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Newsletter

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Editorial

Journey towards sustainability must start now, not a day later!

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Editorial by Céline Charveriat

Dear Reader,

I have some really shocking news: by setting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030, our governments have effectively committed to transform radically the way we work, move, eat and consume goods and services, and they have promised this will happen in the next 5,000 days.

Most scientists actually think we have much less time than this, since the more we wait, the more some options will become impossible. In relation to climate change, **the science body of the UN is warning** we may have already crossed the line beyond which staying within 1.5 degrees of global warming is even a remote possibility. Moreover, we are on a crash course *via-a-vis* other natural boundaries, such as ocean acidification and biodiversity loss.

In spite of its many achievements, the European continent has a tough road ahead to 2030, especially on goals for sustainable production and consumption, climate action, life below water and life on land, as shown by this chart.

Implementation of the SDGs is happening at a time when Europe faces an unprecedented crisis created by a prolonged recession, multiple wars on our doorstep and Brexit, all of which severely reduce the political space to propose bold reforms and shorten the time horizon for national and European officials. It is hard to focus on fire prevention when your own house is burning down around you.

Yet it has never been so urgent for Europe to take a long-term view. In the words of the Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy: 'In every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.' (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_generation_sustainability).

In this sobering context, **Sustainability Now**, the new report written for the President of the European Commission by former Director General of DG Environment Karl Falkenberg is highly welcomed. Falkenberg pulls no punches in reminding us of the harsh reality that achieving a European lifestyle for a global population of 10 billion people in 2050 would require the natural resources of at

least two planet Earths. Better yet, Falkenberg maps out a detailed and well-argued programme for the EU to tackle this challenge in a systematic way, including some practical and eminently reasonable steps.

On the back of Falkenberg's report, what is now required from sustainability think tanks and research institutions is to **plot a credible transformation pathway for each Member State**, and proposals on how European institutions, local authorities, businesses, civil society and citizens can support such a massive transformation.

Here are a few ideas from IEEP:

Backcasting: We need to work backwards from our 2030 SDGs to identify scenarios and policy options that would chart a plausible course between the present and the desired future. Existing documents will not do the trick; while still useful, the **EU's 2020 strategy** is highly growth oriented and too short term. Similarly, the DG Research and Innovation's **Global Europe 2050** report is not detailed enough to guide policy. We need a 'who-does-what-when' Roadmap.

Innovative policies and governance: Personally, I am glad to see that the Falkenberg report mentions universal basic income, which stands up as really innovative thinking which could advance the realisation of many SDGs in Europe. Reforming governance in Europe, with its « millefeuille » of competing and siloed authorities at multiple levels is a must to deliver the scale and speed of change needed. How to do so without getting bogged down in endless debates or opening Pandora’s box is a 10 million dollar question. It probably requires us to seize opportunities for clarification and simplification – whenever they present themselves – and to focus on concrete practice change through bottom up, cross-boundary and multi-stakeholder projects.

Show us the money: To kick-start discussions around the mobilisation of public and private funding to implement SDGs, we badly need robust information regarding the costs of both the transition and the business-as-usual approach in Europe, with a clear understanding

of the additional costs of delaying action. This would also be a breath of fresh air in advance of the discussions around the next EU Budget, which risk being narrowed again to the usual give and take debates among Member States.

Bridging the gap between the knowledge community and the public: Whilst 35% of the EU population are aware of the SDGs, only 10% actually know what they are. This leaves the vast majority of the EU population unaware of what their governments have committed to within the SDGs, let alone the scenarios and options that exist to reach these goals or what ordinary citizens and businesses can do about it. This clearly needs to change.

To finish, let me share some other words of wisdom from Native American nations: In an ancient legend, a hummingbird, faced with an immense fire, brings drops of water in his beak. Other larger animals mock him for his small contribution but the hummingbird says: at least I am doing my share. Like

the hummingbird, IEEP – as a member of Europe’s knowledge community - will certainly do its part and ensure all its work aims to support the implementation of the SDGs.

My question to you, Reader, is how can we collaborate to multiply our drops of water and help catalyse the transition? Please send us your ideas!



