

EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES FOR A TRANSATLANTIC GREEN DEAL

TRANSATLANTIC CLIMATE BRIDGE CONFERENCE | JUNE 2021

The 2021 Transatlantic Climate Bridge Conference explored emerging trends in climate action in Europe and North America. The business prospects of a transatlantic green deal, a long-term outlook at climate action at city and regional levels, the involvement of younger generations in the implementation of the Paris Agreement as well as a just green transition took centre stage.

“We need to show the world that the green transition is working in practice”

Heiko Maas

What does an equitable transition to a new, modern, decarbonised economy imply for businesses and societies on both sides of the Atlantic, and how can it be achieved? As **Emily Haber**, German Ambassador to the U.S. put it, “the Transatlantic Climate Bridge offers a huge array of opportunities and possibilities to work together”. Canada, Germany and the U.S. have all recently upped their climate targets and pledged to invest in green strategies for sectors such as construction and transportation. Now is the time to implement these plans, especially as countries around the world are in desperate search of opportunities for economic growth to fight their way out of the COVID-19 pandemic. “We know that addressing the climate crisis provides huge opportunity”, **Mandela Barnes**, Wisconsin’s Lieutenant Governor, pointed out during the opening panel of the TCB conference. But, he stressed, as policies to combat climate change are implemented, decision-makers need to ensure that they also alleviate fears and concerns regarding the green transition. As we move from strategy to practice, it is crucial to share experiences and good practices on climate policy among transatlantic partners.



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Combatting climate change will mean changes in the economy, changes in the environment and, ultimately, changes in the lives of almost all people. However, because the green transformation will not be linear, countries around the world, including the U.S., Canada and Germany, will need to learn quickly and rely on the knowledge and experiences of subnational and private actors. During the past four years, while the U.S. federal government side-lined itself from international climate diplomacy, it was civil society, academia, the private sector, cities and regions that kept international climate cooperation alive. The relaunch of the Transatlantic Climate Bridge aims to foster exchange on how to set the right incentives and create the right framework conditions in order to make the green transition just and, as **Julie Cerquiera**, Executive Director of the US Climate Alliance, stressed, to make sure that there is equitable access to climate solutions. This holds true both within countries and also across borders.

“SUCCESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE WILL DEPEND ON CIVIL SOCIETY, ACADEMIA, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, CITIES AND REGIONS.”

HEIKO MAAS

Under President Biden, the U.S. again recognises the urgency of the climate crisis and is taking a leadership role in international climate policy. Transatlantic actors can leverage their collective clout to convince other countries to ramp up their climate action and ambition. The G7 summit in June was an important milestone for reviving the collective commitment to implementing long-term decarbonisation strategies. G7 countries’ agreement to end unabated coal finance in 2021 and to phase out direct government support for carbon-intensive fossil fuel projects showed that leaders on both sides of the Atlantic are determined to take on a leadership role at COP26, to be hosted by the UK in November 2021. G7 leaders also showed a willingness to support developing countries in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The three-day 2021 Transatlantic Climate Bridge Conference took stock of projects and policies already in place and explored which specific strategies are needed to underpin the collective commitment to prealigned climate targets with action.

“TOGETHER WE CAN DEVELOP AND ENACT A TRULY AMBITIOUS TRANSATLANTIC CLIMATE POLICY”

MARC GARNEAU



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TRANSATLANTIC CLIMATE BRIDGE CONFERENCE 2021

OPENING EVENT

Heiko Maas | German Federal Foreign Minister
Mark Garneau | Foreign Minister Canada
Amb. Emily Haber | German Embassy in Washington DC
Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes | State of Wisconsin
Julie Cerquiera | Executive Director U.S. Climate Alliance
Moderator: **Justin Worland** | Time Magazine

