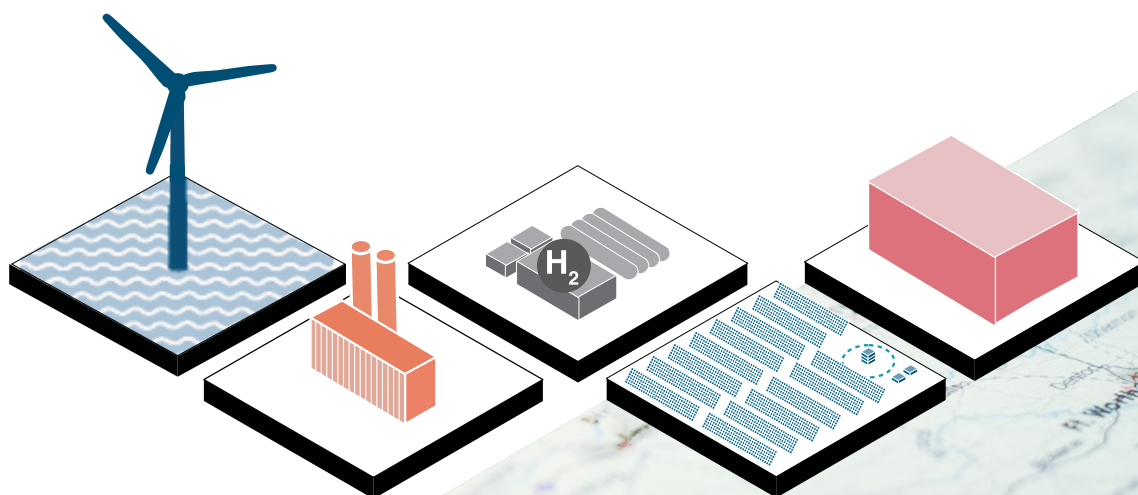


SUSTAINABLE ENERGY TRANSITION STRATEGY

A serious game for the local
energy transition

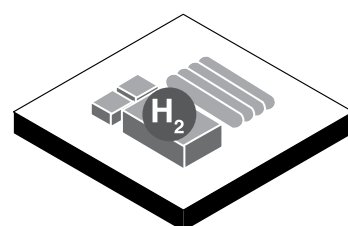
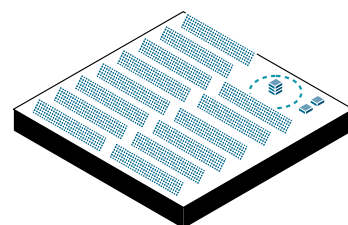




The Sustainable Energy Transition Strategy game (SETS)

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and Generation Energy have developed a serious game to aid decision-making in the energy transition. The game brings together local government officials and other diverse stakeholders in an interactive setting. Each player is assigned the role of an actor in the energy transition—different from the one they occupy in real life, ranging from governments to energy developers and activists. Together, through debate and deliberation, they must find a collective strategy to meet the final energy demand of a given region using a mix of technologies, with each player adopting the persona of their assigned role.

The ultimate takeaway is the creative insight gained from the discussions and debrief, which can be used to inform local and regional decision-making.



What can ICLEI and SETS offer local and regional governments?



SETS is a unique and innovative participatory tool meant for local and regional stakeholders undertaking their sustainable energy transitions. Using the methodology of ‘serious gaming’, it aims to bridge the gap between defining local strategies and implementation mechanisms. By simulating the real-world energy transition context, it provides a testing ground for various ideas and problem-solving approaches before they are realized on the ground, helping improve local planning and feeding into the development of robust action plans. Feedback is provided in real-time during gameplay, but the insights remain valuable for the real world.

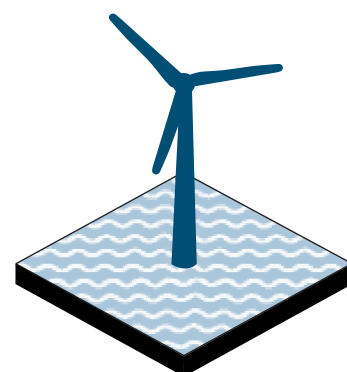
ICLEI brings its experience and expertise in serving local and regional governments in the areas of sustainable urban development, the energy transition, and stakeholder engagement to facilitate a session of SETS, and offers SETS as a real value-add to energy planning and strategy definition for local and regional policymakers.



What is a serious game?

Gaming and play are powerful learning tools. The relatively informal and freer settings of games and gameplay allow for a different way of interacting with others, including through collectively working to find creative problem-solving approaches, and the sharing or adopting of perspectives and roles that may not be possible in the real world. This approach to learning can hold true for more than just socialization and can be applied to a number of different spheres.

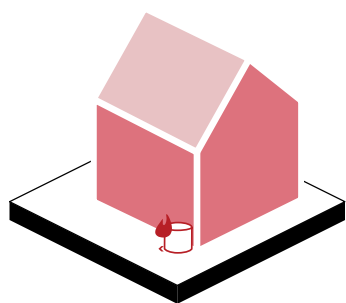
Games are often used in 'serious' settings such as the military, healthcare and policy spaces to train participants, preparing them to be able to tackle difficult situations as they arise, and to improve decision-making by tackling gridlock or siloed approaches.



How are serious games useful for the energy transition?

The transition to a low-carbon energy system is a lengthy and complicated one, requiring cooperation and trade-offs with a large number of stakeholders including energy system actors, economic actors, governments and communities. It is difficult for one actor or institution to grasp the scale and nature of the changes required as each sector requires considerable expertise. Serious games can create an environment that allows various actors to bring forth their perspectives in a relaxed and creative environment.

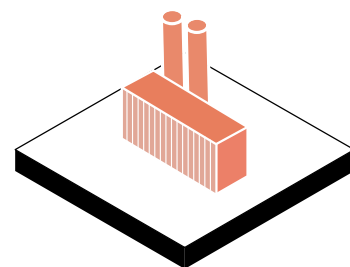
The game setup can then allow for these perspectives to be challenged or expanded, tackling the tendency towards siloed thinking, and provide a more holistic understanding of the challenges of the energy transition, resulting in better-informed, dynamic and harmonized policies.



How do you play the Sustainable Energy Transition Strategy game?

SETS takes place over three rounds. The first round familiarizes players with the selected location—this could be their own city or region. The players spend time identifying land suitable for renewable energy projects. The second round introduces players to their respective in-game roles. Each player must determine the strategy they would like the city/region to adopt to meet final energy demand in 2050.

The third and final round is where much of the deliberation and discussion takes place, with each player playing as their assigned role. The players must now agree on a common strategy to meet final energy demand, and compromise with or convince others of their views. For example, some players may opt for nuclear energy, whereas others might disagree. Resolving these tensions is the key gameplay element, with insights gained from the discussions being incorporating into real-world policymaking.



Interested in learning more? Reach out to us at sustainable.energy@iclei.org and we will be happy to answer your questions!

The 100% Renewables Cities and Regions Roadmap project facilitates the energy transition by raising local awareness on renewable energy sources, showcasing how local and national governments can create coordinated enabling frameworks and policies, exploring access to public and private sector finance, and building local renewable energy projects to address electricity, heating and cooling.

The 100% Renewables Cities and Regions Roadmap project is implemented by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI), which is implemented by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) in close cooperation with the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) and the Federal Foreign Office (AA).