

Big energy storage problem

Is excessive energy storage a problem?

Spyros Foteinis highlights the acknowledged problem that an insufficient capacity to store energy can result in generated renewable energy being wasted (Nature 632 , 29; 2024). But the risks for power-system security of the converse problem -- excessive energy storage -- have been mostly overlooked.

Does our world have a storage problem?

Our world has a storage problem. As the technology for generating renewable energy has advanced at breakneck pace - almost tripling globally between 2011 and 2022 - one thing has become clear: our ability to tap into renewable power has outstripped our ability to store it. Storage is indispensable to the green energy revolution.

Why is energy storage oversupply a problem?

The expansion is driven mainly by local governments and lacks coordination with new energy stations and the power grid. In some regions, a considerable storage oversupply could lead to conflicts in power-dispatch strategies across timescales and jurisdictions, increasing the risk of system instability and large-scale blackouts.

Is excessive energy storage a threat to China's power system?

But the risks for power-system security of the converse problem -- excessive energy storage -- have been mostly overlooked. China plans to install up to 180 million kilowatts of pumped-storage hydropower capacity by 2030. This is around 3.5 times the current capacity, and equivalent to 8 power plants the size of China's Three Gorges Dam.

Why do we need energy storage technologies?

Energy storage technologies are also the key to lowering energy costs and integrating more renewable power into our grids, fast. If we can get this right, we can hold on to ever-rising quantities of renewable energy we are already harnessing - from our skies, our seas, and the earth itself.

How will storage technology affect electricity systems?

Because storage technologies will have the ability to substitute for or complement essentially all other elements of a power system, including generation, transmission, and demand response, these tools will be critical to electricity system designers, operators, and regulators in the future.

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