TRANSATLANTIC BUSINESS DIALOGUE

Sabine Nallinger
Stiftung 2°
Maria Mendiluce
We Mean Business
Marc Vanheukelen
EU Climate Diplomacy
Ambassador
Tim Scharwath
DHL
Jon Morrish
Heidelberg Cement
Ralph Izzo
PSEG
Judith Judson
National Grid
Cynthia Williams
Ford Motor Company
Moderator:
Justin Worland
Time Magazine

TRANSATLANTIC CITY LAB

Vera Rodenhoff
German Federal Ministry for
the Environment, Nature
Conservation, and Nuclear
Safety
Lia Cairone
C40
Alysson Blackwelder
U.S. Green Building Council
Nadine Melcher
Canadian-German Chamber of
Commerce and Industry
Alexandra Hunger
Alfred Herrhausen
Gesellschaft
Moderator:
Sarah Duffy
Government Affairs U.S. and
Canada at the Climate Group

NEXT GENERATION FUTURISTS FORUM

Meredith Adler
Student Energy
Ana F. González Guerrero,
Youth Climate Lab
Hadeel Hamoud
Duke University
Andrea Flores
MOVE Texas
Nora Loehle
Heinrich Böll Foundation,
Washington, DC office
Katrin Lammers
Fellow, Heinrich Böll
Foundation
Christian Hauenstein
Fellow, Heinrich Böll
Foundation
Moderator:
Alexander Carius
adelphi

CLOSING EVENT

Hinrich Thölken | German Federal Foreign Office
Jochen Flasbarth | State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear
Safety
Nigel Purvis | Climate Advisers
Aaron Cosby | State of Wisconsin
Julie Cerquiera | International Institute for Sustainable Development, IISD



WATCH RECORDINGS: <https://adelph.it/watchTCB2021>

What does industry need from politics now?

“The leadership role taken on by the new U.S. administration is well received by German and European companies,” said **Sabine Nallinger**, Managing Director of Stiftung 2 Grad in her opening remarks at the Transatlantic Business Dialogue. Many companies understand climate neutrality as the new business model of the future and are highly interested in transatlantic exchange formats on the climate neutral economy of tomorrow. She concluded that it is very important that federal governments on both sides of the Atlantic respond to this interest with bold leadership as soon as possible.

María Mendiluce, Chief Executive Officer with the We Mean Business Coalition, who also gave opening remarks, recognised the important role industry plays in reaching national and international emissions targets, but underlined that they can only succeed if governments increase action and provide supportive policies. “The race to net-zero emissions is also a race for humanity because we need to bring all countries and all companies along,” she added.

Marc Vanheukelen, EU Climate Diplomacy Ambassador, opened the panel by pointing out “the transatlantic cooperation on the green deal is already very much in the present tense.” For example, at the E.U.-U.S. Summit in June 2021 a number of instruments were put in place to ensure structured cooperation on climate action and climate ambition, such as the High-level Climate Action Group, the U.S.-E.U. Trade and Technology Council or the U.S.-E.U. Energy Council. Keeping in mind that setting targets is the easy part, he said, we must now face the challenge of implementing the targets.

Industry representatives who joined the transatlantic business dialogue discussed just what they need to make the transatlantic green deal a success. **Ralph Izzo**, Chairman, President and CEO of PSEG and **Judith Judson**, Head of U.S. Strategy for National Grid both emphasised the urgency of building and expanding infrastructure for green technologies, such as finding a workable solution for green hydrogen imports along the supply chain of domestic companies. **Tim Scharwath**, Board Member of Deutsche Post DHL Group and **Jon Morrish**, Managing Director, Western and Southern Europe at HeidelbergCement Group, stressed the benefits of a global price on carbon for the transport, logistics and construction sector.

“CLIMATE NEUTRALITY IS THE NEW BUSINESS MODEL OF THE FUTURE”

SABINE NALLINGER

“THE CLIMATE NEUTRAL RACE IS ON.”

MARIA MENDILUCE

WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER EARLY, NOT ONLY CLOSELY, TO MAKE SURE WE HAVE A COMMON APPROACH TO STANDARDS AND TECHNICAL REGULATIONS.

