



INSIDE

# SCOPE<sub>26</sub>

ISSUE 1



# World Leaders Summit

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

**The power of a round number.** Lots of 2030. Some 2050. A new 2070. Will the world only be saved with a zero ending? The opening of COP26 featured global politicians, celebrity environmentalists and voices from the front lines of climate change desperate to convey urgency. Eloquent and moving, but after decades of speeches and pledges, will this COP actually *move* anyone not already predisposed to act and herald change?

Big on slogans, this COP pledges action on **coal, cars, cash and trees**, and many opening speeches emphasised **ambition; accountability** to the generations who will inherit the planet; and **access** to decision making for groups most affected. World leaders elaborated on Nationally Determined Contributions, and further pledges were made and signed.

The **private sector** is identified as having a key role to play and must be transparent in how net zero commitments are measured. Carbon pricing will level the global playing field and make polluters pay.

Small Island States combined to 'speak truth to power', attempting to use international law to establish a legal path to deliver **polluter pays** compensation from fossil fuel companies.

More than 110 countries, including Brazil, pledged to **halt and reverse deforestation by 2030**, and over 30 of the world's biggest financial companies committed to end investment in activities linked to deforestation. A forest protection finance package of \$12bn is announced, alongside \$1.7bn to protect indigenous peoples and their guardianship of forests.

**The future of fossil fuels is in question:** Canada reaffirms oil and gas emissions cap; Israel commits to phase out coal by 2025; a plan by Sweden to be fossil-fuel free by 2055; Mauritius to phase out coal in electricity before 2030; Poland to close coal furnaces, Kazakhstan to reduce share of coal-fired energy generation from 70% to 40%. India furthering commitments to achieve a zero-carbon economy by 2070, with progressive changes in its energy supply.

Over 100 countries joined a **methane** pledge to slash emissions of methane (a gas 86 times worse than CO<sub>2</sub>) by 30% by 2030 from 2020 levels; Canada becomes first to commit to reducing methane from O&G by 75% on 2012 levels by 2030.





# World Leaders Summit

## **JONNY RIGGALL**

**Director Built Environment  
United Kingdom**

The success of COP26 will be much defined by closing the climate change financing gap between the developed and developing economies. Commitments made at COP15 in Paris for \$100 billion a year by 2020 in climate financing were not met, and as COP26 President Alok Sharma warned, “trust matters in international climate politics”.

Developed nations have started defining where they will provide financial support, and countries are hammering out bilateral agreements. Whether this will add up to the £100 billion or not will define Mr Sharma’s point on trust and what weight international climate change commitments actually have in turning to action.

## **ADRIAN JOHNSON**

**Technical Director  
United Kingdom**

David Attenborough focused on the need to drive down one number—concentration of carbon dioxide in the earth’s atmosphere—currently at an unprecedented 414 parts per million. The consequences of failing to act are stark, on both human inequality and environmental instability.

What’s striking at COP26 is the significant shift towards commitments from the wider economy, industry and private sectors. The move by Mark Carney [to move trillions of dollars](#) of private investment to support clean technology, the call from the [WBCSD](#) to set up ‘Corporate Determined Contributions’, and the UK government asking large companies to show evidence that their carbon reduction intentions are in line with our net zero target are examples of potential mechanisms for wide decarbonisation across public and private sectors.

What really matters is the extent we reduce the demand for resources causing emissions. Progress towards eliminating fossil fuels ultimately depends on reducing the demand for the products and services they produce.

In the UK, over 50% of national carbon emissions are associated with infrastructure, a similar proportion must be evident in most developed economies. The anticipated post-COVID increase of investment in physical infrastructure has the opportunity to lead the way in driving out carbon-intensive resources. The whole infrastructure cycle consumes large amounts of concrete and steel, fuel and transport. An uncompromising focus in all areas of infrastructure resource use is the task ahead. Doing so will open up new fronts for decarbonisation, building on the progress in energy, deforestation, methane generation etc.

