



Virtual Workshop #1

“How can the 2050 objectives for carbon neutrality be transformed into short term action?”

Speakers:

Amaury Parelle – Coordinator of the Climate Chance Observatory

Antoine Gillod – Research Officer of the Climate Chance Observatory

Eero Ailio – Adviser Energy Transition and Local Governance, Directorate-General for Energy at the European Commission

Sari Rautio, CEMR Spokesperson on Environment, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, Chairperson of the City Board in Hämeenlinna, Finland

David Laurent – Head of Climate and Resources at “Entreprises pour l’Environnement” (EpE)

Link to webpage:

<https://www.climate-chance.org/en/get-involved/climate-chance-virtual-workshops/atelier1-comm-ent-transformer-les-objectifs-de-neutralite-carbone-2050-en-actions-a-court-terme/>

To discover Climate Chance Advocacy campaign, click here:

<https://www.climate-chance.org/en/to-shape-climate-policies-tomorrow-let-draw-from-succes-ses-recent-years/>

Key takeaways:

- Multiplication of long-term commitments in the last two years from non-state actors, notably from business actors aligning with carbon neutrality.
 - For a company, there are three spaces in which they can act: rules and regulations, voluntary action and voluntary commitments. Binding regulations can be interesting in that a company cannot easily move alone, while voluntary action could lead to a first-mover advantage or disadvantage.
 - The “transformative” nature of the changes to be made requires big efforts from companies; commitments are already a first and necessary step for them to integrate this complexity in their long-term vision.
- Beyond legal regulations, voluntary commitments can be binding if they are backed by the proper monitoring and evaluation tools. Accountability and self-monitoring are progressing among actors but monitoring tools should be standardized and accessible (not asking useless information or data).
- The wider use of digital tools would go a long way in allowing data to be shared between actors at all levels (specially between central and local governments), while also shedding light on business cases, and increasing access to finance for local actors.



- Carbon neutrality goals should be integrated into all policies rather than being concentrated in one “climate policy”. For that, co-creation and multi-level dialogue between people, local governments, companies, civil society and citizen movements, are essential. Multilevel governance has even been a legal requirement by the European Union, binding member states to establish multilevel dialogue. In a softer manner, transnational municipal networks, or setting up climate observatories are relevant levers for a city to find its own path to a long-term transformation.
- In order to ensure that today’s long-term climate neutral commitments are followed up by next generations and mainstreamed throughout all sectors, sustainable living must be integrated into both academic and lifelong curriculums.
- The Green New Deal is also an extra-EU strategy with capacity-building as well as awareness programs specially for African countries and actors.



Full transcript

Amaury Parelle:

We develop mainly 3 activities to reinforce climate action:

1. A climate portal with a mapping of action of actions around the world and also a library.
2. Annual summits and other events to cover various themes with roadmaps carried by our different coalitions. In order to continue the work of the coalitions, Climate Chance decided to organise virtual workshops on the impacts of COVID-19. The second series will take place in the fall to look at the work of the coalitions and the way forward.
3. Analysing climate change, trying to tell a story behind the data and the numbers. Toolbox to use everyday.

Seeing all that's happened in the last 6 months, we need to act on ecological and social aspects. From the approach of the European Union, We want to see whether or not this will lead to a status quo. The recovery programme may not have negative or positive outcomes.
how to transform short term actions?

Antoine Gillod:

This contribution of the Climate Chance Observatory and advocacy campaign - compilation of the best results/actors of civil society to cover 4 sectors that are key:

1. Energy transition. The energy sector has been highly impacted recently by the falling demand for oil, and geopolitical crises (essential for economic recovery). Led to another way of thinking on decarbonation and challenged how we look at the energy balance/mix. Coal is on the decline in Europe and the States, but used to a larger extent in Asia. There is an increasing trend towards renewables for electricity generation. Some national frameworks are more favourable towards this.--local initiatives, closer to citizens, better management, better energy efficiency.
2. Mobility- Initiatives in transport, inter-mobility between urban centres, need to work against fear of public transport (?). Cars, which are in fact more polluting, have suffered less because of the current crisis.
3. The digital sector is enabling the transition and helping us today to do remote working, the transport networks, reorient the economy for activities that are less impactful in terms of GHG emissions. We saw a great example of how the province of Ontario in Canada managed to introduce smart electric meters as soon as 2004 with social consent, to create a smart grid with local companies. Such well designed digital tools, properly used at local levels, can facilitate the recovery.
4. Climate finance alignment with SDGs, need to envisage egalitarian transition globally, need to mobilize private funding, multilateral and bilateral banks(?)

Cannot allow for a gap in activities→ need to look at projects that have worked in the past, as well as new innovations. (Costa Rica something)

Amaury Parelle: - Intro of speakers, presenting the first question.



- How to ensure, on one hand, the commitments made, and on the other, integrate successes?

Question for EPE- about members, regulatory framework, constraints, and voluntary action taken by enterprises

David Laurent:

Question: How can EPE help with the follow up and how to you apprehend commitments?

- Thank you . Just to give you some context, EPE is an association regrouping 50 large companies in France, around 90% of CAC40, mainly french companies. Its an organisation of large companies working on environmental topics in order to include the environment in projects. First thing to mention regarding commitments is what has happened in the last 18-24 months, quite unusual: a multiplicity of commitments, looking at carbon neutrality and the long term goals which is fairly new. Before, the commitments of companies were over 5 or 10 years ahead, some maybe had longer goals but the majority were looking at 10 years ahead. Now the neutrality for 2050 has really been taken in. When you work with people on a 2050 goal it raises new questions and you don't always have the opportunity to look at these complex topics. To look beyond and to look to 2050.
- EPE study -- ZEN (Zero Emission Net) 2015: conditions to succeed in net carbon neutrality by 2050
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- The second thing to mention is "is this feasible?". We started back in 2017, companies were able to get hold of these topics and we noticed that we can't do this by ourselves, we need to get in touch with other actors (local authorities, companies, citizens) to make the link and monitor the progress. We are in a globalised world and economy, we need to see how to be as ambitious as possible.

3 modes of action:

1. rules and regulations (which are enforced)
2. voluntary actions (which the companies themselves take up)
3. voluntary commitments (?) (a cross between the two, with a legal aspect, so can be binding)

Sari Rautio:

- I come from Finland, city of Hämeenlinna, nice summer now, the difficult situation is global and it's important to find solutions together.
- I think the climate change and carbon neutrality objectives must be included in all policies. not special climate policies but must be integrated into all policies. In the EU, this year, what we have done has been very important to keep them together.



- Second thing, is that the real impact is the systemic change based on co-creation and collaboration. All of us, we need to get the people involved because they are the ones who make the change.
- Number three, the measuring which we already spoke about. How to measure? It must be understandable to us all and lead towards our common goals. I think often we tend to forget the measuring. In the green deal we combine the objectives and resourcing the new innovation which is very important for systemic change.
- Last but not least, the resources we have, need to, like in Finland, to work together at roundtables with cities, “what are the actual deeds we can do to reach the common goals?” we have to work in advance to form the objectives together.

Eero Ailio:

There is a conviction with respect to the energy transition that we need to act on the demand and supply sides of energy.

Not just central govts but, regions and local municipalities. In policy shaping, it comes from state then regional then local which means bringing into all these stages, non-state actors, at the bottom of the vertical structure of governance. “Policy-making” and “policy-shaping”. Brings in communities and businesses, and also people and citizens.

E.g. the European Climate Pact, which is something very important. The public consultation is still open. The pact is to include everyone including everyone, academia, schools, cities and businesses. everyone on board to take us forward.