MARC VANHEUKELEN

Cynthia Williams, Global Director, Sustainability, Homologation and Compliance with Ford Motor Company, voiced her support for building momentum around comprehensive market-based solutions for lowering emissions and, as Marc Vanheukelen added, this will include “carrots but also some sticks”. This implies that if private sector climate contributions on a voluntary basis are not enough, then further regulatory action is needed.

All panellists agreed that harmonised, coordinated guidelines are needed to implement the green transition across the Atlantic and around the world. Companies need stability in the laws and regulations which determine how to reach ambitious climate goals, and platforms for sharing expertise and best practices are crucial. This must not only include transatlantic actors. Climate change is a complex, global issue, and no one can be left behind. Or, as Ms. Williams put it: “To change everything, we need everyone”.

CO-CONVENERS TRANSATLANTIC BUSINESS DIALOGUE:



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Cities are laboratories for translating climate targets into action

During the TCB's Transatlantic City Lab session, panellists discussed specific strategies to translate local and municipal climate targets into tangible action in the transport and building sectors. "Two thirds of global energy consumption and two thirds of energy-related greenhouse gases are produced in cities," said **Vera Rodenhoff**, Head of the Division for International Cooperation on Environment, Energy and Cities and Cooperation with the OECD at the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. However, cities are also hubs of innovation and experimentation, and they often act as laboratories for climate and energy policymaking. As a result, cities and towns on both sides of the Atlantic will be key to ensuring that investments create jobs, meet ambitious climate goals, and accelerate the recovery from COVID-19. This is also why it is important that there is international coordination among cities on strategies to achieve climate neutrality and build sustainable infrastructure in the building and transport sectors.

Several of the City Lab speakers highlighted specific examples from North America and Europe that emphasise the importance of city leadership and exchanging best practices. **Lia Ciarone**, Deputy Director for North America at C40 pointed to innovative transportation policies in Los Angeles, which has a city goal of electrifying 100 per cent of Metro/L.A. Department of Transportation buses by 2030, and Toronto, which has committed to procuring only zero emission buses starting in 2025. On the building side, city leadership is coming from New York City, which has mandated that large private buildings reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and Seattle, which has banned the use of natural gas to heat and cool new commercial and large multifamily homes. Further examples in the transportation sector were highlighted by **Nadine Melcher**, Department Manager at the Canadian-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry, including Vancouver's commitment to stop purchasing diesel-fuelled buses by 2025, and California's goal of selling 100 per cent net-zero emissions vehicles by 2035. Additional strategies for the building sector were emphasised by **Alysson Blackwelder**, Project Manager for Advocacy and Policy at the U.S. Green Building Council, who illustrated the "need for continued focus on Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) as a driver of change given the increasing carbon footprint of cities despite energy efficiency gains," and pointed to the more than 900 certified LEED projects currently in place across Germany. All the speakers stressed that these initiatives will not be successful unless their impacts on environmental justice and social equity across municipalities are considered throughout policy design and implementation processes.

"INVESTING IN CLIMATE-FRIENDLY INFRASTRUCTURE OFFERS NUMEROUS CO-BENEFITS AND CREATES HEALTHIER, MORE LIVEABLE CITIES."

VERA RODENHOFF

"A GREEN, JUST RECOVERY IS IMPERATIVE AND REQUIRES EQUITABLE, ACCESSIBLE POLICIES FOR ALL CITY RESIDENTS."

LIA CIARONE

Although there are many examples of municipal efforts to reduce emissions, these efforts often need to be couched in larger national frameworks and funding mechanisms in order to be successful. **Alexandra Hunger**, Project Manager for the Cities Program at the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft, noted the “importance of cities as test beds for experimentation that can act as local feedback mechanisms and inform national governments,” but also spoke to the limits of city action, especially in the building and transport sector.