Through the hierarchy of ‘build nothing’, ‘build less’, ‘build smarter’ and ‘build efficiently’, [PAS2080](#) focuses on driving down energy and resource use and thus carbon out of every stage of infrastructure delivery. It’s all about working together to find the most resource-efficient ‘means’ to achieve the lowest carbon ‘end’. And, of course, through the use of less carbon-intensive grey infrastructure and more low carbon green infrastructure, there’s the potential to promote nature-based solutions and support greater climate resilience.

As David Attenborough said, humans are the greatest problem-solvers to have existed on earth. Let’s get on with integrating all these emerging new commitments, standards, green technologies and other instruments. To redirect the capabilities of all our infrastructure problem-solvers to provide the most resource-efficient solutions we can, to open up new fronts in the war to achieve our zero-carbon future.





# World Leaders Summit

**CARRIE SABIN**  
Vice President,  
Sustainability  
USA

Transparency and net zero targets remain a focus throughout the opening days of COP26. Shortly ahead of this conference, the [Science Based Target Initiative](#) (SBTi) released its official net zero standard. The standard imposes real action and was created to provide consistency in pledges and to address rampant greenwashing seen globally.

SBTi is pushing organisations and companies outside their comfort zones through extremely ambitious emissions reduction requirements (on average 90%) and minimal allowances for neutralisation (up to 10%).

It's interesting, though not surprising, that so many existing net zero pledges rely on offsets. Citizens in developed countries have long felt it was our right to consume whatever we wanted because we have the money and power. Companies reflect

a similar sentiment. The focus on consumption has led to destruction of our resources and higher use of fossil fuels. While there does now seem to be a real desire to address climate change, there is also a reluctance to be inconvenienced or pay the true price of transitions. Offsets created a comfortable cushion - an inexpensive way for a company to make a net zero pledge without necessarily drastically changing consumption behaviours.

This new SBTi net zero standard forces real behaviour change. The fact that the [Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero](#) endorses the stringent SBTi criteria means the financial world will help enforce quick adoption. While it may take a little time for companies to adjust their existing net zero pledges to address the new standard, the result looks to produce real change, accountability, consistency and credibility.

**CHRISTOPHE LEROY**  
Operations Director  
Belgium

We see the cumulative impacts of climate change on the environment, communities, economies, and basic human needs. We continue to see the compounding impacts of weather, including sea-level rise scenarios, and the challenges coastal communities. The [IPCC AR6](#) report identifies that Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries will suffer the worst consequences. Over the coming decades, there will be a need for global development banks to continue to invest hundreds of billions of dollars to support adaptation and mitigation measures. The private sector will need to play a critical role in delivering smart, agile, and impactful services.

Many opportunities are through engagement and education. Groups like the [Global Climate Change Alliance+](#) help facilitate knowledge sharing. The ability to support developing communities

by transferring knowledge to local stakeholders is critical to success. Whether through consultations, workshops, developing policy frameworks, critical risk assessments, supporting planning processes, or building partnerships, increased local knowledge can only support resilience and mitigation.

COP26 articulates the need for continued and increased capital to be reoriented towards sustainable investment in developing nations to support adaptation to natural disasters, reduce environmental degradation, and address social issues. Moreover, it will help local and global economies understand and address the associated financial risks of extreme climate weather events. Supporting knowledge share of mitigation opportunities, adaptation practices (including nature-based solutions), climate risk assessments, and scaling innovation will help ease the shift for developing countries, ultimately supporting implementation.





# Finance

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Finance day brought the men and women holding the world's purse strings to the stage:

Riding on his enthusiasm from the latest UK Autumn Budget speech, **Chancellor Rishi Sunak** outlined three actions: increased public investment to meet the \$100bn global fund; mobilising private funds; and rewriting the global financial system for net zero.

"Right here, right now is where we draw the line...where private finance draws the line," declared **UN special envoy on climate action finance, Mark Carney**. Plans need to go further than 2050, with annual reporting and five-year plans at every point. Our global system must be resolutely focused on climate action, with enhanced country platforms, coordination amongst Multilateral Development Banks and blended financial facilities; and kitemark projects that prove their alignment to national transition strategies.

**IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva** upheld the economic benefits of green investments, with projections of increases in GDP by 2% and 30 million more jobs. But the cost of carbon needs to be revised by 2030; and for rich countries, this price should be much higher and proportionate.