We have done something on the lawmaking side, puts legal requirements to create multi-level governance of “dialogue”, the logic is that it is asking all levels of governance to come up with ideas for how to write these climate plans. There is law and also soft measures, also CoM, (soft law bottom up activities are becoming more and more important). The multilevel approach extends to the tools, established entities-..... european commitments from the Paris Agreement.

Multilevel processes also need tools. Tools need to be standardized, globally, and need to avoid multiple reporting standards. We must talk with everyday language about what we are doing, not with scientific language but with things that are happening at schools, homes, close to us. Lastly, the sectoral , the holistic solutions is important.

The DATA , local governments does not have the data that central governments have. That's why we need to ask central governments to share the data with local levels.

We need to break the silos between the different sectors like transportation, create visibility for good examples.

SECOND ROUND OF QUESTIONS:

Do the existing monitoring tools (voluntary or regulatory) available to actors help them convert their objectives into means ?



How can these policies/strategies be evaluated without weighing disproportionately on the actors' human and technical resources?

David Laurent:

The multiplicity of commitments that exist show that no one can work alone. We make all these commitments, but how do we ensure that we follow through? Always complicated due to multiplicity of actors, and also need to consider indebtedness.

The tools: for example the MEDEF the political French pledge, EPE Act4Nature. There is also the NAZCA platform that can be helpful, there is still a lot of work to do, but the accountability of what can be done. We have massive systematic changes to be done and this is a long term change. Instead of looking at the commitments, we need to look at the strategy and the recovery plans/emergency plans, that is the challenge, and what we are doing today is that. The European green deal, in line with the Paris accord- gives direction, if the financing follows the stated directions, it would be great, direct the economy.

(Do we have the right funding?)

Question: On following the structure of climate strategy.

Sari Rautio:

In Europe we we have >130,000 local authorities, so worldwide there must be even more-- we must all be involved to work together. There are a lot of opportunities as well as challenges. Now that we have had this crisis, we have seen how we can make big changes when we have to or want to.

The SDGs are a common language to be used.

We have created a curriculum from the early childhood education to lifelong learning, teaching the competencies for sustainable living/lifestyles/. We have done this curriculum for all the kids and learning. We are very excited about it.

[showed slide with keystrokes of said curriculum]

Co-creation and collaboration is what we have to do. The world doesn't end in 2035/2050 when the goals are met, so we need to look beyond, and involve the kids, and have a change in mentality.

Amaury: Are the SDGs precise and effective enough for wider climate action?Can it also be used for monitoring enterprises and communities?.

Question: Focus on research and digitization in the recovery plan. Could digitization help in monitoring projects?

Eero Ailio:

Local renewable communities are of great importance. National governments and the integration of renewables.



Monitoring tools must be such that they facilitate clean energy tech businesses, and also help communities and municipalities access finance.

2 types-- voluntary and regulatory tools.

Tools : we have agreed with other city initiatives on a global standard. Standardising is good. The tools do not ask useless questions and collect data that is not needed, because this is just a burden on municipalities.

We are setting up an internet based tool for giving access to transport info, energy, providing access.

We need to build early-stage capacities for smaller towns/municipalities and businesses, to facilitate through access to finance.

Examples of GCoM, City Gap Fund.

Q&A:

Questions on access to financing (solidarity in the EU's recovery plan), CEMR policy to help African collectivities, and education (edu linked to climate change).

Eero Ailio:

- capacity building
- local levels (esp. in West Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa), help cities with planning, financing projects
- Finance is important, but also awareness, which is where the question of education comes in.
- bottom-up is important
- Twin cities, observatories

David Laurent:

- education as a key topic, engage students- in the coming years, not just a socio-economic transformation but also a climate transformation. (french education ministry?)
- also educating present stakeholders, can't wait till students reach decision-making posts
- At all levels→ diff jobs will be affected differently, new jobs created. Q- how will our professional activities evolve, in the frame of these transformations?

Sari Rautio:

- CEMR and UCLG
- all local authorities must ideally find the local organization or groupings of cities, so that they can find twin cities, and work together. In this respect, the UN also has a strong role.