

CLIMATE AMBITION BEYOND EMISSION NUMBERS

**Taking stock of progress by looking inside
countries and sectors**

FRANCE

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<i>How is this document relevant to the Global Stocktake?</i>	2
<i>Foreword</i>	4
France: Climate Ambition Since The Paris Agreement	5
<i>An increased focus on climate in the domestic discourse</i>	5
<i>Evolution National governance</i>	7
<i>Actions and policies</i>	8

Disclaimer

The results presented in this report are outputs of the academic research conducted under the DDP BIICS project as per the contractual agreement. The academic work does not in any way represent our considered opinion for climate negotiations and also does not reflect the official policy or position of the Government of France.

How is this document relevant to the Global Stocktake?

This document is part of a collective report that assesses the evolution of climate ambition in 26 countries and 3 hard-to-abate sectors through a granular and context-specific analysis of trends and progress of national and sectoral transformations.¹ This approach allows identifying what hinders and spurs action in countries and sectors, and understanding the conditions that can support enhanced ambition, which could be political, social, economic, governance.

These insights are directly relevant to four overarching functions of the Global Stocktake in support of its desired outcome, i.e. "to inform Parties in updating and enhancing, in a nationally determined manner, their actions and support in accordance with the provisions of the Paris Agreement, as well as enhancing international cooperation for climate action" (Article 14.3 of the Paris Agreement):

- Create the conditions for an open and constructive conversation on global cooperation (on e.g., technology, trade, finance, etc.), based on an in-depth understanding of the international enablers of enhanced country ambition.
- Organize a process for knowledge sharing and collective learning, based on concrete examples of actions already in place or being discussed, including best practices.
- Create space for open dialogues across different stakeholders to support better coordination of actions, based on a detailed understanding of the levers to be activated to enhance ambition in national and sectoral transitions
- Facilitate ownership by decision-makers of the climate challenge and the risks and opportunities of the low-emission and resilient transition, based on context-specific and granular analysis of barriers and enablers.

More specifically, the collective report in general – and this document in particular – can contribute to address some of the key guiding questions for the Global Stocktake², notably:

- What actions have been taken to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster the climate resilience of people, livelihoods, and ecosystem? To what extent have national adaptation plans and related efforts contributed to these actions (Decision 19/CMA.1, paragraph 36(c))?
- How adequate and effective are current adaptation efforts and support provided for adaptation (Article 7.14 (c) Paris Agreement)?

¹ The full report « Climate ambition beyond emission numbers - Taking stock of progress by looking inside countries and sectors" can be found at: <https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/report/climate-ambition-beyond-emission-numbers-taking-stock-progress>

² Draft Guiding Questions for the Technical Assessment of GST1 (version 20th October 2021), available at: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Draft%20GST1_TA%20Guiding%20Questions.pdf

- What are the barriers and challenges, including finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building gaps, faced by developing countries?
- What is the collective progress made towards achieving the long-term vision on the importance of fully realizing technology development and transfer in order to improve resilience to climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions referred in Article 10.1 of the Paris Agreement? What is the state of cooperative action on technology development and transfer?
- What progress has been made on enhancing the capacity of developing country Parties to implement the Paris Agreement (Article 11.3 Paris Agreement)?
- To achieve the purpose and long-term goals of the Paris Agreement (mitigation, adaptation, and finance flows and means of implementation, as well as loss and damage, response measures), in the light of equity and the best available science, taking into account the contextual matters in the preambular paragraphs of the Paris Agreement:
 - What are the good practices, barriers and challenges for enhanced action?
 - What is needed to make finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low GHG emissions and climate-resilient development?
 - What are the needs of developing countries related to the ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement?
 - What is needed to enhance national level action and support, as well as to enhance international cooperation for climate action, including in the short term?
 - What is the collective progress made by non-Party stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, to achieve the purpose and long-term goals of the Paris Agreement, and what are the impacts, good practices, potential opportunities, barriers and challenges (Decision 19/CMA.1, paras 36(g) and 37(i))?

Foreword

Henri Waisman, Marta Torres Gunfaus, Anna Perez Catala, IDDRI.

Country commitments as reflected in enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions submitted to the UNFCCC are insufficient to put the world on track to achieve the collective objective of the Paris Agreement to hold temperature increase below 2 °C or 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels. Furthermore, concrete policies and actions adopted by countries on the ground are often not sufficient to achieve these NDC targets. These conclusions highlight the need to increase ambition and to provide convincing evidence to accelerate action in the immediate and short term to give effect to this ambition. Yet these assessments are not sufficient to effectively guide the progressive increase of ambition, as organized by the cyclical process of the Paris Agreement.

