LCS-RNet 16th Annual Meeting
10 Years Since the Paris Agreement: Progress and Challenges in Climate Action

Synthesis Report

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Online

Keynote presentation (Day 1) - 10 Years Since the Paris Agreement: Progress and Challenges in Climate Action. Introducing the DDP Report: Advancing Long-term Strategies through Collaborative Capacity Building

(Chair)

- Henri Waisman, IDDRI, France

(Speaker)

- Henri Waisman, IDDRI, France
- Emilio Lebre La Rovere, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Saritha Sudharmma Vishwanathan, Kyoto University, Japan / IIMA, India

Summary of Henri Waisman's Keynote Presentation

In his keynote, Henri Waisman (IDDRI) introduced the 2025 Deep Decarbonization Pathways (DDP) Report, which takes stock of national climate action ten years after the adoption of the Paris Agreement and identifies priorities for the next cycle of enhanced ambition and implementation. A key contribution of the report is its country-level perspective, based on in-depth analyses conducted by national experts in 21 diverse countries, covering both developed and developing contexts. Rather than focusing solely on aggregate emissions trends, the report examines the underlying drivers of climate action, with particular attention to governance and policy frameworks.

Waisman emphasized that while the Paris Agreement has succeeded in establishing long-term climate neutrality goals and creating an iterative framework for increasing ambition, implementation gaps remain substantial. In many countries, long-term targets have not yet translated into short-term policy decisions, effective coordination across actors is still limited, and climate objectives are insufficiently integrated into broader economic and industrial strategies. As a result, current progress is not yet aligned with the depth and speed of emissions reductions required in the coming decades.

Drawing on cross-country lessons, the report identifies three key drivers of ambitious climate action: (i) innovative governance, characterized by inclusive processes, strong institutional mandates, and long-term, science-based perspectives; (ii) comprehensive policy packages that combine multiple instruments rather than relying on isolated measures; and (iii) international cooperation tailored to national circumstances, including finance, technology, and capacity building designed around countries' specific needs. Waisman concluded that the next five years should be used to translate these lessons into concrete policy action, reinforcing the Paris Agreement's learning-by-doing approach to close the ambition and implementation gap.

Summary of Emilio Lebre La Rovere's Presentation (Brazil)

In his presentation, Prof. Emilio Lèbre La Rovere presented key insights from the Brazil chapter of the 2025 Deep Decarbonization Pathways (DDP) Report, placing them in the context of Brazil's policy experience and political economy. He emphasized that Brazil's emissions profile is distinct from most major economies, with around 70% of emissions coming from the AFOLU sector mainly deforestation and enteric fermentation while the energy sector accounts for only about 20%, reflecting Brazil's historically low-carbon electricity mix dominated by renewables.

La Rovere noted that Brazil's energy transition is relatively advanced, driven largely by non-climate factors such as energy security, early hydropower investment, and long-standing biofuel programs. Major past emissions reductions were achieved through strong environmental regulation, enforcement, and economic instruments targeting deforestation. While not initially driven by the Paris Agreement, it has reinforced long-term climate expectations. Looking ahead, he stressed the importance of policy continuity, addressing tensions around oil and gas expansion, and leveraging low-cost mitigation in forestry and renewables, supported by coherent governance and finance, to reach net-zero by mid-century.

Summary of Saritha Sudharmma Vishwanathan's Presentation (India)

In her presentation, Saritha Sudharmma Vishwanathan presented key insights from the India chapter of the 2025 Deep Decarbonization Pathways (DDP) Report, framing India's climate strategy within its broader development agenda. She emphasized that India's main challenge is balancing rapid socio-economic growth and universal energy access with long-term climate goals. With per-capita energy use still below global averages and an ambition to become a developed economy by 2047, energy demand is expected to rise significantly, making affordability, equity, and climate justice central to the transition.

She noted that India has made substantial progress under the Paris Agreement, with several NDC targets already achieved or on track, particularly in expanding non-fossil power capacity and reducing emissions intensity of GDP. India has also set a net-zero target for 2070 through its LT-LEDS. However, deep decarbonization will require simultaneous transitions across energy, industry, transport, buildings, and agriculture, including hard-to-abate and non-CO_2 sectors. She concluded that sustained policy coherence, scaled-up climate finance, and strengthened international cooperation—especially South–South collaboration are essential to align development priorities with a credible long-term decarbonization pathway.

