

# EUCERS Newsletter

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Newsletter of the European Centre for Energy and Resource Security (EUCERS) Issue 68, October 2017

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## Introduction

Dear readers and friends of EUCERS,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this latest edition of the EUCERS newsletter, in which we present you with two articles.

In the first article, EUCERS Research Associate Philipp Nießen analyses the prospect for climate action and energy transition in post-election Germany.

The second article, written by yours truly, gives an update on the state of the hydrogen economy.

Our KAS Fellow Simon Chin-Yee took part in the COP23 Fiji that was held in Bonn in November and is reporting from it in a piece in this newsletter.

At this point, I would like to invite you to the final EUCERS-KAS energy talk 2017 on the future of global climate policy. The workshop features a keynote address by the Minister of State for Climate Change, Claire Perry, MP.

Feel free to keep us informed about your research projects and findings as we look to remain at the forefront of new knowledge and innovative ideas.

Thank you for your interest in EUCERS and for being part of our community.

Yours faithfully,  
**Thomas Fröhlich**  
EUCERS Newsletter Editor

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## ARTICLES

### Climate Action and Energy Transition in Post-Election Germany

By Philipp Nießen

*Less than two years after the much-applauded Paris Climate Agreement, Donald Trump used the Hamburg G20 stage and global attention in July to bid farewell to the United States participation in the treaty. Both the presidential candidate and the President Trump had previously declared their intention to exit this multilateral framework as he assessed it as being detrimental to US economic interests. At the same time, the transformation of the energy system towards bigger roles for clean energies, energy efficiency and smart digitized solutions progresses quickly, notably in the United States. The article concludes that despite the success of climate diplomacy within the UNFCCC framework and beyond being more than ever in limbo, the transformation of energy markets will nevertheless continue. Here, policy-makers have a clear role to play. Especially, energy innovation and research need to be drastically increased to drive technological progress forward.*

Although the residual G20 countries pledged in the summit's final accord to continue to jointly pursue the goals of the Paris Agreement and although the United States also previously had not ratified the more ambitious Kyoto Protocol, for two reasons the US drop-out could be much more damaging for climate diplomacy this time.

First, with continuously increasing global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the window of opportunity for meaningful climate action is closing rapidly according to climate scientists. As the degree of global warming depends on the total concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, any new year without coherent international climate action in form of meaningful carbon pricing reduces the likelihood of staying within the 2-degrees limit. Because the Paris Agreement – in absence of sharp individual carbon budgets and penalties – relies above all on political trust between the most significant polluters, the US drop-out undermines the whole project to a great extent. As the window of opportunity closes, less polluting, less affluent and less technically-apt signatories (compared to the United States) to the Paris Agreement could increasingly perceive the treaty as a toothless, insignificant agreement.

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Hence, climate diplomacy risks to lose its most significant reference point.

Secondly, the US farewell to the climate treaty is a striking eruption of societal undercurrents present not only in the US, but in many rich, industrialised countries of the OECD today. Not only Trump supporters mocked international climate diplomacy as a pet project of the capital cities' media and academic establishment. „Globalist“, technocratic elites were accused of imposing their own political agenda by multilateral, technical accords on broader communities.

It is striking that the US, due to the shift from coal to natural gas in its power sector over the last ten years, is even on track to fulfil the Obama administration's ambitions as formulated in the Clean Power Plan (CPP), possibly without any additional administrative action necessary. Since 2005, emissions were reduced by 20% compared to 2005. The goal for 2030 is – 32%. Nevertheless, despite of the very positive factual development, Obama's domestic and international plans met broad hesitation as expressed in the support for President Trump. Support for Trump in this question was possibly more a result of anti-Washington sentiment than it was about actual climate policy. It seems that, so far, not only in the US, climate protection or energy transition policy objectives have not yet achieved irrevocable, universal recognition. Support that is widely needed given the magnitude of energy transformation required. Given

that the “populist” wave continues to hit countries, this could become a further challenge for climate diplomacy.

Hence, climate diplomacy could even become rockier going forward, despite the “19 against 1” outcome at the G20 in Hamburg. While it is uncertain if the to be expected, future “patchwork” of international climate governance will be able to come up with the necessary instrument of a globally effective carbon pricing necessary for the 2-degrees limit, climate policy makers should not get depressed and should increasingly address “bottom-up” energy transition.