“CITIES ARE TEST BEDS FOR EXPERIMENTATION THAT CAN ACT AS LOCAL FEEDBACK MECHANISMS AND INFORM NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS”

ALEXANDRA HUNGER

Often, standards or limits need to be set in order to effect GHG mitigation, and this work can only be done at the national level. What’s more, cities are often hampered by a lack of funding: an issue that can also inhibit transatlantic exchanges as budgets do not always allow for global engagement. Ensuring new funding streams for both policy initiatives and transatlantic exchange will be key to enabling continued room for improvement and opportunities to expand engagement across the ocean.

The many similarities between municipal initiatives in Germany, Canada and the U.S. result in many opportunities to work together to solve the problems posed by the climate crisis. City Labs moderator **Sarah Duffy**, responsible for Government Affairs for the U.S. and Canada at The Climate Group, closed the discussion on this point, emphasising that it is critical to continue to showcase the progress and benefits of climate action in order to make the case for investment and continued engagement. Only through continued collaboration, learning and exchange of best practices - which can be adjusted for different municipal and national contexts - can cities and towns across the Atlantic develop new and innovative funding approaches to overcome investment barriers, address important social challenges, and ultimately mitigate GHG emissions to achieve climate neutrality targets.



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Why more young people should have a seat at the table

The Next Generation Futurists Panel brought together young change agents to discuss climate and environmental justice in Canada, the U.S. and Germany – and culminated in a passionate call for broadening our understanding of climate action.

“The term climate change does not resonate in every part of the state, however the impacts resonate”, said Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin **Mandela Barnes** during the opening of the Transatlantic Climate Bridge conference on 22 June 22 2021. Two days later, **Andrea Flores**, advocacy organiser for MOVE Texas, illustrated at the Next Generation Futurists Forum how these impacts resonate in her home state: a snow storm earlier in the year had left many Texans without electricity when the electric grid failed; recurring floods in Houston aggravate homelessness in the city.

The social dimensions of climate change impacts are often overlooked. As marginalised and low-income communities are at higher risk of environmental damage, climate action becomes a question that to many, especially young change agents, is inextricably linked to justice and equity issues. During the public brainstorming session on climate and environmental justice concepts on both sides of the Atlantic, **Hadeel Hamoud**, student at Duke University and president of Juhood Magazine, underlined the necessity to shift the current narrative on the path to a decarbonised economy: “We put justice as inhibitor but equity and justice produce important benefits”.

For young change agents, a comprehensive approach to climate action needs to overcome the justice-or-climate dichotomy and also encompass areas such as education, employment, health-care, transport and housing – or as **Ana González Guerrero** put it: “Climate for us is everything!” The co-founder of the Youth Climate Lab emphasised the importance of involving the many voices that have been left aside in the past to ensure they are at the forefront of the climate solutions currently being developed.

From her experience as executive director at Student Energy, **Meredith Adler** knows that youth voices continue to be underrepresented in climate policy making: Only a small share of young people worldwide have ever been asked about energy, or their opinions or visions for a sustainable future. In the lead up to COP26 in Glasgow and in climate policy making in general, political leaders should close this gap and design policies not only *for* but *together with* future generations. This also means deployment of solutions and implementation plans for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in line with budget allocations that demonstrate how announcements by political leaders will translate into tangible action and results.

“MORE YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE A SEAT AT THE TABLE, WE ARE THE ONES MOST IMPACTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE IN THESE NEXT 50 TO 100 YEARS”

ANDREA FLORES

“WE PUT JUSTICE AS INHIBITOR BUT EQUITY AND JUSTICE PRODUCE IMPORTANT BENEFITS”.

HADEEL HAMOUD

Connecting young people through peer-to-peer engagement and coaching, improving access to data, grassroots story-telling, using digital platforms and social media to reach other youth in different contexts – the list of ideas on the agenda for transatlantic cooperation is long. And these ideas are all the more important because bridging geographical boundaries raises awareness, creates understanding and contributes to diversifying approaches to climate activism, especially between the Global North and the Global South.

