

Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence

European and Eurasian Studies Program



EU Jean Monnet Project

Renewable Energy: The Future of Biofuels

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS: BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Panelists



Dr. Annegret Groebel, PhD, PG, CHg

Head of Department International Relations / Postal Regulation, BNetzA
(Bundesnetzagentur), Federal Network Agency, Germany + Vice-President, CEER
(Council of European Energy Regulators)

Dr. Annegret Groebel has studied economics at the University of Heidelberg and Paris-Dauphine and was a researcher at the University of Mannheim where she also got her doctorate in 1996.

Dr. Groebel has worked for the German Regulatory Authority for Telecommunications and Post since 1997 (renamed in 2005 to Federal Network Agency for Electricity, Gas, Telecommunications, Post and Railway). Dr. Groebel has held the post of Head of Section "International Co-ordination" in the German Regulatory Authority for Telecommunications and Post since 2001 and was promoted Head of Department International Relations/Postal Regulation in 2009.

She also holds key positions at the Independent Regulators Group (IRG). She is actively involved in the work of the European Regulators Group (ERG) and of the newly created Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC). She is responsible for all contacts to other European and non-European regulatory bodies as well as for the contacts with the European Commission, including CEER, ACER in the energy field, ERG-Post and IRG Railways.

In March 2012, she was appointed Vice-President of the Council of European Energy Regulators (CEER) and became the alternate member of the ACER Board of Regulators representing BNetzA at the BoR Plenary meetings.

Since August 2013 she is co-chairing the Market Integrity and Transparency Working Groups of ACER and CEER. In November 2013 she was appointed to be a member of the NER Bureau supporting the NER Chair Luigi Carbone (AEEGSI). She has expertise in the European regulatory framework for electronic communications and implementation, as well as the regulatory framework for the internal energy market and is lecturing at universities in Germany, the FSR in Italy, and Switzerland. She has advised public authorities on regulatory reform and sector specific regulation. The Bundesnetzagentur The Federal Network Agency for Electricity, Gas, Telecommunications, Post and Railway, or Bundesnetzagentur as it is commonly known, is the German regulator for electricity, gas, telecommunications, post and railway. It promotes effective competition in the regulated areas and ensures non-discriminatory access to networks. It protects important consumer rights and is also the root certification authority under the Electronic Signatures Act. In addition, the Bundesnetzagentur is responsible for implementing the Grid Expansion Acceleration Act.



Robert J. Downing
Shareholder
Greenberg Traurig, P.A.
Houston and Miami

Robert J. Downing has over 30 years' experience in international business transactions. His practice is focused on energy, mergers and acquisitions, finance and project development matters. Since joining Greenberg Traurig, he devotes a substantial part of his time to counseling multi-national corporations on investing in the power sectors of Mexico, Central and South America. His work also involves cross-border pipeline ventures and cross-border sales of electricity and natural gas.

Prior to joining the law firm, Mr. Downing was Associate General Counsel at Duke Energy International, a subsidiary of Duke Energy, the largest electric utility in the United States. At DEI, he worked on energy matters throughout Latin America and also served on the board of directors of a Saudi Arabian petrochemical company. Prior to DEI, he was senior attorney at the Cisneros Group, a Venezuelan conglomerate with global operations with mining, media and telecommunication interests.

Representative legal matters include electricity generation projects involving solar and wind in Mexico and Nicaragua, hydro in Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, and a geothermal investment in Mexico. Together with the firm's Mexico City office, he has represented clients in the recent international renewables auctions conducted by CENACE. He has also advised clients on gas-fired projects involving Guatemala, Mexico and Peru. In addition, he currently assists clients on biodiesel projects in the United States.

Mr. Downing graduated from Columbia College with a B.A. in Political Science. He earned a J.D.-M.B.A. from Columbia University School of Law and Columbia Graduate School of Business. He also holds an LL.M. in Energy, Environmental and Resources Law from the University of Houston Law Center. He is Board Certified in International Law by the Florida Bar.



Dr. George Philippidis
Associate Professor
Director, Biofuels & Bioproducts Lab
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Dr. George Philippidis is Associate Professor at the Patel College of Global Sustainability (PCGS) at the University of South Florida (USF). He is a Fulbright Scholar and an expert in biofuels and bioproducts with a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Minnesota and an MBA from the University of Denver. He has authored several publications and 11 patents in clean technologies and has developed graduate courses in renewable energy and sustainability.

Dr. Philippidis has 25 years of experience leading strategic business units in the private sector and directing applied research and development in the public sector. He started his career at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) in Denver before moving to Thermo Fisher Scientific in Boston, a Fortune 500 company. He then joined the Applied Research Center at Florida International University in Miami, where he created and directed the Center's energy business.

At USF Dr. Philippidis directs applied research, scale-up, and technology commercialization in the conversion of algae and biomass to sustainable bioproducts, fuels, and power in partnership with industry. He has worked in venture capital, managed energy and environmental projects in the US and Latin America, and advised the US State Department, the US Department of Agriculture, the US Department of Energy, the Organization of American States, and the Florida Office of Energy.