APPROACH

With this imperative in mind, this report adopts a different, complementary, perspective on climate ambition. It seeks to open the box of emission pathways, by considering multiple dimensions of the conditions that will make these pathways possible. These are technical, economic, political, social and governance considerations in need of attention to enable the required far-reaching and systemic transformation towards the long-term goal. On the one hand, the revision of emission targets needs to be directed by an assessment of how drivers of emissions should change to trigger transformation. On the other hand, converting emissions' targets into pertinent concrete implementation requires well-designed policy packages and investment plans that are also informed by a clear and detailed understanding of the starting point, priorities and interplays between the available levers of transformation.

This bottom-up assessment aims at contributing to the process of collective learning in support of the progressive increase of collective ambition, as inserted at the core of the Paris Agreement paradigm. Approaching climate ambition through the lens of underlying transformations calls for reflecting the heterogeneous nature and the multi-faceted aspects

of transitions in different sectors and countries. This forces a move away from a purely global perspective and adopts a more granular approach based on country and individual sector perspectives. Thus, the report explores trends and progress on these transformations, as locally observed over the past years, notably since the Paris Agreement. This 'backwards looking' approach can help identify where developments are going in the right direction, where they should be accelerated and where major tensions remain that should be addressed as a priority to avoid undermining the transition. The picture of the state of the ambition discussion, firmly embedded in the country and sectoral realities, can provide means for reflection and action within the international climate community, particularly to inform focus areas for advancing the collective ambition agenda.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This country report describes the recent evolutions of domestic discourses on climate ambition, national climate policy, national governance and concrete policies and actions with a significant effect on GHG emissions. The chapter highlights a selection of striking and structurally important elements to advance the transformation towards carbon neutrality from an in-country perspective.

This report is part of a full series of 26 country chapters and three sectoral chapters. The full report includes a "summary for decision-makers" to present 10 cross-cutting messages emerging from the country and sector analysis, as a guide to the selection of priorities for collective action in the post-COP26 period.

You will find the full report at: https://www.iddri.org/sites/default/files/PDF/Publications/Catalogue%20Iddri/Rapport/DDP_beyond%20emissions%20report.pdf



CLIMATE AMBITION SINCE THE PARIS AGREEMENT

AN INCREASED FOCUS ON CLIMATE IN THE DOMESTIC DISCOURSE

This chapter has been written thanks to the support of the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU).

This brief exposes selected developments that took place in France since 2015 which illustrate the progress made in climate policy and the overall alignment of the country to the Paris agreement mitigation goal.

Since 2015, Climate has become more important in the domestic policy debate in France. To some extent, this derives from the role France played in the run up of the Paris agreement and hosting the COP21. A strong consensus emerged across the political spectrum to contribute to preserve and reinforce the acquis of the Paris agreement, seen as a major achievement of the French diplomacy. The French government illustrated this by actively inciting the EU and foreign countries to ratify the Paris Agreement, proposing a strong political response to the US withdrawal announcement in 2017 and launching several high-level political summits on the environment called the One Planet Summits.

The aftermath of the Paris agreement saw and increased public awareness on climate¹, changes in the political discussions and stakeholders' narrative integrating climate to a greater extent. The debate focuses now on whether France is doing enough on climate and how domestic decarbonization can be accelerated in conjunction with social justice.

At the domestic level, climate change did not break through as an important topic of the 2017 presidential election; however, the public perception on the importance of climate change clearly increased over the few following years. In a regular poll produced by Ademe², 15 % of French citizens cited environment as the most important issue faced today by France, three times more than in 2015. Among the environmental issues, climate change was cited as the first one by 34 % of the respondents. This increase was already noticeable in 2016 and 2017 following the hosting of COP21; however, it clearly accelerated between 2018 and 2019 in conjunction with the wave of climate mobilisation in Europe. The resignation in September 2018 of the environment ministry Nicolas Hulot, a well-known environmental activist, also contributed to diffuse in the public the idea that the government was not doing enough on climate at the domestic level. At the end of 2018, the Yellow Jackets protest movement initiated on a refusal of a carbon tax increase perceived as unfair. It led to a long period of public debate over 2019 and 2020 on how to combine the ecological transition with social justice³ and the creation of an innovative policy experiment, the Citizen's Convention on Climate (CCC). The convention's organization contributed to keep climate policy under the spotlight and ended up with a large amount of proposals on climate policies⁴.