Not only have clean energy technologies become increasingly cheaper, but they also have a growing political cloud, notably beyond the climate-policy community. This holds far-reaching consequences. As the economic advantages of a gradual energy transition policy become more noticeable, there appears the realistic chance that the narrative of climate protection shifts towards economic chances, innovation and community welfare. Purely, painting a bright picture of the energy future will, however, not do the job. There remain, above all, serious technical and industrial challenges that need to be addressed by policy-makers. So far, energy transition is only mostly a story of low-hanging fruits in power markets. Much more R&D and innovation compared to today will be necessary to come up with solutions to satisfy overall growing energy consumption.

In Germany, a country that has historically been open to climate action and decarbonisation, these trends are currently being tested. The political goal of phasing out lignite and coal from the German energy matrix does not have the necessary backing of political parties in Germany. The Green party is the only part of the ongoing coalition talks with the Christian Democrats and the Liberal party that maintained that stance during the national electoral campaign.

The situation is now being exacerbated by an increasing sentiment that developed parallel to the US election cycle: the notion that climate action is an elite-driven project by a group of “globalists” that do not take into account the real-life issues of the common people. The success of populist movements in Germany and beyond makes politically complex measures even more difficult to implement.

The parties negotiating the new German government coalition need to take these facts into account in their attempt to contribute significantly to global climate action while keeping Germany in a position of worldwide technological leadership.

**This article is an abbreviated version of the article *Wie hält Deutschland es mit der Energie- und Klimapolitik im Wahljahr?* (“The German position on energy and climate in the election year 2017”), originally published in German for the Hanns Seidel Foundation. Available online:**

**[https://www.hss.de/download/publications/PS\\_475\\_A\\_MERIKA\\_ZUERST\\_10.pdf](https://www.hss.de/download/publications/PS_475_A_MERIKA_ZUERST_10.pdf)**

## The State of the Hydrogen Economy

By *Thomas Fröhlich*

The de-carbonization of the economy is one of the main challenges policy makers face in times of human driven climate change. Rockström e.a. (2017) outline the necessity for carbonization and a roadmap towards its completion. While the authors are clear on certain policy measures, they remain vague on concrete recommendations regarding a future energy matrix. Only briefly, hydrogen is mentioned as an “established alternative”, and I want to take this opportunity to recap the current status of the hydrogen economy.

Hydrogen economy describes an energy system where “energy sources would be used to produce hydrogen, which could then be distributed as a nonpolluting [sic] multipurpose fuel” (Gregory 1973). The advantages of hydrogen, apart from being a non-polluting fuel, include the technical easiness of its production - including through renewable energy sources -, the possibility of using existing distribution networks, the similarity to gasoline in terms of transport infrastructure, and its use for energy storage. Many of these properties seem to answer several of the pressing questions of the present debate about renewable energy.

As Brandon points out, “hydrogen is already used extensively in the chemical industry so industry is familiar with its production, handling and distribution on a large scale” and this production can happen in different forms. The two main forms of hydrogen production are steam reforming and electrolysis.

The process of steam reforming uses hydrocarbon fuels to generate hydrogen. It is currently the main production method of hydrogen and takes advantage of a reaction with a natural gas (mainly methane) with steam (United States Department of Energy 2017). The downsides of this method are an overall loss of energy as it takes more energy input than the subsequent hydrogen energy output, which is associated with a relatively high price of the end product (Jechura 2015). While economies of scale could lower this price, the issue of fossil fuel use combined with CO-2 emissions during the production

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remains (Rostrup-Nielsen and Rostrup-Nielsen 2001: 18).

The electrolysis of water seems to offer an alternative. In this method, water is separated into oxygen and hydrogen by passing an electric current through water. This system can be assisted with chemical additives, such as using alkaline water (Santos e.a. 2013). The biggest draw-back of hydrogen production via electrolysis is the high amount of energy that is needed for the production. Estimates vary between 33 and close to 50 per cent of efficiency, which makes clear that hydrogen production is only reasonable with a high level of excess energy production.

Previously, proponents of the hydrogen economy suggested the use of nuclear energy for the electrolysis of water (e.g. Gregory 1973). With the rapid expansion of wind and solar energy production, especially wind-hydrogen systems seem increasingly relevant. Hydrogen offers an opportunity to store excess wind energy from peak production at a lower initial investment rate than for nuclear energy. This wind-hydrogen system can ideally be integrated into a national energy grid and thereby expand the overall output of wind parks (Sherif e.a. 2005).

While the storage of energy as hydrogen can be used for utility scale energy production and can compete with battery storage (Pellow e.a. 2015), the use of hydrogen as a transport fuel at this point is more advanced and closer to a large scale roll out. Hydrogen can be used as a transport fuel either through combustion or via fuel-cell technology.