The **Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero** promises huge capital to be deployed, bringing together financial institutions with assets over \$130tn, including 450

companies responsible for 40% of the world's financial assets. But does membership include hard and fast scrutiny into a company's fossil fuel investments?

The UK aims to be the **first ever net zero aligned financial centre**, whereby it will be mandatory for all UK financial institutions and listed companies to publish net zero transition plans from 2023. Is it ground breaking, or business as usual? There are no legal requirements to make pledges in the first place, and what happens if plans are weak or insufficient with no measures in place to force their improvement?

A **new capital markets task force** will issue billions of new green bonds to fund renewables in developing nations, with £100m given by the UK.

Over 130 countries agreed to a **global tax initiative** to ensure companies pay the right tax.

And will the power of the pen help climate action? Twelve major media brands signed the **Climate Content Pledge** to increase the amount and quality of climate change reporting, including Sky, BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Britbox, Discovery and RTE.

A glimmer of hope as **researchers at Climate Resource** ran the numbers: COP26 pledges could bring projected warming to below 2C for first time in history.

### CHLOE LERMUEAUX

**Project Manager & Climate Change Expert  
Belgium**

Beyond the call for emitting countries to commit to more ambitious GHG emissions reduction targets, COP26 has brought to light several crucial challenges.

Industrialised countries must fulfil their financial commitments towards developing countries less equipped to tackle climate change, and yet more vulnerable to its impact. Climate negotiations and investments are often focused on climate change mitigation, but adaptation is even more critical for developing countries. COP26 is the opportunity to increase finances for adaptation, and for loss and damage.

Guidelines to track progress are still to be developed and agreed, but would bring transparency and help developing countries better assess the adaptation actions required and related financial support.





# Energy

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

The first part of the COP26 President's strapline – *coal, cars, cash and trees* got its big moment on energy day when **190 countries and organisations signed up to the [Powering Past Coal Alliance](#)**, to phase out coal by 2030 for developed nations, and 2040 for developing ones.

Over 100 countries signed the **Global Methane Pledge**, agreeing to cut methane emissions (86 times more harmful than CO<sub>2</sub>) by 30% by 2030. But is this thwarted by the biggest emitters not yet having signed?

It was time for the global financial sector to step up, with **major international banks committing to end all international public financing of unabated coal by end of 2021**. HSBC, Fidelity International and Ethos join the ranks, as does NatWest, with no new money lending and phasing out all current loans to coal in the UK by 2024 (just as the country commits to strike out all coal use) and globally by the end of the decade. **With China, Japan and South Korea** involved, all significant public international financing for coal power has effectively ended.

**EU chief climate negotiator Jacob Werksman** called for fully transparent international carbon trading, and no double counting towards own targets. He also expects all major parties to be 1.5C aligned—particularly applying pressure on those who hadn't updated their NDCs or committed new declarations.

The winds of change are in favour of [Race to Zero members committing to installing over 750GW](#) of installed renewables by 2030. Twenty-five nations committed to end support for international fossil fuels by end of 2022. India will generate 50% of its energy from renewables and reduce its economy's carbon intensity by 45%. Through the new **Glasgow Breakthrough Agenda**, the cost of clean technologies could be cut, putting them first over fossil fuels. Support for all renewables will be needed—some nations cannot deploy all, nor solely rely on one.

The future's green with six African countries and five LATAM countries launching **Africa and Latin America Green Hydrogen Alliance** to kickstart the development of near zero-carbon green hydrogen.

And the **Just Energy Transition Partnership with South Africa** (\$8.5bn deal with US, Germany, France, EU, UK) looks to set a 'blue print' for similar partnerships with others.

But a **just transition** requires channelling funding to the people and communities who will thrive from a clean energy shift—and not just to fossil fuel companies phasing out. Echoing a statement from the Energy Transition Council panel: "We will not be judged by commitments said on this international stage, but by how quickly we implement them."

**Al Gore** matched optimism with realism, saying: "We're gaining on the worsening crisis, and if the many commitments from this conference are kept, we will make a difference... We need more and need it sooner."





