




Results

Results from the Assembly of Humans and More Than Humans 2021 compared with results of the 2020 climate assemblies in France and the UK

1. The assemblies compared

	The Assembly of Humans and More Than Humans	France climate assembly	UK climate assembly
Framing question	Should a wind farm be constructed in mid-Wales, and if so under what conditions? If not, what alternative is proposed?	How can France reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 percent (from the 1990s level) by 2030, in the spirit of social justice?	How can the UK reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050?
Budget	£200	£5M	£500,000
Duration	Two hours online	Seven in-person weekend sessions and one online weekend session	Three in-person weekend sessions and three short online weekend sessions
How many people took part?	100+ so far, with the potential for thousands in the future	150	108
Who was represented?	Humans of all ages represented everything from multinationals to future generations to peat bogs to birds. Our trials have included adults from Indonesia and UK students aged 11 –16.	French adults were selected to represent and engage with and their communities and regions	Adults were selected to match the demographics of the human UK adult population, but with each adult representing themselves.
How will it have an impact?	The impact of the assembly will depend on how big it grows and how much attention it gets.	The process was sponsored by President Emmanuel Macron of France and 70% of the population have heard about it.	The process was sponsored by six select committees of the UK parliament – but very few people have heard of it.

2. Results of the assemblies



Voicing the air: an assembly of humans and more-than-humans

Group	Facilitator	Decision	Comments
1	Angie and Perry	The wind farm approved, on conditions, plus alternative energy generation and demand reduction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wind farm should go ahead, with community funds used for local energy production. At the same time a research programme should be launched into the potential and possible downsides of sources like hydro and free energy. Work on changing the culture of consumption in the West, hence reducing the demand for energy. Unresolved was a challenge to EDF as to how Humans and More Than Humans could hold it to account, with EDF saying it was accountable to its shareholders.
2	Lollie	No wind farm Instead a combination of alternative energy generation and demand reduction, with the emphasis on the latter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide local community owned energy Community owned energy resources are a great method for changing behaviour and reducing energy use. Any sort of development has a global effect. We need systemic change (consuming, housing, behaviour, other sources of renewables) More wild space and separation between Humans and More Than Humans. Restore peatbogs and preserve landscape. Concerns that rejection of the wind farm will lead to more nuclear investment. The Bat pointed out the discrepancies between nuclear, fossil fuels and renewables in terms of dependability and flexibility.
3	Paul	The wind farm approved, on conditions, plus work on demand reduction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The conditions on which the wind farm was approved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> bladeless turbines (which EDF was trialling) sited away from migration routes and not on peat wildlife restoration sustainable materials, with no mining of rare earths and to be fully recyclable at end of life community support for local areas A National Energy Reduction Scheme, fair and equitable, financed by the profit from the turbines

Some of the final plenary discussion – about a ‘smart’ grid - broke new ground, not discussed by previous Assemblies:

Participant 1 (playing Earth): “If one turbine goes down in a big centralised system that is a problem. If one village’s turbine goes down, the other villages can help support that village. So it’s more of an ecosystem than a system. That’s what the Earth thinks. The Earth thinks it’s great to diversify and stop poisoning the planet.”

Participant 2 thought that this argument backfired: “Earth’s proposal actually highlights the benefit of a national grid. When a small part of a national grid goes down it doesn’t have any knock-on effect – there is still a flow of energy, whereas to connect a small group of village communities together is very complicated.”

Participant 3 disagreed with participant 2: “A ‘smart’ energy system probably does away with what was spoken of earlier about the problems of a decentralised system.”



France Convention Citoyenne

In France 72% of electricity comes from nuclear

We want everyone to be able to participate in green energy production at all scales of the territory by 2023. To achieve this we plan the following:

PROPOSAL PT11.1: Improvement of territorial / regional governance.

This includes: compensation mechanisms for regions less endowed with resources for green energy; and regionalising national tenders.

PROPOSAL PT11.2: Participation of citizens, local businesses, local associations and local authorities in renewable energy projects.

This development is important because each region or regional pilot knows a lot better its capacities and opportunities in renewable energies. Local management is a way to better manage the resource because you are in contact with it. We advocate solidarity mechanisms and ambitious production of local energy, recognising that all the territories and cities are not equally endowed.

PROPOSAL PT11.3: Development of self-production, so as to produce the electricity we consume.

“We are particularly committed to the participation of all - individuals, small companies, local authorities - to the production of green energy from local resources. This will support a change in the model of society that we want.” This local production will make everyone aware of the challenges of reducing consumerism. Projects must be developed with respect for biodiversity and the use of suitable eco-responsible materials.

Source, pages 139-145:

<https://propositions.conventioncitoyennepourleclimat.fr/pdf/France-rapport-final.pdf>

Executive summary in English:

<https://propositions.conventioncitoyennepourleclimat.fr/pdf/FRANCE-propositions-synthese%20-%20EN.pdf>



UK Climate Assembly

How the UK generates its electricity is a central question on the path to net zero. The UK still produces a significant amount of its electricity from fossil fuels, particularly gas. All the UK's electricity generation will need to come from low carbon sources if it is to meet its net zero target. The UK is also likely to need more electricity in future due to an increase in electric vehicles and electric heating.

Key recommendation

Large majorities of assembly members 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that three ways of generating electricity should be part of how the UK gets to net zero:

Offshore wind (95%)

Solar power (81%)

Onshore wind (78%)

Assembly members tended to see these technologies as proven, clean and low cost, with wind-based options suitable for a "windy" UK. Offshore wind had key additional benefits, particularly being "out of the way". Solar power was viewed as flexible in terms of where it can be located, among other advantages.

Some assembly members suggested a range of points to bear in mind when implementing all three technologies. These included their location and environmental impact, progress on electricity storage, ways to incentivise and facilitate uptake, visual design, and where they are manufactured.

Source, page 22: Climate Assembly UK Report:
<https://www.climateassembly.uk/report/read/final-report-exec-summary.pdf>

3. What next?

Citizens have generated far more ambitious policies than politicians have ever come up with. Children and other people who don't usually have a voice (including future generations) have energy and initiative that can produce even better policies. They need to be heard. The voices of More-Than-Humans also need to be heard – on an equal footing with humans. That also leads to more ambitious questions and answers.

What next: tell your friends and family and organise another Assembly (with our help).



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