Research on fuel cell technology for vehicles has been the focus of several automotive producers. Nevertheless, there are currently only three models are commercially

produced and their sales have not exceeded 10,000. As seen with hybrid and electric vehicles, however, an aggressive marketing campaign combined with increased security about the availability of refuelling infrastructure might spike sales. While the former is a decision taken by manufacturers, the latter is dependent on political decisions and strategies. The leading countries in hydrogen advances are the US and Japan.

In the US, mainly California and Colorado are actively pursuing a hydrogen transition. Particularly California's Advanced Clean Cars Program has incentivized the creation of a basic hydrogen infrastructure. Currently, there are over 30 hydrogen fuelling stations operative for commercial use in California, mainly in wider Los Angeles and the Bay Area (CAFCP 2017). The network does provide hydrogen throughout the coastline and Sacramento. A further 30 stations are currently being built or in the licensing process.

Japan on the other side, is stepping up its hydrogen game in advance of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics with a plan to increase the hydrogen fuel stations tenfold between 2016 and 2020 to incentivize a hydrogen fleet of at least 40,000 vehicles (FT 24.10.2017). In 2015 already, Toyota teamed up with the local authorities of Yokohama and Kawasaki to establish a hydrogen network in that metropolitan area (Toyota 2015).

In the EU, the Renewable Energies Directive (COM(2016) 767 final/2) offers little direct incentives for the development of a hydrogen economy but leaves space for benevolent interpretation. The Commission Staff Working Document on Electricity Storage (SWD(2017) 61 final) on the other side, offers several paragraphs emphasising the important role of hydrogen for this purpose.

In Germany, with its volatile wind power resources in the North Sea, hydrogen has been the topic of several industry-driven research projects and trials. Lighthouse projects are the Power-to-Gas (P2G) facility in Falkenhagen operated by German utility E.ON and Linde's P2G facility in Mainz. In 2016, the German government extended the National Innovation Program for Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies (NIP) until 2026 and seeks to increase scale effects in the production of fuel cells as well as expanding the existing

infrastructure for hydrogen for transport. One of the results from the previous round of this program is Alstom's Coradia iLint train - a so-called "hydrorail" - that will enter a test phase in the German state of Lower Saxony in early 2018 and commence regular service by 2021.

Many cities, such as London, São Paulo and Oakland - with several Japanese cities - already deploy hydrogen fuelled busses in their public transport systems. This shows that the technology can also be driven by local actors that face local problems such as air pollution. In times when cities enter the arena of global climate change diplomacy with organizations like the Compact of Mayors, hydrogen's chances to advance towards a stable component of the energy system seem promising.

All the above-mentioned initiatives have gradually improved the status of hydrogen as a viable alternative for private consumers as well as industrial producers. The International Energy Agency in 2015 published a road map (IEA 2015) for hydrogen and fuel cells until the year 2045. This long-term plan outlines the steps that need to be taken on the way towards a hydrogen economy. While progress has been slow, the times have never been as promising for the advancement of hydrogen as they are today. Advances in technology and increased visibility of hydrogen powered transport solutions will open the public's eye and make way for significant changes towards the hydrogen economy over the coming decade.

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## *Bula!*

### COP23 Fiji: Measuring Success at This Year's International Climate Change Conference in Bonn

By Simon Chin-Yee

COP23 Fiji took place this month in Bonn, Germany. The 23<sup>rd</sup> instalment of the Conference of the Parties (hence the diminutive COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), was the second since the adoption of the pivotal Paris Climate Change Agreement in 2015, and the first since the US decision to withdrawal from said agreement.

In recent years, the urgency of having strategic effective environmental policy in place all over the world has finally come to the forefront of the political debate. It has (effectively) universally been accepted that the climate is changing due to anthropogenic interference, and if the international community does not confront the climate challenge head on the consequences will be disastrous for future generations. Indeed, COP23 came on the heels of a particularly catastrophic hurricane season that rendered Barbuda uninhabitable, devastated gulf coast cities in Texas, and left residents of Puerto Rico struggling for survival. This is particularly poignant as this COP is the first to be held by a small island state.

On 5 November 2017, at the opening of the Climate Planet at COP23, Fijian Prime Minister and COP President, Frank Bainimarama, stated that 'for all the disasters we have witnessed and the suffering of people around the world ... I remain optimistic. Humanity ... has the ingenuity, the innovation and the financial resources to be meet this challenge. What we need is the political will.'<sup>1</sup> That political will would be put to the test during this two week conference, as negotiators, scientists, activists and world leaders dealt with the elephant in the room: the departure of the world's second largest emitter of greenhouse gases from the commitments made in Paris.

