

Dissertation Release

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Actors’ attitudes and the structure of the energy sector could slow down the mitigation of climate change.

Title of the dissertation	Finland in energy transition – The interplay between actors and institutions and the application of climate abatement technologies
Contents of the dissertation	<p>Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing modern societies. Climate change has been progressing faster than predicted, and its harmful effects have been more severe than anticipated. Reaching the necessary mitigation targets requires fundamental transitions in various sectors. This dissertation examines the transition of the Finnish energy sector towards a more sustainable energy system, based on renewables. Research interviews were used to investigate the strategic work actors of the energy sector engage in, and the mental models they use in their communication. Interviews were complemented with an analysis of the institutional structure of the energy system, and the influence it has on the energy transition in Finland.</p> <p>The results demonstrate that the institutions of the energy sector do not support a rapid energy transition, and instead there is evidence of institutions slowing down the adoption of abatement technologies. Mental models have influenced climate policy, which has affected the profitability of sustainable technologies. Institutions also guide the strategic choices actors make and can make it difficult for them to challenge existing structures. Although actors are motivated to create a more sustainable energy system, it is likely to build on existing structures, instead of transitioning them.</p>
Field of the dissertation	Energy Technology
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Opponent	Professor Jouni Paavola, University of Leeds
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