



# Energy Myths and Realities

lecture by  
Dr. Vaclav Smil  
*Order of Canada recipient*  
October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2:30-3:30 pm  
Room: 223 Wallace Building  
Reception to follow

Dr. Vaclav Smil (Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Environment and Geography in the Riddell Faculty) was recently appointed to the Order of Canada. Dr. Smil is a renowned expert on global energy issues and he provides critical insights into energy development, distribution, and usage challenges. His diverse and prolific writings are considered essential reading by policy makers, scientists and academics in the field. Bill Gates wrote in June 2013 that *"There's no author whose books I look forward to more than Vaclav Smil. With his vast knowledge of science and energy, history and business, he brings new insights to every topic he examines."*

Energy Myths and Realities, by Vaclav Smil. My takeaways, below, are a study guide you can refer to when you're reading an overly optimistic book on energy or climate change. Before you get too excited, flip to the appropriate chapter and let Smil take some of the air out of an overinflated idea. Reality: Electric cars are only a niche piece of the market, and will be long into the next decades. Myth: All cars will be electric cars in the near future (next 10-ish years). Smil's main points: Slow adoption rate. In Energy Myths and Realities, Vaclav Smil brings a pragmatic view to popular ideas for our energy system of the last few decades: electric cars, nuclear, decentralized energy production, peak oil, carbon sequestration, biofuels, and wind power. His key message is that energy technologies are often over-hyped, often ignore environmental consequences or infrastructure requirements, and that transitions are slow. His analysis benefits from an extensive and current reference list, mostly journal articles. In Energy Myths and Realities, Vaclav Smil brings a pragmatic view to popular ideas for our energy