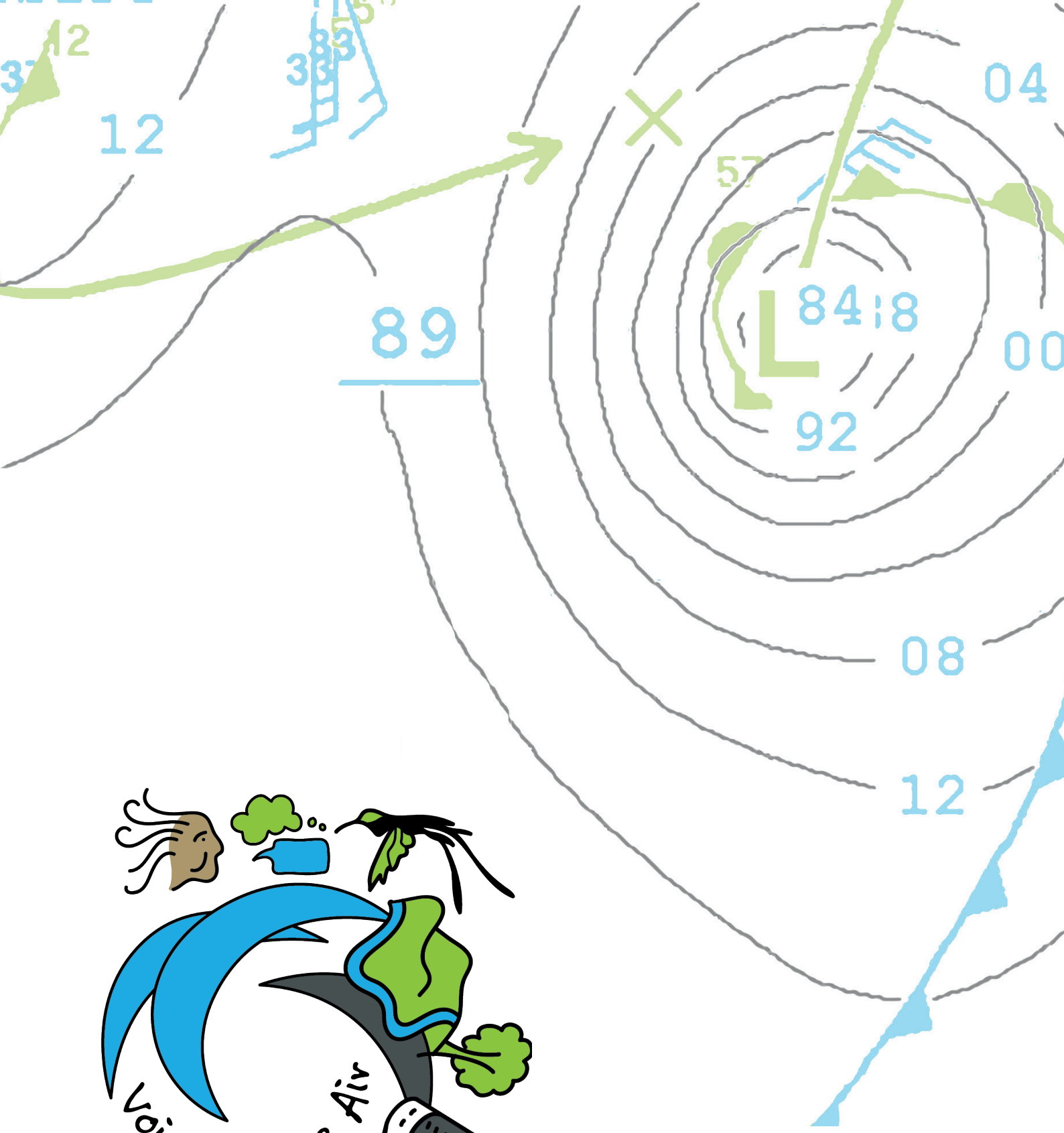


Assembly of Humans & More-Than-Humans

Sheffield Festival of Ideas

22nd October 2021

Voicing the Air

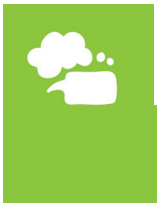
Results

Results from the Assembly of Humans and more than Humans 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?	100s so far, with the potential for thousands in the future	150	108
Who was represented?	Humans of all ages represent 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 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

The application was turned down. This was by supermajority, with EDF dissenting. The refusal reflected Bat's suspicion of human promises. It was also seen as the best way to achieve a range of objectives, all widely supported:

• There was a desire to reduce the demand for energy. One way of doing this was through a programme of insulation, as in Kirklees.

• Greta Thunberg led the call to explore other forms of energy supply, such as tidal.

• The Earth demanded habitat restoration, with healthier moorland leading to more grassland, more carbon reservoirs and less silt.

• Rhodri, the Welsh farmer, invited EDF to come and discuss how the wind farm could provide as much as possible of local benefit.

For the first time, the event included a Facebook audience. While the Zoom participants prepared to negotiate, the members of the audience were invited to choose to be Bat, Falcon or Wind, and then to leave their home, go round the block, and use their senses to explore being their choice. They then watched the Zoom participants negotiate. Here are a few of the comments posted on Facebook during that negotiation:

• The participants forget about the colour and temperature of the sky, the warm air that Falcon uses to go up high in the sky.

• Humans could start thinking in a broader way and delight in us Bats, rather than electricity

• I can tell that the farmer has never been caught in the murderous vortex of a wind turbine!

• My cousins who live in the hills could invite Farmer for a trial flight in Wales where blades are rotating.

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 - in 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.

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%)

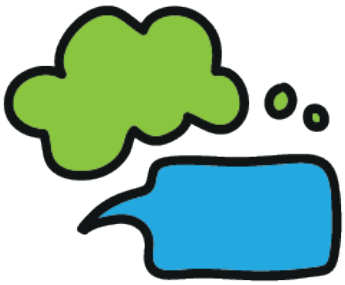
Assembly members tended to see these technologies as proven, clean and low cost, with wind-based options suitable for a “windy” UK. Offshore wind had key additional benefits, particularly being “out of the way”. Solar power was viewed as flexible in terms of where it can be located, among other advantages.

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.

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).



Discover more creative ideas from Humans and More Than Humans Assemblies on the project's website

https://www.voicingtheair.org/results/

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Sources:

France Convention Citoyenne
Source, pages 139-145:
https://propositions.conventioncitoyennepourleclimat.fr/le-rapport-final/

Executive summary in English:
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