*Listen to **Erik Solheim** – new Executive Director of the UN Environment Program – talk about the role of the UN and of governments in achieving sustainable development – now!*



Source: Based on Bertelsmann Stiftung & SDSN. 2016. SDG Index and Dashboard – A global report.

Cross-Atlantic cooperation on innovative biodiversity financing mechanisms



IIEEP, together with CIRAD (France) and Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico), are supporting a dialogue and sharing of lessons learned between the EU and Mexico on innovative financing mechanisms (IFMs) for biodiversity.

Public financing is key for biodiversity conservation both in the EU and globally. However, public resources on their own generally fall short of delivering conservation objectives and need to be complemented by other sources of financing to ensure proper levels of protection.

Existing biodiversity financing frameworks in Europe and Mexico provide interesting insights into the use of IFMs. Several payments for ecosystem services (PES) schemes, which pay land managers to attain specific environmental objectives, are already in use on both sides of the Atlantic. IIEEP, CIRAD and Universidad Iberoamericana are supporting knowledge exchange on IFMS for biodiversity between Europe and Mexico.

In Europe, close to 30 different types of PES are in place including

programmes financed by private companies and citizens, by local, regional or national public bodies, or co-financed with public and private sources. The schemes mostly address agricultural and forest areas, and aim to improve the delivery of ecosystem services including water quality and quantity, flood protection, carbon sequestration and recreation opportunities.

Innovative public-private partnerships are being developed in the EU and Mexico, including the EU **Natural Capital Financing Facility (NCFF)** which combines European Investment Bank (EIB) and EU LIFE programme funds, and the EU **Biodiversity and Business Platform** which aims to raise awareness and share best practice examples.

Dialogue between European and Mexican stakeholders has revealed that business is increasingly looking to develop biodiversity conservation projects, both in the EU and Mexico. The **Harmony initiative**, for example, by the multinational food and beverage company Mondelez finances the adoption of more sustainable agricultural practices by wheat and cocoa farmers.

While the work by IIEEP and partners continues, existing examples of IFMs and increasing stakeholder interest (e.g. from the business sector) show potential for scaling up biodiversity financing. However, it is also clear that instruments must be both properly designed and included in a wider biodiversity conservation policy mix to deliver concrete conservation results. These aspects also play a key role in supporting private sector participation in conservation activities.

The project's results will be presented at a side event during the **13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP)** to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Cancun (Mexico) in December 2016. An international conference will also be organised in Mexico City in January 2017 to discuss the actual and potential use of IFMs in Mexico and the EU. (See **IIEEP Conferences and Events**).

For more information on the project, please contact **Marianne Kettunen** or **Daniela Russi**.

Shot in the arm for Rural Development Policy at Cork conference



The second Rural Development conference held in Cork on 5-6 September was a remarkably constructive participatory event, engaging all the principal rural stakeholders in agreeing some broad medium term priorities for European rural and agricultural policy post 2020. IEEP was actively involved in helping shape the final declaration, as it was at the first Cork Rural Development conference back in 1996.

The **Cork 2.0 Rural Development conference** gathered 300 people back in Cork, Ireland, twenty years after the celebrated 1996 conference that contributed to the Fischer Agenda 2000 reform of the CAP and the introduction of the Rural Development second pillar. IEEP was actively involved in shaping the final declaration, as it also did back in 1996.

Cork 2.0 was organised as a bottom-up participatory event, with four parallel workshops feeding into final conclusions and the **ten-point Declaration**. Lying behind the

Declaration is a shared sense that rural policy needed new vigour and a refreshed sense of direction to avoid it being relegated in the EU's priorities and its budget reduced. To this end, IEEP's David Baldock co-led the environmental workshop and was part of the declaration drafting team, with Kaley Hart acting as the rapporteur for the group, feeding back to the plenary on the main opportunities, drivers, barriers and ways forward for addressing environmental and climate issues via rural development policy.