During this period, French stakeholders also included climate largely in their priorities and activities. The French business community vocally supported the Paris Agreement and organised a common initiative to communicate their climate pledges⁵ with 99 companies among the biggest in France participating. They tend to support climate policy as a way to position the economic activity on innovative industries to increase the competitiveness of the French economy and frequently ask for carbon trade adjustments for productions from countries with less ambition on climate. Trade unions also integrated climate in their narrative and recommendations on several occasions by promoting common solutions for a just transition in partnerships with environmental organisations⁶. On top of these initiatives and supporting the climate strikes movement, environmental organisations concentrated their action on increasing the public authorities' accountability on climate, first by proposing a framework to assess regularly the progress on climate action⁷ and then by starting a climate litigation action against the French state⁸ that gathered the support of more than 2 million signatories.

The rise of climate in the domestic political discussion also influenced national political parties. The 2019 European election seeing all major parties referring to climate in their political platform and major gains for the Green party was a pivotal moment. Then, during 2020 municipal elections, an unprecedented number of mayors were elected on an Ecologist platform. Overall, the political debate in France is not whether climate should be a public policy topic but rather on the kind of climate policy that should be implemented and whether the government is doing enough to address climate change. On one-side, ecologist and leftist parties promote stricter governance mechanisms for enforcing climate objectives regulatory instruments and the inclusion of a redistributive agenda linked to climate policy, while the centre political majority in government promote an ecology based on solution and right-wing parties support climate innovation and oppose most regulations.

1 Recent studies show this has not been reversed by the Covid-19 crisis. Ademe, BOY Daniel, RCB Conseil (2020) Rapport. Les représentations sociales de l'effet de serre et du changement climatique, 40 p. Available at www.ademe.fr/mediatheque

2 Ademe, BOY Daniel, RCB Conseil (2020) Rapport. Les représentations sociales de l'effet de serre et du changement climatique, 40 p. Available at www.ademe.fr/mediatheque

3 See Saujot M. et al (2019) After the carbon tax freeze, what are the priorities for the French ecological transition?, Iddri Policy Brief n°2019 : <https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/policy-brief/after-carbon-tax-freeze-what-are-priorities-french-ecological>

4 See Saujot M. et al. (2020) The Citizens' Climate Convention: 149 measures for a new vision of the transition, Iddri Study n°7/2020 : <https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/study/citizens-climate-convention-149-measures-new-vision-transition>

5 See French business climat pledge (2019) <https://www.medef92.fr/uploads/media/node/0001/20/9e52f6c8203a85aeaeef-8d2aa11000e8da2f9292.pdf>

6 See Pacte du pouvoir de vivre <https://www.pactedupouvoirdevivre.fr/> or <https://plus-jamais.org/>

7 Observatoire climat-énergie : <https://www.observatoire-climat-energie.fr/>

8 L'affaire du siècle : <https://laffairedu siecle.net/>

Finally, from the outset of the Covid-19 crisis, the need for a recovery plan with a strong green component has been central in the French policy debate. Several contributions from Think tanks⁹, Business leaders¹⁰ or NGOs and Unions¹¹ highlighted the multiple co-benefits of investing in the ecological transition¹². In addition, the Citizen's Convention on Climate¹³, which was ongoing when the Covid-19 crisis hit, produced a special contribution to the economic recovery including 50 proposals from its work in April 2020¹⁴. All these contributions showed that greening the recovery was a priority among many different stakeholders and laid the ground for an ambitious uptake by policymakers.

EVOLUTION NATIONAL GOVERNANCE

The past five years have seen climate change being elevated to the highest political level. Noticeable evolutions include the regular organization of interministerial environmental security councils¹⁵, the creation of the High Council for Climate, the adoption of a new climate neutral target for 2050 and two climate laws and the organization of a Citizen's Convention on Climate.

The energy transition law voted in 2015 laid the foundation of the French climate governance system by making it mandatory to produce every five years a 2050 decarbonization strategy linked to a prescriptive

