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 COLUMBIA CLIMATE SCHOOL
Climate, Earth, and Society

 UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN MACEDONIA

The Evolving Climate and Energy Landscape in Greece

International Conference

May 25-26, 2026

Venue: John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation
Address: Pallas Athena Building 4 Xenias, Kifisia

Program Agenda

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John S. Latsis
Public Benefit Foundation

Day One

May 25, 2026

Arrival

09:00 - 9:30

Welcome Remarks

9:30 - 10:30

Speakers

- Stavros Papastavrou - Minister for the Environment and Energy of Greece
- George Stassis - Chairman & CEO, PPC S.A.
- Alexis Abramson - Dean, Columbia Climate School
- Theodoros Theodoulidis - Rector, University of Western Macedonia (UOWM)
- Stefanos Gandolfo - Director, Columbia Global Center Athens

Session I: From Global Sustainability Goals to Regional Energy

Decisions

10:30 - 11:45

This session explores how global climate and sustainability agendas translate into concrete transformations of energy systems at national and regional levels. Building on international commitments such as the Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal, the discussion will examine how governments and regions are adapting their energy strategies, diversifying energy sources, and reshaping their energy mixes to achieve decarbonisation while strengthening energy security.

Speakers

- Phoebe Koundouri - Founder, Alliance of Excellence for Research and Innovation on Aeiphoria (AE4RIA)
- Alexandra Mavrogonatou - Just Transition Development (JTD) Special Authority, Head of Directorate of Strategic Planning & Coordination of Funds

Moderator

- Alexis Ambrason - Dean, Columbia Climate School

Day One

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Coffee Break

11:45-12:15

Session 2: Accelerating the Renewable Energy Transition

12:15 – 13:30

This session explores how renewable energy is accelerating the global energy transition and the strategies needed to scale deployment in the coming decade. As countries pursue decarbonisation alongside energy security, technologies such as solar and wind are reshaping energy systems and markets. The discussion will examine how projects are financed, developed, and integrated, addressing key challenges including investment mobilization, grid integration, permitting, and regulation, as well as the role of innovation in enabling large-scale deployment.

Speakers

- Vasilis Antoniadis – Managing Director and Senior Partner, Boston Consulting Group Greece (BCG)
- Andreas Gandolfo – Strategy and Analytics Manager at Pulse Clean Energy
- Richard Hartman – Chief Innovation Officer (CINO), Air Force Office of Energy Assurance (OEA), Air Force Civil Engineer Center
- Vasilis Nikitas – Economic Counsellor, European Commission, Directorate-General Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN)

Moderator

- Greeshma Gadikota – Lenfest Earth Institute Professor of Climate Change, Columbia University

Lunch Break

13:30 - 14:30

Day One

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Session 3: The Future of Conventional Energy in a Net-Zero Economy

14:30 – 15:45

This session examines the evolving role of conventional energy sources and energy-intensive industries in the transition to a low-carbon economy. While renewables are expanding rapidly, sectors such as oil and gas, refining, cement, and metals remain essential and face complex decarbonisation challenges. The discussion will explore how these industries are adapting through technological innovation, carbon management strategies, and low-carbon fuels, while balancing climate goals with energy security and economic competitiveness.

Speakers

- Kostas Andriosopoulos – Affiliate Professor, Alba Graduate Business School; Director, HELLENiQ ENERGY Center for Sustainability and Energy; CEO & Chairman, Akuo Energy Greece
- Helena Athoussaki – Chief Sustainability Officer, Motor Oil Group
- Alexandra Papalexopoulou – Executive Director, TITAN Cement Group
- Sofoklis Papanikolaou – CEO, Molgas
- Tripp Hornick – Principal, Quince Street Strategy

Moderator

- Lefteris Topaloglou – Associate Professor at the Department of Chemical Engineering, Polytechnic School, University of Western Macedonia; Head of ENTRA Lab, Director, Institute of Energy Development & Transition to Post-Lignite Era

Coffee Break

15:45 - 16:15

Day One

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Session 4: Policy Perspectives on the Energy Transition

16:15 – 17:30

This session examines the policy and governance frameworks shaping the energy transition. Bringing together policymakers and institutional leaders, it explores how European and national policies support decarbonisation, energy system transformation, and investment mobilization. The discussion will focus on regulatory design, cross-sector coordination, climate finance, and the role of public institutions in aligning economic development with climate goals while ensuring energy security and stability.

Speakers

- Theodora Antonakaki – Director, Climate Change and Sustainability Centre (CCSC), Bank of Greece
- Anne-Sophie Corbeau – Global Research Scholar, Columbia University
- Panagiotis Grammelis – Director of Research CERTH/CPERI
- Nikos Mantzaris – Lead Policy Analyst & Co-Founder, The Green Tank
- Natasha Martsekis – Chair of the Audit Committee, EYDAP
- Stella Tsani – Associate Professor, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Moderator

- Alexander Cooley – Claire Tow Professor of Political Science, Columbia University

Cocktail Reception

17:30 - 18:30

End of Day One

Day Two

May 26, 2026

Arrival

09:00 - 9:30

Session 5: Entrepreneurship Driving New Energy Solutions

09:30 - 10:45

This session explores the role of entrepreneurship and innovation in accelerating the transition to a sustainable energy system. Bringing together founders and industry leaders, it examines how startups are developing solutions in areas such as energy management, data analytics, and climate finance. The discussion will highlight how entrepreneurial ecosystems support the scaling of climate technologies, as well as the key opportunities and challenges facing emerging ventures in the energy transition.

Speakers

- James Lyons – Chief Technologist, Capricorn Investment Group
- Anastasis Stamatis – CEO, Dataphoria
- Michael Rowley – CEO, Stillwater Critical Minerals

Moderator

- Panagiotis Karampinis – Regional Managing Director for Europe & Managing Director, Endeavor Greece

Day Two

May 26, 2026

Session 6: Society, Regions, and Economic Transformation

10:45 – 12:00

This session explores how climate policies and the energy transition translate into socio-economic change at the regional level. As Greece advances its climate goals, particular attention will be given to the impacts on employment, skills, and local economies, especially in regions historically dependent on fossil fuels. Bringing together perspectives from policy, employment, and industry, the discussion will focus on workforce reskilling, the role of public institutions, and how businesses and communities can support a fair and inclusive climate transition.

Speakers

- Konstantinos Chasapis Tassinis – Climate Change Policy Officer, WWF Greece
- Gianna Chormova – Governor of the Public Employment Service (DYPA)

Moderator

- Georgios Christoforidis – Vice Rector for Research & Innovation, University of Western Macedonia

Coffee Break

12:00 - 12:15

Day Two

May 26, 2026

Session 7: Young Researchers' Session

12:15 – 13:45

A discussion of innovative research by early-career scholars on climate and energy challenges, highlighting fresh perspectives, interdisciplinary approaches, and policy-relevant insights.

Speakers

- Columbia Climate School Graduate Students
- University of West Macedonia Students

Moderator

- Greeshma Gadikota – Lenfest Earth Institute Professor of Climate Change, Columbia University
- Lefteris Topaloglou - Director, Institute of Energy Development & Transition to Post-Lignite Era, University of Western Macedonia (UOWM)

Closing Remarks

13:45 - 14:00

Speakers

- Greeshma Gadikota - Lenfest Earth Institute Professor of Climate Change
- Lefteris Topaloglou - Director, Institute of Energy Development & Transition to Post-Lignite Era, University of Western Macedonia (UOWM)
- Alexis Abramson - Dean, Columbia Climate School

Lunch

14:00 - 15:30

End of Day Two