# Energy

## **CHRIS LEACH**

**Environmental Planning  
Director, Energy and Resources  
United Kingdom**

Phasing out coal is not a new pledge for the UK. But major finance houses pledging to stop funding coal and other developing nations to phase out coal by 2030 takes this to a global level. If followed, it should have a significant impact.

Non-compliance from some parts of the world is likely to be a major barrier. The actions at COP also aren't legally binding, giving others the option to follow through, delay or even U-turn in a short period of time.

The widespread condemnation of fossil fuels by most leaders means that all countries must decarbonise their energy systems more rapidly than before. Race to Zero members have committed to reaching over 750GW of installed renewables by 2030. The new Glasgow Breakthrough Agenda aims to cut the cost of clean technologies so they're first choice

for the most polluting sectors, with efforts to focus on supporting a just transition in the power, road transport, hydrogen, steel and agriculture industries.

A joined-up approach to energy trading, storage and distribution will be required. The need for richer countries to help developing nations will be key, as acknowledged by the Just Energy Transition Partnership with South Africa.

The UK is one of the frontrunners in renewables, largely thanks to an abundance of wind power, but we're also heavily reliant on gas. This is likely to change significantly, with further investment in storage, renewable generation and carbon capture and storage. At COP26 we've seen statements about the diminishing role of gas and that it should peak now, with a rapid decline. This is welcome, but it's likely gas will still need to play a critical role in the energy transition.

At an individual level, we all have a role in reducing carbon emissions from energy, such as switching to a 100% renewable energy provider, and being smarter about energy use. We need to become more self-sustaining through roof mounted solar panels, move from natural gas to electricity, air source heat pumps or hydrogen—all of which are likely to affect us on a more individual basis in the near future.

## **CHRIS PEKAR**

**Renewables Sector Lead,  
Environmental Services  
USA**

Recently I've participated in several renewable energy projects calls with developers, electrical engineers, biologists, lawyers, soil scientists, communication specialists, GIS analysts, archaeologists, civil engineers, geologists and accountants.

We wrestled with the environmental, engineering and permitting nuances of deploying hundreds of megawatts of renewable energy across the American landscape. I am humbled, thrilled, and grateful to be a part of these amazing teams. But the most exciting part is that I know similar calls involving countless people are taking place daily all around the globe.

COP26 has four established goals: secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach; adapt to protect communities and natural habitats; mobilise finance; and

work together to deliver. The first three are not feasible without the fourth.

We all recognise that, collectively, we are not on track to limit warming to 1.5 degrees, but even imperfect commitments have helped spur renewable energy deployment. And as utilities and renewable energy developers gain more experience with portfolios rather than one-offs, development costs and timelines will come down. In turn, these will make even more ambitious pronouncements possible at COP27, 28, 29 and beyond. This positive feedback loop, between increasing government ambitions, and those doing the actual work of designing, permitting and constructing renewable energy projects, year after year, will allow us to secure global net zero by mid-century.

This COP26 I urge all delegates to go as bold as they can on commitments, knowing they are backed by a passionate renewable energy industry working together to deliver. Deploy, deploy, deploy!



# Energy

## **DUARTE COSTA**

**Climate Change Expert  
Belgium**

The strategic Global Methane Pledge is promising to address a potent GHG by largely applying existing technologies and improving efficiency in industrial processes. Large methane emitters are still out of the pledge, and a big uncertainty/concern is whether it will actually be implemented. Many of the pledges made (including deforestation, phasing out coal, and others) still leave space for countries to [not really do what the pledges imply](#).

Also, according to an analysis published by Carbon Brief, this pledge should be a 50% reduction by 2030, not 30%, to reach 0.2C warming reduction.

When it comes to pledges about the phasing out of coal, the elephant in the room is that the largest emitters of CO2 from coal are not signatories. China has made huge progress in increasing coal use efficiency in

powerplants, reduced 36% of its coal-fired emissions from 2006-2020 and will continue to do so into its projected peak emissions in 2030. Many developed nations are still unclear about ditching coal where they have more means and responsibility to do it.