framework of action including the definition of carbon budgets for the next 15 years and the definition of an operational energy plan for the next 10 years. The long-term strategy and carbon budgets cover territorial ghg emissions from all sources including land-Use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) and agriculture. All these planning documents must be revised every five years. The last cycle due to be finalized in 2018 was extended until the end 2019 but saw some positive evolutions. First, the learnings from the new IPCC report on the 1.5°C¹⁶ have been reflected at the domestic level with the adoption of an updated 2050-climate neutrality target instead of a pre-existing – 75 % ghg emissions target. Second, an extensive consultation with stakeholders took place during the process, including a public debate on the 10-year energy plan¹⁷. This led to produce a first comprehensive roadmap of the French economy towards achieving the Paris agreement goals that also recommended accelerating the decrease in fossil fuel consumption to reach – 40 % by 2030. During the process, major points of controversy appeared, among them the respective share of bioenergy and renewable electricity in the energy mix and the inclusion of biodiversity in the definition of the decarbonization strategy. These controversies are still very much in the debate and could trigger significant revisions during the next cycle. The need for a more regular evaluation of climate policy performance and overall progress on climate performance became also apparent. It led to the creation at the end of 2018 of a new independent body, the High Council for Climate (HCC), charged with issuing advice and recommendations to the French government on climate performance of policies and measures and provide independent insight on government climate policy. Modelled after the example of the UK Climate Change committee, the HCC is formed by 13 members selected according to their scientific expertise. Since its creation, its productions serve as a reference for the public debate on climate policy. Finally, it has also been decided that the main objectives of the next 10-year energy plan due in 2023 will be debated and voted in parliament in collaboration with the HCC, which will increase its political clout. All of these changes were included in a Climate and energy law voted in 2019.

⁹ I4CE (2020) Relance, comment financer l'action climat https://www.i4ce.org/wp-core/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/I4CE-Relance_FinancementActionClimat-52p-2.pdf

¹⁰ https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2020/05/03/mettons-l-environnement-au-c-ur-de-la-reprise-economique_6038523_3232.html

¹¹ See for example, Le Pacte du Pouvoir de vivre (2020) Les 15 mesures indispensables pour le pouvoir de vivre dès la fin du confinement <https://www.pactedupouvoirdevivre.fr/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/DOSSIER-DE-PRESSE-OK-15mesures.pdf> et

¹² Terra Nova and I4CE (2020) C-bénéfices environnementaux et sanitaires de l'action publique: it's (also the economy, stupid ! https://tnova.fr/system/contents/files/000/002/013/original/Terra-Nova_Cycle-Covid19_Co-b_n_fices-environnementaux-et-sanitaires-de-laction-publique_070520.pdf?1588781732

¹³ The CCC is an innovative policy process launched in October 2019 involving 150 randomly selected citizens to propose measures to reach the French 2030 climate target in a spirit of social justice. To learn more : <https://www.conventioncitoyennepourleclimat.fr/en/>

¹⁴ Convention citoyenne pour le climat (2020) Contribution de la CCC au plan de sortie de crise <https://www.conventioncitoyennepourleclimat.fr/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Contribution-de-la-CCC-au-plan-de-sortie-de-crise-1.pdf>

¹⁵ See : <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/conseil-de-defense-ecologique>

¹⁶ IPCC (2018) Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5 °C : <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

¹⁷ See : <https://cpdp.debatpublic.fr/cdpdp-ppe/index.html>

In the aftermath of the Yellow vest protest movement and the French carbon tax freeze¹⁸, the French government decided to organize an innovative democratic experiment. It consists in mandating a panel of 150 randomly selected French citizens, representative of the French population, to select and propose policy measures to achieve the French 2030 climate objective in a spirit of social justice¹⁹. During eight months, they learned about climate change from experts, then deliberated, and proposed to the French government 149 measures to be implemented related to all relevant sectors (transport, buildings, food, production and consumption) to accelerate climate action in France. It led to the adoption in parliament of a climate and resilience law in 2021, the second climate law voted in two years, aimed at translating some of the citizen's proposals in law. The citizen's convention on climate also proposed to include the fight against climate change in the French constitution leading to a policy debate on whether a referendum should be organised on the topic, however the proposal was then blocked in the Parliament. Overall, the organization of the CCC can be seen positively because it proved that citizen's, when left with time and information about climate, tend to support ambitious measures on climate and measures that are generally supported by the general public.²⁰ It also help putting in the public debate measures not applied or included in the current climate policy-mix such as regulating advertisement, aviation line restrictions and speed limit on highways²¹. It is still to be seen if other citizen's convention will be organised again on climate or other policy areas but several governmental communication suggest this could be the case.

ACTIONS AND POLICIES

¹⁸ Following yellow vest demonstrations, the French carbon tax was frozen at 44.6 €/tCO₂ while its level was previously supposed to raise every year to reach 56 €/tCO₂ in 2020 and 100 €/tCO₂ in 2030.

