



Oil

By *Gavin Bridge, Philippe Le Billon*

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Oil pulses through our daily lives. It is the plastic we touch, the food we eat, and the way we move. Oil politics in the twentieth century was about the management of abundance, state power, and market growth. The legacy of this age of plenty includes declining conventional oil reserves, volatile prices, climate change, and enduring poverty in many oil-rich countries. The politics of oil are now at a turning point, and oil's future will not be like its past.

In this in-depth primer to one of the world's most significant industries, authors Gavin Bridge and Philippe Le Billon take a fresh look at the contemporary political economy of oil. Going beyond simple assertions of peak oil and an oil curse, they point to an industry reordered by global shifts in demand towards Asia, growing reliance on unconventional reserves, international commitments to reduce carbon emissions and a growing campaign for fossil fuel divestment, and violent political struggles in producer-states.

As a new geopolitics of oil emerges, the need for effective global oil governance becomes imperative. Highlighting the growing influence of civil society and attentive to the efforts of firms and states to craft new institutions, this fully updated second edition identifies the challenges and opportunities to curtail price volatility, curb demand and the growth of dirty oil, decarbonize energy systems, and improve governance in oil-producing countries.

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About the Author

Philippe le Billon is associate professor at the Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia. He has worked for environmental and humanitarian organizations in Angola, Cambodia, Sierra Leone, and the former Yugoslavia.

Gavin Bridge is a reader in economic geography at the University of Manchester. He has published widely on the geography of natural resources.

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