## **MARIO FINIS**

**Executive Vice President,  
Energy & Resources,  
North America**

## **SANDRA SHUSTER**

**Vice President, Director  
Business & Development,  
Energy & Resources  
USA**

Energy and resources must be at the centre of climate change discussions. We've seen industry shifts with many energy clients making carbon neutral and net zero commitments as part of a proactive approach to reducing climate change impacts.

At the centre is the need to embrace alternative fuels. Beyond traditional renewables (wind, solar and hydropower) we are seeing the integration of alternative fuels like liquified natural gas, hydrogen, and biogas into the generation mix. Carbon capture and other emerging technologies also help reduce the impacts of energy generation and

resource extraction, while continuing to provide essential materials and services.

While an emphasis continues to be on reducing coal and a push for clean energy, two major challenges are often overlooked:

- Large scale energy storage solutions like hydro pumped storage allow us to integrate intermittent renewables. Pumped storage is currently the only viable, proven, long-duration energy storage solution, but it takes years of permitting, planning and design and construction to be functional. Batteries and other technologies can fill smaller capacity, short duration needs. While they continue to improve, they are not expected to match the scale, duration, and cost of hydro pumped storage soon.
- Net zero mining is an opportunity to revolutionise how we mine resources. Electric vehicles, solar panels, wind turbines and lithium-ion batteries all require extraction

and processing of raw materials. We must focus on sustainable mining practices and help the industry in their transition to net zero.

We need an **energy transition plan**, including investing now in long-term energy solutions and the decommissioning of old ones, and a coordinated plan that reduces emissions at existing facilities.

In the US, we need **large-scale investment in existing infrastructure**, including overall energy grid and cleaner energy sources like hydropower. Investment in upgrading and modernising existing plants and investing in bridge technologies and fuels such as natural gas, are critical to maintaining safe, reliable energy while the transition to cleaner technologies progresses. Without integration and upgrade of our energy grid to include Distributed Energy Resources and microgrids, our country cannot meet our aggressive clean energy goals.



# Energy

## **ROSARIO URRUTIA**

**Country Manager**  
**Chile**

Undoubtedly one of the outcomes from COP26 is the commitment that countries such as Chile have expressed in reducing coal by 2030. This commitment is of utmost importance and constitutes a challenge of proportions for a small country like Chile, a country that has developed on the use of fossil fuels. On the other hand, the severe drought that affects the country—undoubtedly a product of climate change—makes the commitment to reduce the use of coal even more challenging. The sustainable use of water as an energy source is no longer enough to supply the country with electricity. The increasing investment in new renewable energy sources challenges not only the authorities, but also the scientific community, entrepreneurs, and others in the search for new sources.

The transition towards “fair” renewable energies will have a positive effect on communities, particularly inhabitants of areas surrounding coal plants who have witnessed habitat’s deterioration and have emissions-induced health issues. These areas no longer want to continue to be “sacrifice zones”.

The commitment to accelerate the reduction of coal has already been signed by 190 countries, with the countries that contribute the highest percentage of emissions yet to join. 2030 is very close and the changes to be made are great. It’s urgent to move towards this objective, that will bring us closer to sustainability.

## **TAVIS MACKENZIE**

**Senior Project Manager,**  
**Energy & Resources**  
**Australia**

The challenge Australia would have in phasing out coal is based on its vast land mass, with a wide population spread, with the serious task of transmitting power from town to town and state to state—we’re looking at thousands of kilometres without significant infrastructure in regional areas. We would need to replace coal power when demand is growing. Available funding (from ending international funding of coal) should be directed to new renewables as well as improvements to existing coal while in transition. If funding is easy and competitive, it will drive investment.

Australia also has vast reserves of relatively cheap gas and existing infrastructure in place making it easy and economical to generate power, even more so in the many remote areas. Tariffs could be channelled into renewables and green hydrogen infrastructure. The logistic and infrastructure needs are serious to a

land mass the size of Australia. A significant number of private sector businesses including major miners, have chosen to introduce renewable energy into their operations. This is a focus but is still not the most economical solution as legacy and gaining infrastructure has limitations.

Transition planning is very important to provide a tangible road map as every country and region’s challenges will be different. We have to understand the effort and work required to “turn-off” existing hydrocarbon-based power, with social, environmental and economic impacts managed accordingly.

