

Open energy modeling / NGO bridge

Author: Robbie Morrison <robbie.morrison@posteo.de>

Date: 5 March 2019

Release: 05

This [elevator pitch](#) proposes a bridge between the **open energy modeling community** and **energy and climate NGOs** within Europe. To date, there has been virtually no contact between these two camps. This one page précis derives from a longer online public [discussion](#).

Context

Energy models are used to explore **future energy systems**, usually to 2050, by analyzing scenarios.

The **Open Energy Modelling Initiative (openmod)** is a grassroots network of energy system modelers pursuing **open** analysis: open source models, open (as opposed to simply public) data, open access publications, and open science. We number about 500 and are now sufficiently advanced and organized to support serious public policy analysis. See [wikipedia](#), our [forum](#), and our [mailing list](#).

While many **environmental NGOs** argue for public process and transparency, their policy formation is often opaque and non-reproducible, due to closed source models, withheld data, and copyrighted reports. Not only is this ethically inconsistent, it also means that substantial resources remain untapped and that a proven (open source) development model lies dormant and wasted ([Morrison 2018](#)).

The **European Commission** is shifting to open energy policy development and open science. The incumbent NGOs risk falling behind accepted scientific standards if they don't follow suit.

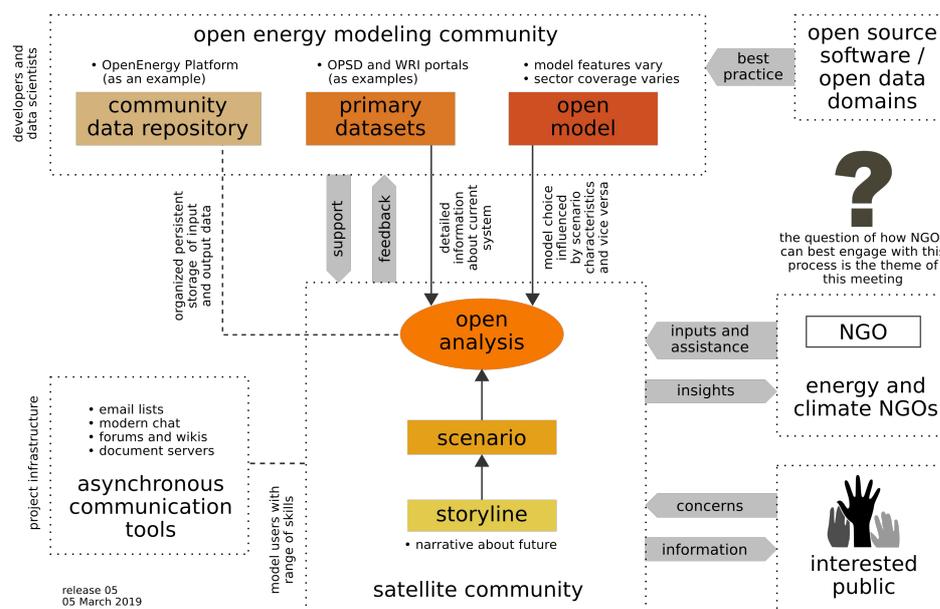
Proposed Berlin meeting in mid-2019

A one-day physical meeting is being planned for mid-2019 in **Berlin, Germany**. It will most likely be hosted by the [CoalExit group](#) at TU Berlin and organized by CoalExit (Pao-Yu Oei), [Germanwatch](#) (Eva Schmid), and myself (no institutional affiliation). The meeting will provide an opportunity for:

- open energy system modelers to **showcase their capabilities**
- NGOs to share **their experiences** of working with energy models and data
- a discussion on how best to **work together** going forward

Satellite community option

The following diagram indicates one possible game plan. A **satellite community** would be independent and would draw strongly on open source development methods and tools. Careful separation would limit the reputational risk for any associated NGOs.



Open energy system modelers expect **substantial benefits** with a move to open analysis. Model-mediated public consultation is arguably unavoidable, given the system and policy complexities involved. And NGOs could transition to a supporter engagement model fit for the early 21st century. □