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<sup>1</sup> Bainimarama, F. (2017): Prime Minister and incoming COP23 President's speech at the opening of the Climate Planet in Bonn, Germany on 5 November 2017. Full speech: <https://cop23.com.fj/earth-home-must-protect-incoming-cop23-president/>

Simon Chin-Yee is the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) fellow 2017/18 at EUCERS. His research during the fellowship focuses on the future of global climate change policy in light of the 'Paris Paradigm' and the 'Trump Challenge'. Having recently completed his doctoral research at the University of Manchester, this project will continue Simon's work exploring influences on national climate policy. In addition to his academic background, Simon has extensive experience international cooperation and policy having worked as a consultant on UN projects primarily in Africa.

Logistically, this year's COP was divided into two zones; the Bula Zone, where the negotiations took place; and the Bonn Zone, where most of the side events and country pavilions were. Over a kilometre apart, there was stark contrast between the festive atmosphere in the Bonn Zone which showcased climate action on a variety of platforms to the actual negotiations in the Bula Zone, where progress is slow and methodical (most of the time). With so much going on, it is often difficult to measure the success or failure of a COP (bar COP15 Copenhagen). Long-standing divides between developed and developing countries inevitably resurface, official decisions and texts are drafted, as country coalitions are formed and disbanded. In the sections ahead, I give a brief synopsis of a few of the issues faced at COP23.

#### **Preparation for COP24 and operationalising the Paris Rulebook**

COP23 was a preparatory conference. Although this may not bring the fanfare afforded the adoption of an accord, it allows the negotiators to get to the nuts and bolts of the agreement. Commitments secured in Paris now have to be put into action. This conference needed to prepare for COP24 and the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

This is no small feat. The Paris Agreement was adopted in December 2015 and entered into force a mere eleven months later. The rapidity with which this Agreement entered into force was unprecedented for a UN accord not to mention an environmental agreement; the Kyoto Protocol, by contrast, took seventy-four months to enter into force. However, the reality is that countries were not ready to put into practice the Paris Agreement. Many of the Nationally Determined Contributions

(NDCs) submitted prior to COP21 were hastily put together and addressed country climate action in very broad terms. As a text, the Paris Agreement defines the ambitious but general principles of addressing climate change. Countries now need to negotiate in practical detail how they are going to address climate action at the national level.

To that end, a *rulebook* was to be finalised and launched by COP24 Katowice. In Paris, countries pledged to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. At COP23, the negotiators needed to advance the system that is to monitor and verify these pledges. As commitments made in the NDCs are voluntary, this rulebook is needed to operationalise the Paris Agreement.

Although slow, progress was made on negotiating this rulebook. In the Decision Document ([1/CP.23](#)) that came out of Bonn, the completion of the work programme under the Paris Agreement recognised the need for ‘an additional negotiating session for all three subsidiary bodies’ (UNFCCC: Item 1.5) before COP24. The simple fact that the Ad-hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA) was working with [180 page text](#) on agenda item 3 (NDCs) detailing all country party submissions demonstrates the expansive gap in views of different countries. Indeed, disagreements in how the NDCs should be organised and monitored kept negotiators working well into the night.



COP23 did launch the facilitative or *Talanoa* dialogue, which it to start in January 2018. This will be an important tool for Parties to the Convention to take stock of their collective efforts toward the long-term goal set out in Article 4.1.<sup>2</sup> Talanoa, a Fijian word reflects ‘a process of inclusive, participatory and transparent

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<sup>2</sup> UNFCCC (2017) Draft decision 1/CP.23: Point II.

dialogue,<sup>3</sup> and this initiative is to do just that. Under the Paris Agreement, the first global stocktake is to take place in 2023, with new NDCs submitted by 2025. It will allow countries to share and detail progress made, which will inform the next round of NDCs. In the spirit in inclusivity, this global stocktake could potentially take into account actions by non-state actors – cities, industry, civil society – which are increasingly being recognised as essential to achieving the goals set out in Paris.<sup>4</sup>

While work needs to be done to complete the Paris Rulebook, the launch of the Talanoa Dialogue has the potential to ensure the process is transparent and inclusive. Measures need to be taken to safeguard the implementation of the Paris Agreement. 2015 was a major breakthrough for the international community, but the job of these COPs is to produce mechanisms that will ensure that commitments made before Paris are not only maintained, but ratcheted up significantly if we are to achieve the 1.5 degrees Celsius target.