Because all rural interest groups were present and worked constructively and creatively together, the Declaration is rather dense in detail, somewhat obscuring the broad picture for the non-insider. However, many delegates seemed to agree with Franz Fischler's concluding remarks that rural development should in future become the core business of Europe's rural and agricultural policy, implicitly incorporating Pillar 1 as a single element in a wider and more strategic framework. There is a confident tone in the language about improved performance, smart

administration rather than mere simplification, addressing new elements such as the climate agenda, digitisation, and the need for policies to be accountable and fit for purpose.

The original Cork Declaration was not formally adopted by EU institutions but nevertheless substantially influenced the subsequent evolution of the CAP. It can therefore be hoped that the Cork 2.0 Declaration will similarly contribute towards the defence of rural policy expenditure during 2017 and beyond, as the debate over the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework and the CAP develops. IEEP will continue working actively to play a role in shaping these debates, including on the future of the CAP post 2020.

For more information, please contact **David Baldock** or **Kaley Hart**.

Japan's post-Fukushima renewables revolution



In the aftermath of the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, and the resulting catastrophe at the Fukushima I nuclear reactor, local energy and economic regeneration efforts have focused on renewables. IEEP's Martin Nesbit looks at a test case for the conclusions of our project for the IEA's Renewable Energy Technology Deployment programme on local economic impacts of clean energy investment.

On a cliff-top in Naraha, a group of visitors in business clothes is gazing out to sea. It's disappointingly misty; but suddenly the cloud breaks momentarily, and we can see the blades, side-on, of a distant turbine. Uniquely, it is floating.

Naraha is in Fukushima province and one of the coastal towns that was devastated by the 2011 tsunami, and then evacuated following the nuclear accident. Type 'Naraha tsunami' into a search engine, as I did, and you will find terrifying footage shot from the same cliff-top. It's a place where sometimes technical

issues like the energy transition to renewables, and choices between low-carbon technologies, have a raw emotional edge.

IEEP's report for the International Energy Agency's (IEA) Renewable Energy Technology Deployment programme on local economic benefits of renewable energy deployment has now been published. I was in Fukushima to present our findings to the RETD members and local Japanese energy stakeholders. Our six case studies identified real long-term economic benefits from renewables, and our recommendations cover issues like the power of local political commitment, the importance of a sense of urgency, and the need for economic regeneration policy and long-term decarbonisation strategies to work closely together.

Our Japanese hosts took us on a bus tour to show how they have set to work since 2011. The commitment is impressive. In Kawauchi village, land that can no longer be used for dairy farming, because of radioactivity constraints, now has an impressive solar array providing energy for the equivalent of 1,300 households.

The experimental offshore floating wind farm we saw from Naraha is testing a number of turbine and float designs, including down-wind turbines to maximise output from floats which lean slightly in high winds. It aims to make a major contribution to worldwide renewables deployment by bringing down costs through early learning. There are also educational facilities, including the Solar-Agri park at Minamisoma, where inspirational former nuclear power executive Eiju Hangai has created a state-of-the-art hydroponic salads farm using solar energy, as part of a venture aimed at teaching schoolchildren about the need for an energy transition.

While not everything that is happening across the prefecture is guaranteed to succeed, the scale and enthusiasm behind the investment ticks all the right boxes. Fukushima provides a valuable example for areas that might not have the same history, but nevertheless have the same need to combine clean energy and a bright economic future.

For more information, please contact Martin Nesbit.

Supporting the safe reuse of treated waste water



Reuse of waste water has the potential to address environmental and societal water needs, provided it is treated to a level that makes it safe. IEEP supported the development of EU level guidelines to support safe use, which were published this summer.

The European Commission's 2012 Water Blueprint (for which IEEP undertook supporting analysis) identified reuse of treated waste water as one potential source to support water management in water scarce parts of Europe, thereby contributing to environmental protection. However, concern over the safety of waste water has been a barrier to its use in some cases.

The Commission has identified two courses of action. One is to develop minimum standards for reuse in agriculture and for aquifer recharge. This is progressing. The other action is to develop guidelines to support water reuse in wider water management. IEEP led the work to support [these guide-](#)

[lines](#), which were finally published earlier this summer.