Key messages in bullet points:

- Long-term targets require short-term governance linkages. The main implementation gap lies in translating climate neutrality goals into concrete policies, investment decisions, and institutional capacity through coherent, well-coordinated governance frameworks.
- Climate action is most effective when aligned with development priorities. Experiences from Brazil and India show that embedding climate policy within economic growth, energy access, employment, and competitiveness strengthens political durability and policy impact.
- Early mitigation and international cooperation are key to raising ambition. Leveraging low-cost sectoral opportunities and mobilizing tailored climate finance and cooperation can accelerate near-term action while maintaining credible long-term decarbonization pathways.

Session 1: Agrivoltaics as a Pathway to Regional Resilience

(Chair)

- Damasa B. Magcale-Macandog, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB)

(Speakers)

- Yugo TANAKA, IGES, Japan
- Marie Hrabanski, CIRAD, France
- Alessandra Scognamiglio, ENEA, Italy

Summary of the presentations:

Yugo TANAKA:
Agrivoltaics as a Pathway to Regional Resilience: Applying Japanese Good Practices to ASEAN
In his presentation, Dr. Yugo Tanaka framed agrivoltaics as a governance- and institution-driven tool for regional resilience rather than a purely technological solution. Drawing on Japanese experiences and implications for ASEAN countries, he argued that agrivoltaics should be integrated into broader local development strategies instead of being treated solely as an energy project. The three pillars in local decarbonization initiatives are ownership, partnership and integrated solutions. Tanaka emphasized that while agrivoltaics has strong potential in regions facing land-use competition, climate risks, and the need for decentralized energy systems, projects fail when agriculture becomes secondary or symbolic. Using Japanese case studies, he showed that resilience emerges from social and institutional arrangements such as local ownership, revenue-sharing schemes, urban–rural cooperation, and clearly defined roles during emergencies. These arrangements allow agrivoltaics to contribute simultaneously to energy supply, food security, and disaster preparedness. He concluded that ASEAN countries must embed agrivoltaics within robust local governance frameworks, supported by capacity building and clear institutional responsibilities, to ensure meaningful and durable resilience outcomes.

Marie Hrabanski:
Agrivoltaics in France: Regulation, territorialization and contestation
Dr. Marie Hrabanski examined the development of agrivoltaics in France from a governance and political economy perspective, emphasizing that it is a contested socio-political process rather than a purely technical solution. She located agrivoltaics within France's renewable energy strategy under the Multiannual Energy Programme (PPE), which seeks to expand photovoltaics toward climate neutrality by 2050. Agrivoltaics initially expanded in the 2010s without a clear legal framework, largely driven by energy developers accessing agricultural land. The 2023 Law on the Acceleration of Renewable Energy (APER) introduced a formal definition, requiring projects to deliver concrete agricultural services such as climate adaptation or risk protection. However, implementation remains highly territorialized, with significant discretion at local levels and wide regional variation. Hrabanski highlighted growing conflicts, notably in Occitanie, over landscape impacts, land use, and fears that agriculture is instrumentalized. She concluded that strong territorial governance and social legitimacy are essential for agrivoltaics to support a just energy transition.

Alessandra Scognamiglio:
Agrivoltaics as a Pathway to Regional Resilience: Insights from Italy
Dr. Alessandra Scognamiglio examined agrivoltaics in Italy as a potential pathway to regional resilience, stressing that it is primarily a governance and socio-technical challenge rather than a purely technical solution. She emphasized Italy's strong territorial diversity across climate zones, landscape, ecosystems, crops, and farming systems—which makes standardized agrivoltaic models

ineffective. Agrivoltaics has developed within a complex and unstable regulatory context: while ground-mounted PV on farmland has long been restricted, recent policies, notably the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), promote "innovative" agrivoltaics with elevated structures, monitoring, and safeguards for agricultural continuity. However, unclear legal definitions and permitting rules have created uncertainty and uneven regional implementation. Scognamiglio also highlighted rising social and territorial resistance to large-scale projects, driven by landscape concerns, project concentration, limited local involvement, and fears of land appropriation. She concluded that agrivoltaics can enhance regional resilience only if deployment choices are aligned through clear governance, robust agronomic evidence, high-quality design, and genuine community engagement.