### US Withdrawal from Paris Agreement

An event took place this year that risked undermining all efforts being made in the past six years; the Trump Administration decided to pull out of their commitments made in Paris. The fact that the Trump Administration pulled out of the agreement should not have come as a surprise to anyone following global governance of climate change. Since the creation of the UNFCCC in 1992, the US has obstructed any notion of binding emission targets.

Donald Trump was elected President of the United States on 8 November 2016, in the middle of COP22 Marrakech. That day the atmosphere was palpable, as negotiators and activists asked the question *where do we go from here?* The election of a climate sceptic to the White House began to overshadow enthusiasm surrounding the Paris Agreement. COP23 was the first

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<sup>3</sup> UNFCCC (2017). ‘2018 Talanoa dialogue (2018 Facilitative dialogue).’ Website: <http://unfccc.int/items/10265.php>

<sup>4</sup> Rajamani, Lavanya (2017) ‘Structuring the UNFCCC 2018 Facilitative Dialogue’ for Centre for Climate and Energy Solutions: 1. Report accessed: <https://www.c2es.org/site/assets/uploads/2017/05/structuring-unfccc-2018-facilitative-dialogue.pdf>

conference since this announcement and questions and uncertainties around the ability to achieve the effective outcomes of the Paris Agreement without the US surfaced.

However, when the inevitable eventually happened in June 2017, many different actors, including other country parties, US state governors and city mayors as well as activists and even big business stepped up to the plate to reaffirm their commitment to the Paris agreement. Indeed, there were effectively two US delegations at COP23. Apart from a now infamous US sponsored side event on the role of cleaner fossil fuels and nuclear power (which was disrupted by signing demonstrators), the official delegation kept a relatively low profile during the negotiations.

The second unofficial delegation, part of the **#WeAreStillIn** movement that began in the US following their withdrawal, made their presence felt during the negotiations. This movement is comprised of 2,500 leaders in the US representing 127 million Americans, and 6.2 trillion in US GDP<sup>5</sup> are invested in advancing climate action in the US. Speaking at COP23, former New York City Mayor, Mike Bloomberg<sup>6</sup>, affirmed that

‘It’s important for the world to know: The American government may have pulled out of the Paris Agreement, but the American people are committed to its goals – and there is nothing Washington can do to stop us ... As much as we would like to see more leadership from Washington, the decision to withdraw from the agreement has had the effect of galvanizing public support for bigger and bolder actions by all levels of society – and that is on full display here this week.’

This announcement of Donald Trump cannot take effect before 2019, and for the moment the US remains party

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<sup>5</sup> #WeAreStillIn: About. Website:

<https://www.wearestillin.com/about>. Retrieved 29 November 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Mike Bloomberg Delivers Remarks on America's Pledge at COP23, Bonn, Germany, on Saturday, November 11th, 2017. For full speech:

<https://www.mikebloomberg.com/news/mike-bloomberg-delivers-remarks-americas-pledge-cop23-bonn-germany-saturday-november-11th-2017/>.

to the Agreement – indeed they share co-chair duties with China on an NDC working group. There were questions surrounding whether the US would convince other delegations to follow suit or block advancement. This last point could be catastrophic for the agreement as decisions taken at the COP are based on consensus. If the global climate challenge is to be tackled, inaction is not an option.

### Global reaction to US withdrawal

The Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA – a continental coalition of civil society organizations) was very vocal throughout COP23, urging real action on climate change for country parties. Part of PACJA's mission at COP23 is to push industrialized countries to reduce their carbon emissions and safeguard Africa from the adverse effects of climate change. In a statement released at the beginning of COP23, they went one step further in calling for the US delegation poison that should be removed from the negotiations.<sup>7</sup> In a report entitled *CSO Demands to COP23*, they stated that ‘[i]naction by any party is equivalent to alliance with Donald Trump,’ cautioning that silence or inaction by any country is synonymous to backing Trump’s decision to withdraw from the agreement.<sup>8</sup> There was a fear that the US withdrawal could be used as an excuse by certain states to stall the negotiations.