The guidelines explore the different sources of waste water (e.g. sewage, water used by industry) and its different potential uses (e.g. for agriculture, parks and industrial use). They discuss the potential environmental, societal and economic benefits from reuse, as well as the potential risks. They also discuss how to integrate thinking on reuse into water management planning and how to apply standards for reuse for different purposes. Finally, the guidelines highlight the importance of active stakeholder participation and explore opportunities for the financing of water reuse schemes.

IEEP continues to support work at the EU level on water reuse, seeking to ensure its recycling within a circular economic model and the potential contribution to meeting environmental and societal needs, whilst ensuring that health and the environment are protected.

For further information, please contact: [Andrew Farmer](#).

Brexit, the environment and IEEP



The result of the UK's EU referendum on 23 June has opened an uncharted area for European policymaking – and it is vital to ensure that environmental outcomes are protected both in the UK and in the remaining EU Member States.

The result of the UK's EU referendum on 23 June has opened an uncharted area for European policymaking – and it will be vital to ensure that environmental outcomes are protected both in the UK and in the remaining EU Member States.

IEEP is working with UK environmental stakeholders to identify the risks and opportunities from a UK departure from the EU. Our earlier [reports for UK NGOs](#) and the [All-Party Parliamentary Group on the Environment](#) have already set out that the risks outweigh the opportunities. Policymakers now need to maximise the potential benefits and avoid the downside risks. In particular, the downsides we identified relating to nature legislation are not inevitable; the outcome will

depend on the choices made by UK and EU negotiators, and by UK ministers in their future decision-making.

In the meantime, a number of inquiries and public events are cropping up. The UK Parliament's House of Lords EU sub-committee held an [evidence session](#) in July with experts including IEEP's Martin Nesbit. The Committee was clearly struck by the size of the challenge ahead to secure an effective transition on environmental policy; Martin emphasised in particular the risks of a hard exit without a negotiated agreement, and the importance of EU enforcement mechanisms in ensuring that governments deliver on their environmental commitments.

Also in July, the Royal Geographical Society organised a [Q&A event](#) with UK politicians leading on environment issues, with Martin also on the panel. The event revealed real audience concern about the threats, and a lack of clear answers on the UK's likely negotiating stance and future policy direction.

IEEP will continue to work in the UK and across the EU to improve pub-

lic understanding and awareness of the challenges for environmental policy posed by the UK's departure.

We will also, of course, be thinking through the implications for IEEP itself. We have always been more than a UK-based organisation, with a Brussels office and a talented team drawn from across the EU Member States and beyond. Céline Charveriat's arrival as Executive Director, based in our new Brussels office at rue de la Science, re-emphasises that. We are likely to need to formalise that direction by strengthening our corporate structure in Belgium, in addition to retaining our UK entity; but that will have little impact on our day-to-day work.

For more information, please contact [Martin Nesbit](#).

IEEP Conferences and Events



European Environmental Bureau (EEB) 2016 Annual Conference

Vienna (Austria), 26 September 2016

IEEP's Executive Directive, Céline Charveriat, will offer insights and perspectives on how Europe may strengthen its environmental voice in global governance by participating to the concluding panel discussion at the 2016 EEB Annual Conference. The event will be an important opportunity to stake stock and explore the implications for the environment and sustainability of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris climate agreement. Attendance is by invitation only.

Contact: Céline Charveriat

Ecosystem Services – the benefits of Nature for Humans

Luxembourg City (Luxembourg), 14 October 2016

IEEP's Konar Mutafoglu will discuss the benefits of conservation of nature for human health and social cohesion at the interdisciplinary forum promoted by the Luxembourg Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, Natur Musée and Natur&ëmwelt. Konar will contribute to the dialogue on the economic and environmental benefits of nature by drawing on the recently published IEEP's report on the [Health and Social Benefits of Nature and Biodiversity Protection report](#). Registration is available on the forum website.

Contact: Konar Mutafoglu

Investing in Biodiversity and Natural Capital: Lessons learnt and challenges ahead

Mexico City (Mexico), 23-24 January 2017

This international conference will explore innovative financing mechanisms (IMFs) in Mexico and the EU. Experts and practitioners will be invited to discuss key questions such as how to encourage and support private investments in biodiversity and nature conservation, how to measure the impact of such investments, and what are the key factors to ensure their success and feasibility.