Knowledge sharing from global initiatives is key to each country’s success and transition plans, particularly with tangible examples and working with heavy industries and primary producers. More can also be done to understand and communicate what power is used to produce products and services, such as “Made with Renewable Energy”. This should be a consideration when trading.

Common guiding principles need to be established. The challenge here is “cheaper” does not facilitate the right change, improved infrastructure or the development of new technology—but the industry still needs to be competitive.



# Energy

## **MARK PRICE** **Energy Transition Sector Leader** **Australia**

One thing that COP26 has provided to Australia's energy transition sector is clarity; that private investment and innovation are required to drive this transition, rather than political urgency or major public investment.

Australia has released a last-minute pre-COP 'Net Zero by 2050' commitment, which could be seen to be more of a "do-nothing" option forecast than a commitment. One could look at this as a failing or lost opportunity, or as optimism in technological advancements, some of which [don't quite exist yet](#). It's clear that any 100% renewables or 500% renewables targets will need to stand on their own two economically viable legs.

Australia deciding not to join 40 other nations in committing to end the use of coal power by the 2030s "or as soon as possible thereafter" was expected. We have a world-leading

uptake of solar PV, and numerous big-batteries committed to or already in service. The energy transition is in full swing, with or without strong political policy propelling it to an early finish line crossing.

In a way for Australia, COP26 has felt a bit out-of-sync with the optimism and urgency seen in 2021 towards corporate ESG and net zero target announcements. Australians are going green; from their diets, clothing, retirement funds and even choice of employer – leaving businesses needing to make the right choice rather than the most lucrative choice or risk being left behind. I'm filled with optimism for the future when every day, I see CO2 volumes given as much consideration in investment decisions as the financial bottom-line. Whilst Australia's contribution to COP26 hasn't added to that optimism, it won't detract from it. It has thrown down the gauntlet to the private sector, and that's a challenge I think it's ready to accept.





# Youth and Public Empowerment

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS & EVENTS

Millions of people protested around the world, trying to make their voices heard on the day the COP schedule assigned to focus on youth and public empowerment. COP organisers called youth an 'unstoppable force' while Greta Thunberg labelled COP a 'Global North greenwash festival, a two week celebration of business as usual'. Over 10,000 people took to Glasgow's streets with banners, placards, and a determination to be heard.

A [manifesto](#) produced at the Youth4Climate pre COP event in Italy included requests for meaningful participation with young people nominated to the UNFCCC, energy transition by 2030, prioritisation of nature based solutions and inclusive involvement in decision making.

Reiterating earlier finance themes, the manifesto also sounded the call for transparent and accountable finance but went further to demand phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies by 2030, and **carbon pricing** of at least US\$50–100/tCO<sub>2</sub> by 2030.

A green **tax** system was proposed that favours green businesses, charges more for single use products and non-environmentally friendly products and reduces customs fees and taxes on products related to green jobs.

[YOUNGO](#) presented the **global youth statement**, a summary of work from young people across 140 countries to Scotland's First Minister, COP26 President, UNFCCC Executive Secretary and the UK's lead climate negotiator. It called for divestment of finance and environmentally harmful activities, progressive carbon taxing and delivery of the \$100bn promised in Paris.

Twenty-three countries including South Korea, Albania, and Sierra Leone committed to making national **climate education** pledges including net zero schools and putting climate at the heart of their national curriculums. A new sustainability and climate change strategy was announced for all UK primary schools giving teachers the resources to share evidence around climate change.

People called for the **media** to be better trained in conveying the urgency of climate change. Whilst millions have been trying to have their voices heard, UK media stories included Boris Johnson likening the climate crisis to James Bond wrestling with a ticking time bomb and temporary disruption caused by protestors. Do these detract from negotiations happening inside the many rooms?



# Youth and Public Empowerment

**MATTEO RUDELLO**

**Senior Project Technical Leader**  
*Italy*

**NICOLA MAPELLI**

**Sustainability Lead**  
*Italy*

What do we want our world to look like in the future? Can we harness our collective potential to build a culture that is sustainable? A proper answer to these questions comes from new governance models that can take on board new stakeholders which, so far, were not able to have a role and be heard.