Summary of the Q&A:

Question 1: What were the governance challenges you encountered, and how were they addressed for agrivoltaics to genuinely function as a pathway to regional resilience in ASEAN countries?

Response:

Dr. Tanaka explained that a major governance challenge has been strong local resistance rooted in earlier solar incentive schemes. High incentives attracted energy developers to farmland, despite their lack of experience or interest in agriculture, which negatively shaped local perceptions of agrivoltaic projects. This legacy continues to act as a governance barrier.

He noted that Japan has recently revised its national regulatory framework to allow municipalities to remove agrivoltaic facilities that do not maintain meaningful agricultural activity. In addition, policies now encourage early participation of local communities in project design, supported by public subsidies. Tanaka emphasized that such a balanced regulatory framework, combining regulation and community engagement, is essential to promote high-quality agrivoltaic projects.

Question 2: At the local territorial level, how are contestations of agrivoltaic projects addressed? Could you give some examples of how conflicts are dealt with?

Response:

Ms. Hrabanski explained that in regions such as Occitanie, a large share of agrivoltaic projects involve farmers in subcontracted positions, where developers first identify land and design energy projects, and only later seek farmers to legitimize them. As a result, agricultural activity is often poorly developed or secondary, sometimes limited to minimal activities such as beekeeping.

These situations frequently trigger opposition from farmers' unions, environmental NGOs, and local actors, who argue that such projects are not acceptable. Conflicts are addressed through various strategies, including judicial action, mobilization through protests and demonstrations, and collective action targeting local authorities or prefectures. Hrabanski stressed that contestation reflects deeper governance and land-use issues rather than technical opposition to agrivoltaics itself.

Question 3: Elevated agrivoltaics appears very promising. What actions or drivers are needed to promote and support elevated agrivoltaics in Italy?

Response:

Ms. Scognamiglio emphasized that a key priority is to demonstrate clearly that agrivoltaics works and works well. She described initiatives led by associations that organize site visits for farmers, local communities, local governments, and other stakeholders to functioning agrivoltaic systems, allowing them to see firsthand that agricultural production is genuinely maintained. Such exposure can significantly improve perceptions and acceptance.

She also highlighted the importance of promoting the concept of shared value in elevated agrivoltaics, noting that these systems can create stronger synergies with agriculture than other configurations.

Key messages in bullet points:

- Agrivoltaics is fundamentally a governance and socio-technical challenge, not merely a

technical solution. Evidence from Japan/ASEAN, France, and Italy shows that outcomes depend more on land-use governance, incentive structures, and decision-making processes than on technology alone.

- Social acceptance relies on agricultural primacy and early, meaningful local participation. Conflicts arise when farming is marginalized or symbolic; sustained farmer involvement and community engagement from the design stage are essential for legitimacy and long-term viability.
- Regulatory clarity, multi-level coordination, and transparent evidence are key enablers. Clear definitions, alignment across governance levels, demonstrable economic, social, and environmental co-benefits build trust and support regional resilience and development.

Session 2: Bridging Science and Policy for Sustainable Cities in a Changing Climate

(Chair)

- Kyoko TAKE, IGES, Japan

(Speakers)

- Minal Pathak, Ahmedabad University, India
- Ho Chin Siong, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Malaysia
- Amélie Clark, CIRED, France

Summary of the presentations:

Minal Pathak:
Climate Action in Indian cities
Dr. Pathak highlighted the central role of Indian cities in advancing climate action, emphasizing that India's urban transition is complex and shaped by rapid urbanization, socio-economic diversity, and large disparities in capacity and risk exposure. While India has committed to net-zero emissions by 2070, cities are critical to achieving this goal due to growing energy demand, infrastructure gaps, and the need to address equity alongside mitigation and adaptation. She outlined the wide range of urban climate plans in India, from national and state missions to city master plans and sector-specific initiatives, noting that ambition and scope tend to increase with city size and institutional capacity, as seen in cities such as Ahmedabad, Chennai, and Bangalore. Scenario analyses showed that ambitious pathways can substantially reduce emissions compared with business-as-usual, though this potential remains underutilized. Pathak stressed that effective urban climate action depends on inclusive governance, stakeholder participation, and transparency, areas where practice remains uneven. She concluded by calling for a shift from planning to implementation through institutional mainstreaming, stronger financing mechanisms, adaptive governance, and evidence-based decision-making to scale inclusive urban climate action across India.