However, it is not all bad news. As mentioned previously, the US withdrawal has – to some extent – galvanized other parts of the world into action. On 7 July 2017, 19 of the 20 G20 leaders made it clear that the USA has an isolated stance on climate change, affirming their *irreversible* commitment to the Paris Agreement. A communiqué released following the G20 Summit in Hamburg clearly states that

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<sup>7</sup> Pan African Climate Justice Alliance Press Release (7 November 2017): ‘African Civil Society Demands for UNFCCC-COP23.’ For full statement:

<file:///C:/Users/K1768099/Downloads/PRESS%20STATEMENT.1.COP23.BONN.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Ngalame, Elias Ntungwe (2017) “‘Inaction by any party at COP23 is equal to alliance with Donald Trump’ - African Civil Society’ for Pan-Africa Media Alliance for Climate Change. For full article:

<http://www.pamacc.org/index.php/k2-listing/item/676-inaction-by-any-party-at-cop23-is-equivalent-with-alliance-with-donald-trump-african-civil-society>

‘We take note of the decision of the United States of America to withdraw from the Paris Agreement’ adding that ‘The Leaders of the other G20 members state that the Paris Agreement is irreversible ... [reiterating] ... the importance of fulfilling the UNFCCC commitment by developed countries in providing means of implementation including financial resources to assist developing countries with respect to both mitigation and adaptation.’<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, Ministers and World Leaders came to Bonn to reaffirm their commitment to the Paris Agreement despite the US withdrawal. German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated that

‘We ... firmly believe that climate policy is also forward looking economic policy, as preserving the basis of our existence is the prerequisite for a successful economy. In view of this, a broad alliance comprised of a large number of states, cities and companies has also been set up in the United States and has presented America’s Pledge. I very much welcome this because it underlines the importance of climate protection in large parts of the United States irrespective of President Trump’s decision to leave the Paris Agreement.’<sup>10</sup>

French President Emmanuel Macron highlighted the need to maintain a high degree of scientific expertise. Expertise that is threatened by the US decision to stop funding. Recognising the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in systematically providing the UNFCCC and countries with this expertise, Macron challenged European countries in joining France to make up the shortfall if the US discontinues its funding. In a speech during COP23, he ‘guarantees that from 2018, the IPCC will not miss a centime in order to function, advance and continue to inform our decision.’<sup>11</sup> Indeed, Trump is not even

<sup>9</sup> G20 Leaders’ Declaration 2017: 10.

<sup>10</sup> Speech by Federal Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel at COP23 in Bonn on 15 November 2017. For full speech: [https://www.bundeskanzlerin.de/Content/EN/Reden/2017/2017-11-15-bk-merkel-cop23\\_en.html](https://www.bundeskanzlerin.de/Content/EN/Reden/2017/2017-11-15-bk-merkel-cop23_en.html)

<sup>11</sup> Translated from French by the author. Discours du Président de la République, Emmanuel Macron, lors de la COP23 à Bonn, 17 November 2017. For full speech (in French): <http://www.elysee.fr/declarations/article/discours-du->

invited to the Climate Conference that will be held in Paris 12 December 2017.<sup>12</sup>

However, countries that came into COP21 trailing their feet, could use US withdrawal as an excuse for inaction. The business-as-usual model of tackling climate change will not help the international community meet the goals set in Paris. As implementation of the Paris Agreement gets underway, industrialised countries have begun the journey towards net zero emissions, there are those whose ambitions are not strong enough (Australia<sup>13</sup>), continue to use coal (Japan<sup>14</sup>), or furthering oil exploration (Norway<sup>15</sup>), to name but a few. Although the spotlight may be on US action (or inaction), the international community needs to be vigilant and ensure that all countries are living up to their commitments.

### Measuring the success of a COP

Bringing together over 20,000 participants, success (or failure) of COP23 will depend on the country, group or institution you belong to. For developing countries, climate finance is crucial if they are to implement their adaptation targets. Mali on behalf of the African Group of Negotiators (COP23 stocktake session, 11 November 2017) noted their concern that ‘developed country Parties [are] not fulfilling ... their obligations under the Paris Agreement ... [They] have an obligation in Article 9.5 for biennial communications and indicative support.’

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[president-de-la-republique-emmanuel-macron-lors-de-la-cop23-a-bonn/](https://www.elysee.fr/declarations/article/discours-du-president-de-la-republique-emmanuel-macron-lors-de-la-cop23-a-bonn/)

<sup>12</sup> Reuters (2017) ‘Trump not invited to Paris December climate change summit for now, says France.’ Website: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-climatechange-accord-trump-paris/trump-not-invited-to-paris-december-climate-change-summit-for-now-says-france-idUSKBN1D71U0>

<sup>13</sup> Climate Council (2017) ‘COP23: Keeping the Pressure on Tackling Climate Change.’ Factsheet: <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/uploads/7c8c7a6abf049e98d3d80b6efe97cf5f.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> McHugh, Babs (2017). ‘Japanese government planning to build 45 new coal fired power stations to diversify supply’ for ABC News. Website: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2017-01-31/japan-coal-power-plants/8224302>

