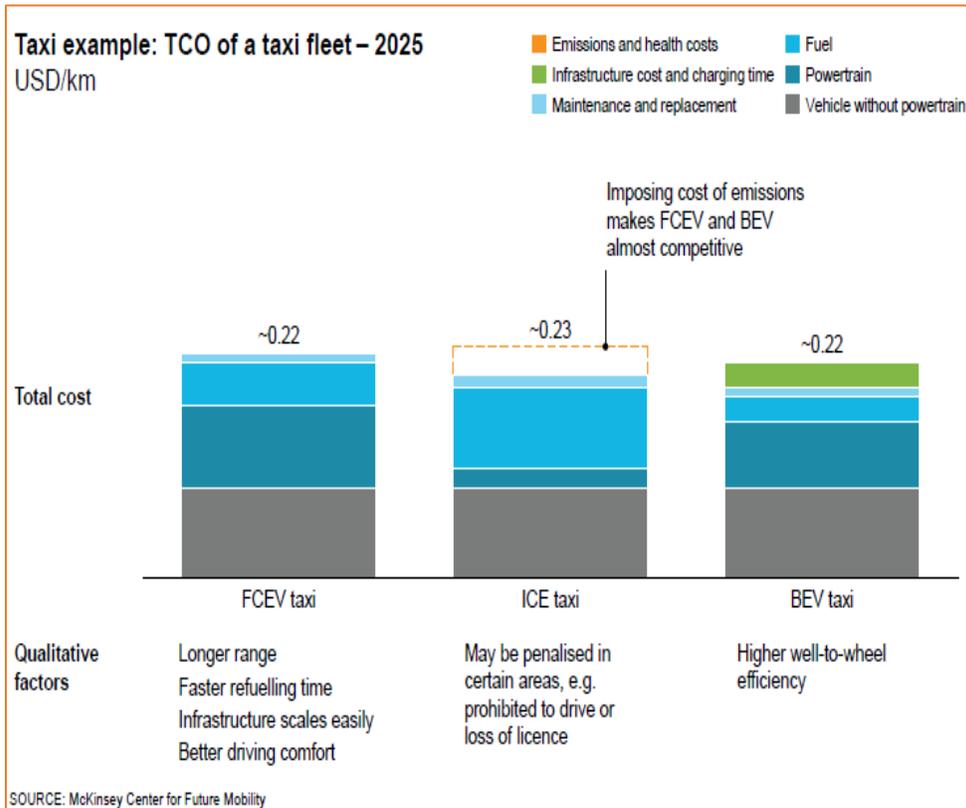
[www.chemepd.com](http://www.chemepd.com)

[JBP@Chemepd.com](mailto:JBP@Chemepd.com)

[Powell@USBCSD.org](mailto:Powell@USBCSD.org)

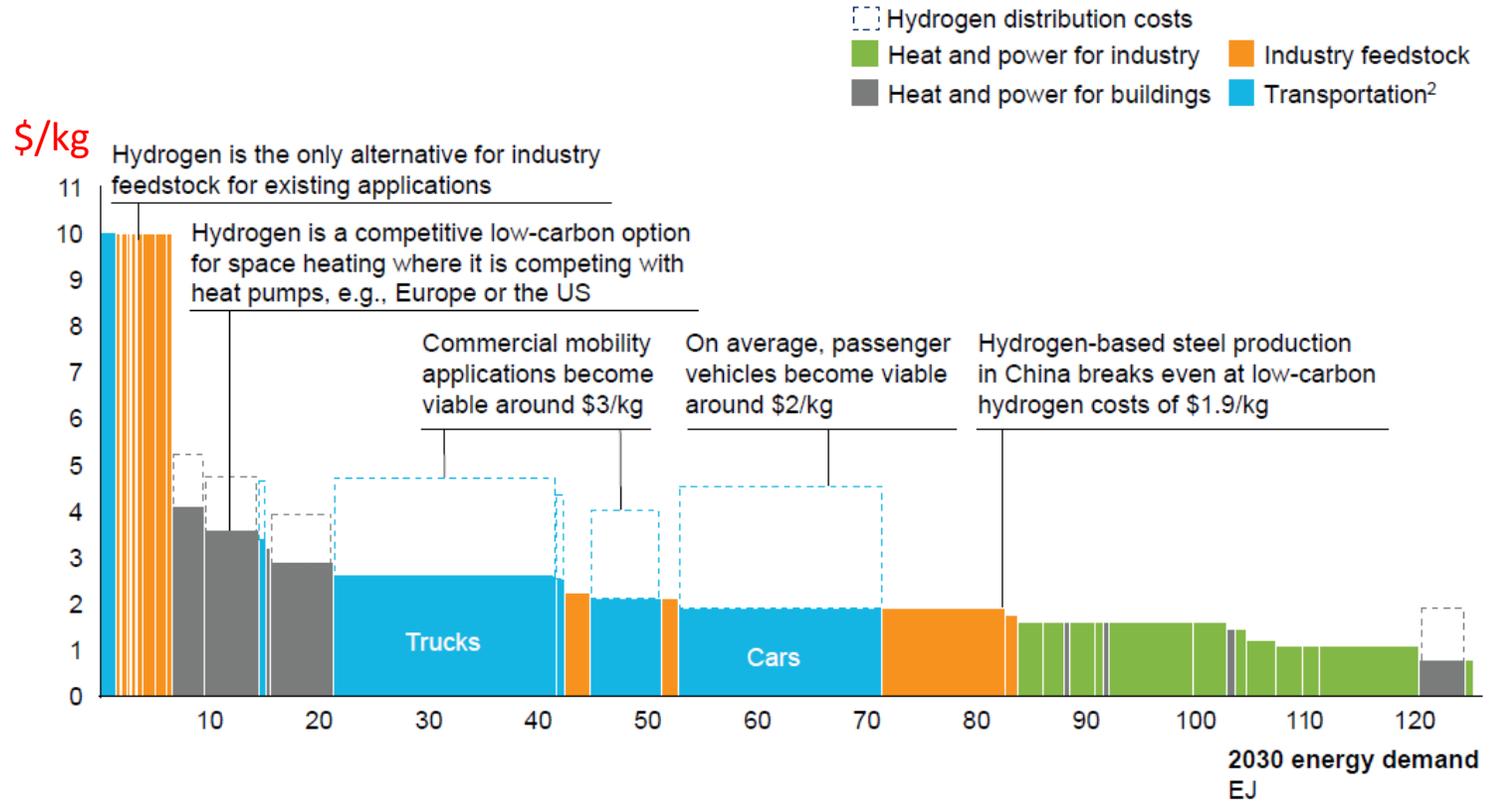


# Hydrogen break-even cost



## Break-even hydrogen costs at which hydrogen application becomes competitive against low-carbon alternative in a given segment

USD/kg



1. Regions assessed are the US, China, Japan/Korea, and Europe  
 2. Transportation segments breakeven calculated as weighted average  
 SOURCE: McKinsey; IHS; expert interviews; DoE; IEA

•IEA, *The Future of Hydrogen* (2019)