Contact: Marianne Kettunen, Daniela Russi or Andrea Illes

Stakeholder conference on the updated inventory and assessment of soil protection policy instruments in Europe

Brussels (Belgium), 5 December 2016

An EU-level stakeholder workshop will take place in Brussels as a part of a European Commission study focused on the policy framework for soil protection. IEEP will present the outcomes of an extensive gap analysis of soil protection policy instruments in the 28 EU Member States. The workshop will provide an opportunity for a range of cross-sectoral stakeholders to discuss the outcomes and conclusions of the analysis. Attendance is by invitation only; please contact the IEEP team below to express an interest.

Contact: Catherine Bowyer

IEEP Books and Publications



Nature and the Wealth of Nations

December 2015

ACCESS PUBLICATION

IEEP contributed to the 'Nature and Wealth of Nations' review commissioned by the Department of The Commissioner General for Sustainable Development at the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy.

Gough Island in danger – IEEP assessment of World Heritage Site

19th July 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

IEEP assessed threats to the Gough and Inaccessible Island World Heritage Site as an assignment for the RSPB. The report brings together evidence that globally important seabird colonies and endemic species are under threat of extinction from invasive alien species, especially predatory house mice, and that appropriate eradication measures should therefore take place as quickly as possible.

The impacts of the UK's low carbon energy policy on biodiversity: evidence and policy tools

20th July 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

The study reviews evidence of the impacts of UK's low carbon energy policy on biodiversity in the UK and abroad, and incorporates biodiversity effects of low carbon energy scenarios into the UK Department of Energy and Climate Change 2050 pathway calculator tool.

Biodiversity offsets: What did the UK pilot scheme achieve?

20th July 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

Voluntary biodiversity offsetting was piloted in six areas in England by local planning authorities and stakeholder organisations under a dedicated government programme. IEEP and Collingwood Environmental Planning, together with David Tyldesley, assessed outcomes of the government programme from 2012 to 2014.

The cascading use of woody biomass in the EU – challenges, opportunities and policy solutions

29th July 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

Improving the resource efficient use of wood, through cascading the resource from one use to another, requires action throughout the wood flow. Current efforts focus on recovering and re-using waste wood. According to the IEEP and partners' assessment, more could be done with the production and utilisation of wood processing residues and improving the balancing between the material and energy use of wood.

IEEP Books and Publications



New study on the Health and Social Benefits of Biodiversity and Nature Protection

25th August 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

Protecting nature and biodiversity is helping to tackle urgent health and social challenges across Europe. A study by IEEP and partners shows how urban, suburban and rural green areas bring multiple and often overlooked benefits to society.

Study on the Revitalisation of local economy by development of renewable energy

7th September 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

IEEP's report for the International Energy Agency's Renewable Energy Technology Deployment programme (IEA RETD) explores local economic benefits of renewable energy through six in-depth case studies in Norway, France, Germany, USA, Canada and the UK.

Book review: *EU Environmental Policy – Its journey to centre stage*

3rd August 2016

Since its launch in May this year, former IEEP Director Nigel Haigh's book "EU Environmental Policy – Its journey to centre stage" has received frequent attention. In one of the more recent comments published in the Journal of Energy and Natural Resources Law, Catherine Banet of the University of Oslo calls the book "a precious testimony of the birth and evolution of EU environmental policy as well as a call for reflection as to its current challenges". Ms Banet's comprehensive review provides a useful summary of Mr Haigh's main themes as well as key points, while offering her own thought provoking linkages to more recent EU events. Praising Haigh's historical testimony as a reminder of the need for ambition and consistency in EU environmental policy, Banet also complements David Baldock's final chapter of the book as "a very useful and complementary analysis of the current stance of EU environmental policy".

“The book can serve as a nice introduction for students but can also be a source of reflection for professionals already active in the field.”

ACCESS REVIEW



Editors: Silvia Nanni,
Marianne Kettunen,
and Emma Watkins

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