Ho Chin Siong:
Bridging Science and Policy for Sustainable Cities: The Case of Malaysian Cities
Prof. Ho Chin Siong emphasized the critical role of cities in delivering Malaysia's climate commitments, including NDC 3.0 and the national net-zero target by 2050, noting that implementation must extend beyond the national level. He introduced the Science-to-Action (S2A) framework developed by the UTM–Low Carbon Asia Research Centre, which translates scientific modeling into practical urban policy. Using the AIM model, UTM has supported Malaysian cities in developing Low Carbon Society Blueprints and Climate Action Plans that include GHG inventories, scenario analysis, mitigation, and adaptation measures. These plans show that substantial emissions intensity reductions of 50–75% are achievable in cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru, Putrajaya, and Pulau Pinang. A key message was the importance of integrating climate action plans into statutory local development plans, as demonstrated in cities like Muar and Iskandar Puteri. Prof. Ho concluded that institutionalization, enforcement, robust scientific evidence, and sustained community engagement are essential to move from planning to effective urban climate action.

Amelie Clark:
Urban Climate Adaptation and Scientific Expertise
Dr. Amelie Clark examined how cities mobilize scientific expertise in the development of climate adaptation plans, highlighting a persistent gap between scientific knowledge and practical implementation. Drawing on six case studies, namely Barcelona, Boston, Durban, Paris, Rotterdam, and Vienna—she showed that while cities are increasingly active in adaptation planning, approaches vary widely and lack consistent patterns. Urban adaptation processes typically involve four groups of actors: city administrations, academic researchers, consultancy firms, and public or non-profit

expertise institutions. However, the role of academia is highly heterogeneous, ranging from direct involvement in vulnerability assessments and methodological design to informal or advisory contributions. A key finding was the absence of formal legal or procurement frameworks that systematically link academic research to urban planning, making collaboration dependent on informal networks, boundary organizations, and individual relationships. Clark emphasized that scientific expertise enhances policy legitimacy, methodological rigor, and innovation. She concluded that stronger institutionalized science–policy interfaces and local knowledge ecosystems are essential for effective, evidence-based urban adaptation planning.

Summary of the Q&A:

Question 1: What were the key factors that made Mumbai, Chennai, and Ahmedabad stand out in promoting climate excellence?

Response:

Dr. Pathak explained that these cities share several enabling factors. First, they are among India's largest cities and therefore already had relatively high institutional and administrative capacity, as well as a history of successful policymaking beyond climate issues. Second, they benefited from strong support from external city networks and international organizations, such as the World Resources Institute, the World Bank, and ICLEI South Asia, which helped drive climate action. Third, in at least two cases, local champions within city governments played a decisive role by actively promoting and sustaining climate initiatives.

Question 2: At the intersection of research and implementation, what has been useful in enabling links between researchers and policymakers? How can researchers approach governments to influence planning?

Response:

Dr. Clark emphasized that the strongest links between research and policymaking are often informal rather than formal. These links frequently emerge when policymakers themselves have a research background, which helps create trust and sustained collaboration with academia. In some cities, such as Vienna, science–policy interaction has been institutionalized, with dedicated municipal departments and national boundary organizations facilitating cooperation with universities. However, she noted that collaboration is typically city-driven; researchers rarely initiate sustained partnerships independently, and interactions often occur when cities request expert input on specific policy issues.

Question 3 Why were there no Asian cities included in your case studies, despite their vulnerability to climate change?

Response:

Dr. Clark explained that this was a limitation of the study rather than a deliberate exclusion. Case study selection was largely based on existing contacts and accessibility within the project's timeframe. She acknowledged that the geographic distribution of cases was uneven and stressed that the research should be seen as a starting point, with future work needed to include a broader range of cities, including those in Asia.

Question 4: Could you elaborate on how city-to-city collaboration takes place in practice?

Response:

Prof. Ho explained that Malaysian city leaders are particularly interested in practical implementation and visible best practices. City-to-city collaboration, including mayor-to-mayor exchanges and study visits, helps translate low-carbon policies into action. He highlighted cooperation between Kuala Lumpur and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, which focused on decarbonizing the building sector through capacity building and joint workshops, supported by Japan's Ministry of the Environment. He also cited ongoing collaboration between Saitama City and Johor Bahru, focusing on low-carbon building design and timber construction, as an example of effective knowledge transfer.