It is not just a matter of justice, but especially of efficacy. Equipping citizens and next generations not just with the necessary competences and set of skills which are required to take climate action, but also with the necessary support to act and become influential players. This is fundamental to address the current challenges, and channel the energy from protests to constructive behaviors. Youth should be equipped to be leaders, this is our goal as

sustainability professionals and human beings who have an interest in young people and society. At the same time, while protests and discussions continue at the COP26, there is not much clarity about the real role youth could play to contribute to the climate change challenge, and even less about how adults should empower them to become a transforming force for a brighter future.

Introducing effective countermeasures to bend the rising temperature curve quickly requires decisions to be taken now, by the adults that are today's political and economic leaders of the developed and developing countries. Adults should be the ones giving the example to youth on how wise, fair and effective solutions are discussed and agreed between rich and less-rich countries and how loyally they are enforced together. Reality is that "parents" should be living examples for the youths, they should show the way to put courageously aside particular interest in favor of finding solutions

for the common good, showing how to learn from past mistakes. Also, looking ahead, adults should focus on securing for youth an education based on values and principles that can nourish "inner sustainability", as well as starting to involve students and the public on local scale projects to train them on becoming actors of sustainable change.

Thanks to support from the European Institute for Innovation and Technology that believed in the original idea, combined with the heartfelt desire of many researchers and sustainability experts from all over Europe, Stantec developed a youth and public empowerment project that works in this way, and we called it: "D.Game: Dream, Design, Develop"

D.Game engages key stakeholders to work alongside schools, uniting communities and connecting students with local players, building networks of trust and mutual listening for an inter-generational alliance for change.

Through this empowerment format all the actors of the community are put together, experimenting co-creation of collective solutions to local sustainability challenges.





# Youth and Public Empowerment

## **CURT BJURLIN**

**Vice President,  
Environmental Services, Power  
USA**

There is a nearly limitless amount of work to be done, and the current workforce is at capacity. World leaders need concrete plans today to retool the education system and train the professionals that will execute their ambitious commitments.

In 2050, the year by which we need to achieve net zero emissions, today's college students will be in their mid-forties, mid-career and in a world where every meal, purchase, decision is inextricably entangled with a much warmer world. To find a feasible pathway to carbon neutrality, we'll need to radically change what we're teaching our youth. Our institutions of higher learning need to provide the ethics, knowledge, and tools to tackle the multitude of complex interrelated, inter-disciplinary problems that are coming, as well as those already here.

The ecologist philosopher Timothy Morton has called global warming

a *hyperobject*: something so vast in time and space, it defies comprehension. I've experienced how difficult it is to put a desire to address this crisis into tangible action. It's understandable that leaders and universities haven't yet implemented the comprehensive education changes necessary. But with their voices, these groups have unequalled ability to guide and educate large numbers of people to confront vast, intractable problems. Professional services firms have also only recently implemented comprehensive climate services initiatives and more must be done by experts in the field to provide on-the-job training. Together, we all share a responsibility for our future. Without talented and trained young people entering the workforce, we have little chance of achieving a 1.5 degree C future.

Read full comment [here](#).

## **SADE AKINDELE**

**Developing Professionals  
Network Lead  
The Netherlands**

My hope for this COP was that it would meet its promise for action. The world is in a delicate place right now, so if extensive resources are going to be dedicated to bringing leaders together from around the world for facilitated conversations, something fruitful needs to follow.

That being said, it's great to see how youth leaders have been involved in these conversation in numbers we haven't seen before. In fact, under the EUROCLIMA+ programme, aimed at enhancing environmental sustainability and climate resilience across Latin America (managed by our Stantec international development team on behalf of the European Commission), 12-year old Colombian Climate Activist Francisco Vera Manzanares was brought in to participate in several EC+ events. Having voices like his and the many others allows for new perspectives

on the current state of things to be heard, and welcomes fresh energy to the mix.

Despite talk that this COP may yield more pledges than action plans, I remain hopeful. There is genuine ambition and attention being put towards climate resiliency and the global energy transition, and I believe that by working together, youth and senior leaders alike, we'll be able to bring the change we all have an appetite for.

