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Is the Money and Attention Given to Carbon Capture and Storage Worth It? An Expert Debate

By Jennifer L



In its weekly podcast, Climate Now unveiled a historical audio debate among experts in [carbon capture and storage \(CCS\)](#). It marks the first episode in a series of debates tackling the pros and cons of technologies essential for transitioning to clean energy and mitigating climate change.

Climate Now covers key scientific ideas that underpin the understanding of how and why the climate is changing. The company also provides relevant information on clean energy technologies and policies tackling the climate crisis and energy transition.

This first-of-its-kind [debate involves 4 CCS experts](#) actively arguing for and against the technology. Their insight will bring light for those who want to understand the controversial matter on both sides.

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carbon from emission sources, helping reduce global warming.

The [IPCC](#) and other international organizations believe that CCS serves a crucial role in avoiding carbon emissions from industrial production and power generation from warming the atmosphere.

The UN panel made it clear that removing carbon from the air and locking it away for good is key to achieving the Paris Agreement climate objectives.

CCS is one of the carbon removal technologies that receives the most attention lately, both from private and public investors. The U.S. [Department of Energy](#) has been awarding grants in billions of dollars to [carbon capture projects](#). The agency is backing up both early-stage (R&D) and commercial CCS projects.

The [Environmental Protection Agency](#) has also proposed new rules that would regulate emissions from coal and new gas-fired power plants. In effect, CCS technologies would be one of the most attractive solutions for this hard-to-abate sector.

Other national governments are also following the U.S. such as Canada, the UK, and the EU. They have also committed millions, if not yet billions, of dollars to these climate technologies.

However, other scientists and industry leaders question the technology's feasibility, efficacy, and whether it detracts from the urgent need to transition to renewable energy sources. Others also raise concerns about CCS cost, scalability, and its use in extending the life of fossil fuel-powered industrial processes.

To address these contending ideas, Climate Now produced a landmark debate between the allies and enemies of CCS.

Key Questions Covered in the Debate:

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1. Decisions made in the next seven years about where to allocate resources towards clean energy technologies will have a profound impact on the habitability of our planet for decades to come. Why should those dollars be spent on CCS, when there are more expedient ways to cut emissions faster?
2. If CCS is not the answer, what strategies are being proposed instead to deeply decarbonize the hard-to-abate sectors? How feasible are those strategies?
3. To date, how effective has CCS been in actually reducing emissions globally? What are the challenges?
4. Looking ahead, what developments in technology, governance, or the market might shift the debate, either toward more CCS adoption or away from it?

Arguing for CCS project expansion are:

- Susan D. Hovorka, a Senior Research Scientist at the Bureau of Economic Geology, Jackson School of Geosciences, at The University of Texas at Austin
- George Peridas, the Energy Program Director, Carbon Management Partnerships at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

Debating against CCS technologies are:

- Kurt House, entrepreneur working at the interface of technology and natural resources, CEO and co-founder of KoBold Metals
- Charles Harvey, a hydrologist and biogeochemist at MIT

The opposition members are co-authors of the [NYT Op-Ed, Every Dollar Spent on This Climate Technology is a Waste](#).

This debate, featured in the first episode of the Climate Now podcast, is available across the company's channels including Spotify, Apple Podcasts, YouTube, and its website.

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