Question 5: What parameters are useful for cities to align themselves with national NDCs, and how can cities translate NDC targets into local action?

Response:

Prof. Ho noted that cities often struggle to interpret national policies. Using a science-to-action approach, including AIM-based monitoring, helps clarify which parameters are most relevant. He emphasized that energy and mobility are the dominant urban emission sources, accounting for nearly 70% of emissions, and should therefore be priority sectors. He also highlighted the importance of carbon sinks, such as urban and peri-urban forests, in achieving carbon neutrality. He stressed that a bottom-up approach, supported by improved awareness and understanding among mayors and governors, enables cities to contribute effectively to national NDCs.

Question 6 Do cities have too much autonomy, and how does this affect alignment with national climate targets?

Response:

Dr. Pathak clarified that, in India, cities actually have limited autonomy, with many decisions still made at the state level despite constitutional provisions for decentralization. She noted that differences in climate plans arise from the involvement of multiple actors, including international agencies, as well as from political economy factors and vested interests. Some cities have adopted targets more ambitious than national goals, reflecting higher local ambition and the presence of local champions.

Dr. Clark added that city networks play a significant role in shaping urban climate action plans. These networks often provide funding and technical frameworks, which can influence both the content and structure of plans, contributing to a degree of homogeneity across cities' approaches to climate mitigation and adaptation.

Key messages in bullet points:

- Cities are pivotal but uneven actors in climate implementation. Their ability to translate national targets into action depends on local authority, institutional capacity, external support, and the presence of committed local champions.
- Institutionalized science–policy integration is essential. Moving beyond informal interactions toward structured science-to-action frameworks improves legitimacy, consistency, and implementation of urban climate policies.
- Networks and coordination accelerate impact. City networks provide critical funding, guidance, and peer learning, helping align sectoral priorities with municipal decision-making and move from planning to delivery.

Keynote presentation (Day 2) - Advancing the Global Stocktake by Bridging Science and Decision-Making, and Strengthening Research and Capacity Development Across the Global South and North

(Speaker)

- Harald Winkler, University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa / One of the two co-facilitators, technical dialogue of the first Global Stocktake

(Chair)

- Kiyoto TANABE, IGES, Japan

(Commentator)

- Lara Aleluia Reis, CMCC, Italy

Summary of the keynote Presentation:

Prof. Harald Winkler (University of Cape Town) examined the Global Stocktake (GST) as a core mechanism of the Paris Agreement, designed not as an academic assessment but as a political and strategic process to drive stronger national action over successive NDC cycles. He emphasized that the first GST clearly exposes a persistent ambition and implementation gap: despite expanded climate policies and pledges since Paris, current trajectories remain incompatible with limiting warming to 1.5°C, especially in terms of near-term emissions reductions. The GST confirms that incremental change is insufficient and that rapid, deep, and sustained mitigation is required this decade.

A central focus of the presentation was equity and differentiation. Prof. Winkler stressed that the GST reinforces the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR–RC). Differences in historical responsibility, development needs, and national capacities mean mitigation pathways cannot be uniform. For developing countries, higher ambition is conditional on adequate finance, technology transfer, and capacity building, placing renewed emphasis on means of implementation as a core pillar of the Paris framework.

He also highlighted the GST's role in linking short-term action with long-term strategies and net-zero goals, underscoring the need for just and equitable transitions, particularly in coal-dependent and energy-intensive economies. Prof. Winkler concluded that the GST should be understood as a learning and ratcheting mechanism whose success will ultimately be measured by whether it catalyzes accelerated, fair, and implementable climate action.

Summary of Kiyoto Tanabe's Presentation

Increasing Importance of Non-Party Stakeholders under the Paris Agreement

Kiyoto Tanabe discussed the increasing importance of non-Party stakeholders (NPS)—such as civil society, businesses, financial institutions, and subnational actors—since the adoption of the Paris Agreement. He emphasized that, unlike the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement explicitly encourages engagement by non-state actors, recognizing their role in supporting national climate action.

Tanabe highlighted that the first Global Stocktake (GST1) marked a significant expansion of non-Party stakeholder involvement. Data from the UNFCCC process show that non-state actors submitted a large share of inputs to the GST, covering mitigation, adaptation, finance, capacity building, and equity. This reflects a shift toward a more inclusive climate governance framework beyond national governments alone.