¹⁹ To learn more about the French Citizen's Convention on Climate see: <https://www.conventioncitoyennepourleclimat.fr/en/>

²⁰ See Adrien Fabre & Bénédicte Apouey & Thomas Douenne & Louis-Gaëtan Giraudet & Jean-François Laslier & Antonin Macé (2020) "Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat : Les citoyens de la Convention comparés à des échantillons représentatifs de la population française. Note de travail," PSE Working Papers

²¹ Saujot M. et al. (2020) The Citizens' Climate Convention: 149 measures for a new vision of the transition, Iddri Study n°7/2020 : <https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/study/citizens-climate-convention-149-measures-new-vision-transition>

French recovery measures brought additional funds to climate mitigation actions

French economy, as all major economies, has been severely hit by the Covid-19 crisis with a -8.3 % Gdp recession in 2020. France played an active role in setting up an European recovery plan²² and, in line with stakeholder's recommendations, made environment one of the three key priorities, with competitiveness and cohesion of its "France relance" plan, earmarking 30 out of the 100 bn euros to environmental and climate actions. The main priorities where additional public funds are proposed are building energy retrofitting, transport infrastructure, a new hydrogen plan and low carbon innovation especially related with aviation greening. This is an important achievement because most of the initiatives correspond to areas where climate progress has been too slow until now. However, the extent to which the recovery plan contributes to climate objectives heavily depends on existing and future sectoral regulation and policy changes, such as building renovation support and incentives for clean car purchase and freight transport modal shifts. **By providing additional climate funding in sectors where emissions reduction has been lagging, the French recovery plans have so far contributed to climate mitigation, however its ability to put France on track to achieve its 2030 and 2050 climate objective is uncertain and depends on additional policy changes.** An occasion to adjust the sectoral regulations took place with the Climate & Resilience law, following the CCC final recommendations published in June 2020²³. However during the writing of the law, several citizen's proposal were delayed or have been cutback, lowering their climate ambition. Several studies showed that there is still a significant gap to reach the -40 % GHG target, even after taking into account the additional measures brought by the new law. This is illustrated by an impact assessment²⁴ commissioned

²² Initiative franco-allemande pour la relance européenne face à la crise du coronavirus : <https://www.elysee.fr/admin/upload/default/0001/07/d4fe338244d28de018c5bf0c538c83c337285d0e.pdf>

²³ Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat (2021) Rapport final : <https://propositions.conventioncitoyennepourleclimat.fr/le-rapport-final/>

²⁴ See for instance MTEs (2021) Evaluation climat des mesures du quinquennat : https://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2021_03_01.Etude_BCG_Evaluation_climat_des_mesures_du_quinquennat.pdf or Carbone 4 (2021) L'Etat français se donne-t-il les moyens de son ambition climat ? : <http://www.carbone4.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LEtat-franc%CC%A7ais-se-donne-t-il-les-moyens-de-son-ambition-climat.pdf>

by the Environment Ministry showed that out of the 107 MtCO₂ necessary emissions reduction between 2018 and 2030 to reach the national 2030-climate target, only 21 MtCO₂ are likely to be achieved with existing measures. The same impact assessment estimated that 29 MtCO₂ are difficult to achieve with existing measures whereas 57 MtCO₂ can be achieved if existing or new measures are implemented voluntarily. **The Climate and resilience law is therefore a step in a good direction but still insufficient to put France on track to reach its 2030 climate objective that** will need to be reinforced in line with the new EU climate objective of -55% ghg emissions by 2030.

DDP

The DDP is an initiative of the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI). It aims to demonstrate how countries can transform their economies by 2050 to achieve global net zero emissions and national development priorities, consistently with the Paris Agreement.. The DDP initiative is a collaboration of leading research teams currently covering 36 countries. It originated as the Deep Decarbonization Pathways Project (DDPP), which analysed the deep decarbonization of energy systems in 16 countries prior to COP21 (deepdecarbonization.org). Analyses are carried out at the national scale, by national research teams. These analyses adopt a long-term time horizon to 2050 to reveal the necessary short-term conditions and actions to reach carbon neutrality in national contexts. They help governments and non-state actors make choices and contribute to in-country expertise and international scientific knowledge. The aim is to help governments and non-state actors make choices that put economies and societies on track to reach a carbon neutral world by the second half of the century. Finally, national research teams openly share their methods, modelling tools, data and the results of their analyses to share knowledge between partners in a very collaborative manner and to facilitate engagement with sectoral experts and decision-makers.

www.ddpinitiative.org

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The Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI) is an independent, not-for-profit policy research institute based in Paris. Its objective is to identify the conditions and propose tools to put sustainable development at the heart of international relations and public and private policies. IDDRI is also a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform and supports stakeholders in global governance debates on the major issues of common interest, such as actions to mitigate climate change, protect biodiversity, strengthen food security, and to manage urbanisation. The institute also participates in work to build development trajectories that are compatible with national priorities and the sustainable development goals.

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