Dr. Arif Sarwat

Associate Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, FIU
Director of the FIU and FPL Solar Research Facility and EPS.

Dr. Arif I Sarwat received his M.S. degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the University of Florida, Gainesville and PhD in Electrical Engineering from the University of South Florida. He worked at Siemens for nine years executing many multi-million dollar projects. Before joining the FIU as Assistant Professor, he was the Research Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering in the University at Buffalo, the State University of New York (SUNY) and the Deputy Director of the Power Center for Utility Explorations. He is the co-developer of the DOE \$12M funded Gateway to Power (G2P) Project along with FPL/NextEra company. His significant work in energy storage, microgrid and DSM is demonstrated by Sustainable Electric Energy Delivery Systems in Florida. He is also the Principal Investigator of a \$7.65M research initiative with FPL/NextEra Energy entitled “Energy Power Reliability And Analytic Center (EPRAC)”, which conducts high-end studies on the effect of high penetration PV integration into the Smart Grid’s reliability, power quality and other aspects.

Smart Grid, PHEV & EV Systems, High Penetration Renewable Systems, Power System Reliability, Large Scale Distributed Generation Integration, Central Command & Diagnostic Center, Large Scale Data Analysis, Electric Power Engineering, Industry Efficiencies, Interoperability, Advance Metering Infrastructure, Infrastructure Cyber Security, SFCL, Renewable Energy and Sustainable Power Systems, Distributed Power Systems, Micro-grids, Storage, Exploring Links between Weather, Reliability, Economics and Markets, Machine Drives, Demand Response and Demand Side Management, Predictive Self Healing Networks and Strategic Load Pockets are some of his areas of research interest.



Dr. Haneen Aburub

Postdoctoral Research Associate
Department of Electrical and Computing Engineering
Florida International University

Dr. Haneen Aburub received the B.Sc. degree in mechatronics engineering from Hashemite University, Zarqa, Jordan, in 2012, the M.Sc. degree in electrical engineering from Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas, USA, in 2013, and the PhD. Degree in electrical engineering from Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas, USA, in 2016. She is currently working as a Postdoctoral research associate at Florida International University in developing solutions that keeps the future smart grid to be resilient, reliable, and stable under the high penetration of renewable resources.

During her Ph.D. studies, she was working on a research project funded by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) that focuses on developing sub- and full- optimized algorithms for operating adjustable speed pumped hydro storage in the current and future day-ahead and real-time US energy markets. In the summer of 2014, she gained a great deal of industry experience in the market optimization area while working on a day-ahead ISO-NE market project with the Market Management Systems (MMS) team at Alstom Grid. In 2013, she was a part of a Power Systems Engineering Center (PSERC) funded project, in which she assessed the use of the California ISO (CAISO) wholesale grid state indicator to enable price-responsive demand. This assessment was based on system and economic analyses for using the indicator to manage the operation of various smart grid technologies and applications. In 2012, she built with her team a self-balanced two-wheeled human transportation system similar to the well-known Segway. She improved her control systems background during her internship period at the maintenance section of airplanes at RJAA.

Her current research interests are power systems economics and markets, energy storage optimization, renewable energy Integration, demand response, and smart grid development.

Being the event coordinator and the president of the IEEE Student Branch at Wichita State University has improved her communication and leadership. When she was a president for the branch, she was responsible for the overall management of all the branch affairs and decided how much responsibility should be delegated to the Executive Committee members. She was working along with her team to make their branch succeed.



Mr. Alexandre Wagner

Senior Project Manager – Investments for the Future Program
ADEME, The French National Environment and Energy Management Agency
France

Alexandre Wagner has about 10 years' experience in renewable energies financing. Since 2012 as Senior Investment Manager at the ADEME, he has been in charge of minority equity investments, in behalf and in the name of the French State, in start-ups, joint-ventures or infrastructures projects. He also managed call for tenders launched by the French State aiming to finance the construction of tidal & floating offshore wind pre-commercial farms.

Prior to joining the ADEME, Alexandre was Project Finance Manager at Lanco Solar International. He previously served as Project Finance analyst at IKB Deutsche Industriebank, where he financed wind farms and large-scale PV projects.

He holds a Master Degree in Politics (Sciences Po Bordeaux) and a MSc Degree in Finance (ESCP Europe).

Moderator



Dr. Edward Glab

Director, Global Energy Security Forum, FIU

Dr. Glab has a background in international business, education, media, and government service. He was with Exxon-Mobil for more than 25 years and held a variety of positions in public affairs, including political risk; government and community relations; new business development; media relations; corporate and marketing advertising, and emergency response, among others. Dr. Glab has a Ph.D. in political science and is currently is a professor of business and Co-director of the Global Energy Security Forum under the School of International and Public Affairs at FIU. He has consulted for USAID, U.S. intelligence agencies and the U.S. military in the area of political risk analysis, and has participated in high-level crisis management scenarios, as well as scenario building, for countries in Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe. Dr. Glab also continues to talk about the energy business to a variety of audiences in the U.S. and overseas; he often is quoted in the media.