**“CLIMATE FOR US
IS EVERYTHING!”**

**ANA GÓNZALEZ
GUERRERO**

The panel discussion proved that in conceiving climate and justice as inseparably linked, in framing climate action as community protection, and in proposing new visions for climate action, young people have a lot to bring to the table. This perception was confirmed by **Nora Löhle**, Program Director for Energy and Environment at Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Washington, D.C., and by **Katrin Lammers** and **Christian Hauenstein**, both fellows of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, who emphasised in their concluding remarks the importance of a just, green transition not only on a transatlantic, but also on a global level.

Now it is on policy makers to welcome young stakeholders from across the world to the table and ensure that policy making reflects their bold ideas for a decarbonised tomorrow. The next generation of futurists is ready.



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Outlook for future transatlantic climate diplomacy

The prospects of a just transition, the conditions to decarbonise the industrial sector and the importance of transatlantic climate diplomacy were at the heart of the closing panel, facilitated by **Hinrich Thölken**, Commissioner for Energy and Climate Foreign Policy and Digital Transformation at the German Federal Foreign Office.

According to Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary in the Federal Ministry for the Environment, the conference indicated how vibrant and diverse transatlantic cooperation can be. By bringing key players to the table, the Transatlantic Climate Bridge can make a difference and formulate expectations towards decision makers. Business representatives ask for transatlantic leadership through the coordination of policies within the frameworks of the EU Green Deal or the U.S. Infrastructure Plan. Cities position themselves as drivers of climate protection, just transition and hubs of innovation – but, to this end, need supportive regulatory frameworks. Finally, young voices ask to be represented in these discussions and the implementation of infrastructure plans – as a matter of intergenerational justice.

Where is the TCB going? Having observed the discussions, the two challengers **Nigel Purvis**, Founding President and CEO of Climate Advisers, and **Aaron Cosbey**, Senior Associate with IISD, formulated priorities for the future of transatlantic cooperation.

According to Mr. Purvis, the TCB can strengthen climate action by focusing on four areas:

1. Organising around thematic areas like just transition, innovation, climate finance and corporate supply chains.
2. Collaborating on specific sectors such as the automobile industry.
3. Continuing the promotion of collaboration among cities and sub-national governments.
4. Strengthening diplomacy to work together on a more global level, including the Global South.

“EVERY SINGLE PANEL UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION.”

JOCHEN FLASBARTH

The Transatlantic Climate Bridge (TCB) was initiated in 2008. As a network of various activities supported by Germany's Federal Foreign Office, Federal Ministry for the Environment and the foreign missions in North America, the TCB aims to stimulate and expand transatlantic exchange on climate and energy policy.

Mr. Cosbey put a strong focus on industrial decarbonisation as one of the most promising foci for collaboration on a transatlantic basis. Economies depend on the production of basic materials, such as steel, cement, nitrogen fertilisers and aluminium, which are all emission-intensive in production and particularly difficult to decarbonise technologically. “In this particular sector, an international approach is fundamentally necessary,” he said, because global companies are involved and production in these sectors is linked by global trade. He emphasised cooperation on research and the development of new technologies as a priority, in order to avoid carbon leakage and preserve competitiveness in the face of carbon policy, which is unevenly applied in different countries around the world. Policies such as low carbon standards and carbon border adjustments require agreement upon what is considered best practice. The TCB can help to identify principles to guide the elaboration and implementation in ways that would reduce international frictions.

Looking ahead at COP26, transatlantic leadership is a promising lever to raise global ambition in the form of enhanced commitments to decarbonisation, including from developing economies that are growing emitters such as China and India. To this end, the discussion emphasised again that transatlantic climate diplomacy is not restricted to transatlantic parties, but needs to include other countries and especially those who are most affected.

The TCB offers opportunities to mainstream climate issues across all sectors, including economy, finance, health, social security, welfare and more. For example, there will be an exchange on climate neutrality in transport with the Chambers of Commerce in Toronto and San Francisco starting in fall 2021. Dialogue and exchange with a broad stakeholder base will continue to be at the core of the TCB to ensure that the transatlantic green deal is just and leaves no one behind.



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