<sup>15</sup> Sutterud, Tone and Ulven, Elisabeth (2017) ‘Norway sued over Arctic oil exploration plans’ for the Guardian. Website: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/nov/14/norway-sued-over-arctic-oil-exploration-plans>

They further added [We would like to highlight the urgency of starting as early as possible the process towards identifying the new collective goal of finance ... taking into consideration the experience related to the existing finance target of USD 100 billion annually by 2020, which has not been addressed satisfactorily eight years down the line.]

One aspect that has always driven a wedge between developed and developing countries is finance. While many developed countries like to avoid notions of *climate justice* and *differentiated responsibilities*, the reality for the most vulnerable countries is that supranational policy is crucial if they are able to tackle the climate challenge at home. Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement is not automatic; in fact, the four-year period it will take for the US to pull out of this treaty could see a change in leadership in the White House. However, the \$3 billion the US had pledged to the Green Climate Fund, a fund created to help developing countries implement their own NDCs, has been halted, which could drastically affect climate policy implementation in many impoverished countries.<sup>16</sup> COP24 will need to see an increasing the pool of finance for developing countries as well as enhance direct access to support climate action.

On the other hand, two significant pieces of text were approved. The first ever Gender Action Plan (GAP) was adopted on 14 November 2017. Created under the Lima work programme on gender, this action plan will support and advance gender responsive climate policy.<sup>17</sup> Joanna Wilson, of the Women and Gender Constituency, stated 'the GAP is an important milestone in pushing forward multiple mandates for gender equality under the UNFCCC which have so far been neglected.' She added that 'if properly implemented, resourced and monitored

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<sup>16</sup> Kotchen, Matthew J. (2017) 'Trump will stop paying into the Green Climate Fund. He has no idea what it is' for the Washington Post. Website: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/06/02/trump-will-stop-paying-into-the-green-climate-fund-he-has-no-idea-what-it-is/?utm\\_term=.47ce0207d501](https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/06/02/trump-will-stop-paying-into-the-green-climate-fund-he-has-no-idea-what-it-is/?utm_term=.47ce0207d501)

<sup>17</sup> UNFCCC (2017) 'Establishment of a gender action plan.' Decision accessed: [http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/bonn\\_nov\\_2017/application/pdf/cp23\\_auv\\_gender.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/bonn_nov_2017/application/pdf/cp23_auv_gender.pdf)

the GAP has the potential to turn the patriarchal system upside down and bring us closer to a truly gender-just climate change framework.'

Additionally, the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform was launched during COP23. This is a platform aimed at sharing best practices on adaptation and mitigation.<sup>18</sup> While it is an achievement, that allows for a greater role for indigenous people in climate action, it only recalls the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the preamble.<sup>19</sup> Once again, we will only begin to see if indigenous rights are explicitly highlighted in the NDCs come COP24.

Finally, various collaborations were launched during COP23. The Powering Past Coal Alliance brought together more than 20 countries. Spearheaded by the United Kingdom and Canada, this alliance aims at accelerating rapid phase-out of coal with support to affected communities.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the C40 mayors representing 150 million citizens have pledged to implement ambitious action plans by 2020 with the goal of having emissions neutral climate resilient cities by 2050.<sup>21</sup>

This year's 'technical' conference had its share of achievements and setbacks, however, the real test will be in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, which is to start in 12 months. Touted as the People's COP, the Fijian presidency tried to bring the *Bula spirit* (Fijian for Welcome) to the COP, making a 'connection between

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<sup>18</sup> UNFCCC (2017) 'Local communities and indigenous peoples platform: proposals on operationalization based on the open multistakeholder dialogue and submissions.' Decision accessed:

<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2017/sbsta/eng/06.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Paul, Stella (2017) 'COP23 Finally Provides a Platform for Indigenous People on Climate Talks' for Earth Journalism Network. Website:

<http://earthjournalism.net/stories/cop23-finally-provides-a-platform-for-indigenous-people-on-climate-talks>

<sup>20</sup> UNFCCC (2017) 'More than 20 Countries Launch Global Alliance to Phase Out Coal.' Website: <https://cop23.unfccc.int/news/more-than-20-countries-launch-global-alliance-to-phase-out-coal>

<sup>21</sup> C40 Cities (2017) 'C40 showcases bold city commitments at COP23.' Website: <http://www.c40.org/other/cop23>

these complex negotiations and the real, everyday concerns and aspirations of people the world over.<sup>22</sup> A phrase that came up time and again during COP23 was the concept that *no one is left behind*. Success will mean that no one is truly left behind. In order for this to be achieved, all parties to the convention need to ratchet up their ambitions and ensure they are accountable and transparent in this process.

