


Voicing the Air



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 hu-	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 as well as UK students aged 11 – 16.	French adults were selected to represent and engage with and their communities and regions	Adults were selected to 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	Johnny	Approved with conditions + reducing demand (Discussion incomplete – but this is the most likely result)	The conditions would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the number of turbines • Make them as tall as possible • Make the blades as short as possible • Locate them away from populations and flight paths of birds and bats Ways of reducing demand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofitting homes • Solar panels
2	Jenny	Approved with conditions (but see final condition)	Conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wind farm should be built and run on a not-for-profit basis • Local benefit in terms of jobs and the running of the not-for-profit company • Lots of education on moving away from high energy consumption and fossil fuels • All components recyclable, designed from cradle to grave • Location sensitive to avian world • Turbines redesigned to reduce harm • Lots more research – which might negate the need for the wind farm
3	Perry	Approved with conditions + reducing demand	Overarching principle: solidarity, especially between Wales and the countries where rare earths are mined. Agreed that demand should be reduced. This would have two benefits for rare earths: demand for them would fall, and less demand would mean less global warming, hence less ice melt, so reducing the amount of rare earths exposed in places like Greenland. Conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The turbines are designed to be gearless, so no rare earths are needed • The wind farm will be built and operated by a community energy company, which the Welsh farmer will help to set up. EDF agreed to go into partnership with the company to pass on its knowledge. Two points were unresolved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ken Saro-Wiwa challenged the Welsh farmer, saying that as a nuclear company, EDF was an unsuitable partner. The Welsh farmer in response suggested that the partnership be time limited. EDF

			<p>in that case could not see the benefit of being involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Welsh farmer wanted smaller turbines and blades, symbolising local production for local use. EDF proposed larger blades, meaning fewer turbines, as being less harmful to animal life.
4	Paul	Approved with conditions + some demand reduction	<p>Reason for approving it: accept that there is a long-term need to change the way we generate energy.</p> <p>Conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigate impact of pylons on the earth Avoid harm from the extraction of rare earth metals – especially to native communities and land Fewer turbines with shorter blades. EDF confirmed that mini-turbines would be possible. Have a localised grid, which will reduce transmission losses. (Accept that this will mean less subsidy from EDF.) Link this to a local insulation programme
5	Lollie	Approved with conditions + reducing demand	<p>The starting point is that there is a climate emergency and a pressing need to switch to renewables</p> <p>Conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lot more research into the effect of the wind farm on the local area and how it could benefit Bladeless turbines, not built on peat bogs People commit to using less energy, so that a smaller wind farm is sufficient to meet demand.



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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