## DISCLAIMER

*The views expressed in this Newsletter are strictly those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Centre for Energy and Resource Security (EUCERS), its affiliates or King's College London.*

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*Simon discussing his research at COP23*

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<sup>22</sup> Concluding statement from COP23 Chief Negotiator Nazhat Shameem Khan outlining the key outcomes from COP23. Published 20 November 2017. For full speech: <https://cop23.com.fj/cop23-peoples-cop/>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Final Energy Talk 2017: The Future of Global Climate Policy – The Security and Financial Dimension. With a keynote by Claire Perry, MP, Minister of State for Climate Change and Industry

13. December 2017, 9:00 - 13:00 Anatomy Museum, Strand Campus, King's College London, WC2R 2LS

We are delighted to invite you to the final Energy Talk 2017 in our series on "The Impact of the Paris Agreement on the Energy Sector" jointly organised by the European Centre for Energy and Resource Security (EUCERS), King's College London, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in London and the European Climate Foundation.

The final talk focuses on the security and financial dimension of global climate policy. Please find the programme on the right.

*09:00 Welcome Address and Introduction*

**Professor Dr Friedbert Pflüger**, Director, EUCERS  
**Hans-Hartwig Blomeier**, Director London Office, Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation (KAS)

Keynote: "The Future of Global Climate Policy and Security"

**Claire Perry MP**, Minister of State for Climate Change and Industry

*Comments by*

**Chris Mottershead**, Senior Vice President (Quality, Strategy & Innovation), King's College London

**Christoph Wolff**, Managing Director, European Climate Foundation

**Dr Frank Umbach**, Research Director, EUCERS, King's College London

Q&A

*11.00 Changes in energy financing triggered by climate considerations*

**Ingrid Holmes**, Senior Partner, E3G

**Chris Barrett**, Executive Director Finance, European Climate Foundation and former Australian Ambassador to the OECD

**Dr Megan Bowman**, Lecturer in Law and Co-Founder, Climate Law and Governance hub at King's College London

Q&A

*13:00 Lunch*

In order to attend the event please RSVP to: [carola.logan@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:carola.logan@kcl.ac.uk).

## EUCERS ON THE ROAD

Our team represents EUCERS at various conferences and events all over the world. This section gives a regular update and overview of conferences and interview contributions by EUCERS Director Professor Dr Friedbert Pflüger, Research Director Dr Frank Umbach and Associate Director Dr Adnan Vatansever, as well as by our Research Associates.

04.11.2017	Friedbert spoke on energy and climate at a workshop at the World Policy Conference that was held in Marrakesh from 3rd – 5th November.
26.10.2017	Frank gave a presentation on “Klimawandel und Energiewende“ („Climate Change and Energiewende“) at the Viessmann GmbH.
06.10.2017	At the 23rd energy “Weinlese” in Meisenheim, Friedbert gave a presentation on “Between Climate Change, Diplomatical Ice Age and Winter Package: European and German Energy Policy in the Global Context”.
04.10.2017	Friedbert spoke at a panel discussion at the 21st Meeting of the Berlin Eurasia Club. The event was titled “Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Kazakhstan – achievements and goals”.

## PUBLICATIONS

Nießen, Philipp, “Wie hält Deutschland es mit der Energie- und Klimapolitik im Wahljahr?”, in: Politische Studien 475/2017, pp 72-79, Hanns Seidel Stiftung, available online:  
[https://www.hss.de/download/publications/PS\\_475\\_A\\_MERIKA\\_ZUERST\\_10.pdf](https://www.hss.de/download/publications/PS_475_A_MERIKA_ZUERST_10.pdf)

Umbach, Frank, “The Limited Global Impact of Trump’s ‘America First’ Energy Policies”, GIS, 17 October 2017, 8 pp. (<https://www.gisreportsonline.com/the-limited-global-impact-of-trumps-america-first-energy-policies,energy,2361.html>).

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If you have found our Newsletter interesting, wish to hear more about our activities, or, indeed, contribute with ideas or essays, please contact Thomas Fröhlich, Newsletter Editor EUCERS on [thomas.froehlich@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:thomas.froehlich@kcl.ac.uk) or call 020-7848-1912.

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