He stressed that effective engagement of non-Party stakeholders requires credibility, transparency, and accountability, to ensure alignment with long-term climate goals. Tanabe concluded by noting ongoing IGES research aimed at improving how non-state actors contribute to future Global Stocktakes, so that their inputs better support enhanced ambition and implementation under the Paris Agreement.

Summary of Comment by Lara Aleluia Reis

Advancing the Global Stocktake by Bridging Science and Decision-Making, and Strengthening Research and Capacity Development Across the Global South and North

Lara Aleluia Reis emphasized a fundamental scientific point: global temperature outcomes depend on cumulative emissions, not on political negotiations. While countries can negotiate effort-sharing and climate finance based on responsibility and capability, the physical impacts of climate change are non-negotiable.

She noted that since the Paris Agreement, science has helped build consensus on key goals, including limiting warming to well below 2°C and pursuing 1.5°C, phasing down fossil fuels, ensuring fairness, and mobilizing international finance. However, she stressed that implementation remains the main challenge, particularly regarding who pays, how much, and when.

Reis highlighted the critical role of non-state actors in the current geopolitical context, as they can mobilize capital, drive innovation, and accelerate the diffusion of low-carbon technologies when political agreement among Parties is weak.

She concluded that delaying action for political feasibility undermines Paris-consistent pathways, as shrinking carbon budgets increase overshoot risks and shift burdens to future generations. She pointed to ongoing work on Development Socio-Economic Pathways to better reflect Global South development aspirations in future Global Stocktakes.

Summary of Q and A:

Question 1: Given that the next Global Stocktake will begin in less than one year, what are your expectations or advice for stakeholders and negotiators engaging in the next Global Stocktake?

Response from Harald Winkler

Prof. Winkler emphasized the continued and growing importance of non-Party stakeholders in the Global Stocktake (GST), calling for their engagement to be further strengthened in the next cycle. He highlighted innovations from the first GST, such as World Café formats, which broadened participation beyond traditional UNFCCC practices. For the next GST, he noted key improvements, including inter-sessional meetings enabling continuous engagement and the potential for local, national, and regional stocktakes to strengthen bottom-up inputs. He also pointed to clearer finance parameters under the NCQG, improved GGA indicators, and more standardized Biennial Transparency Reports, enhancing comparability and assessment across countries.

Response from Lara Aleluia Reis

She agreed with Prof. Winkler and stressed that greater investment in transparency is essential for the next Global Stocktake, as current policies often lag behind rising climate pledges. Transparency is needed to clearly identify gaps between commitments and implementation. She highlighted the growing role of non-state actors, especially cities, as frontrunners that can demonstrate how development can be decoupled from emissions. Cities can offer practical examples for both developed and developing countries. She concluded that showcasing successful practices, understanding enabling conditions and financial barriers, and broad stakeholder involvement are key to closing the gap between pledges and action.

Question 2: Japan states that its NDC is consistent with the 1.5°C target. Do you agree with this assessment?

Response:

Prof. Winkler stated clearly that he does not agree with claims that any single country's NDC—whether Japan's or that of any other country—can be straightforwardly described as consistent with the 1.5°C goal. He explained that such claims require careful consideration of three critical dimensions: time, space, and equity.

He noted that assessing consistency with 1.5°C involves long-term perspectives extending to 2100 or beyond, not only short-term targets such as 2035. It also requires clarity on equity assumptions, including what principles are being used (e.g. equal per-capita emissions) and what mitigation efforts

are assumed for other countries. Without explicitly addressing these dimensions, he argued, claims of 1.5°C consistency are oversimplified and misleading.

Key messages in bullet points:

- Non-Party stakeholders are now essential actors in the Global Stocktake, with inclusive engagement formats strengthening collective climate action.
- Greater transparency and comparable data are critical to bridge the gap between pledges and implementation, particularly through Biennial Transparency Reports and clearer finance and adaptation indicators.
- Assessing alignment with the 1.5°C goal requires equity, time, and global context, and cannot be determined by national targets alone.

Session 3: The Role of Public Participation in Broader Climate Policy

(Chair)

- Naoyuki MIKAMI, Nagoya University, Japan

(Speakers)

- Kenji ASAKAWA, IGES, Japan
- Steve Pye, UCL, UK
- André Duramois, Citizen Engagement Division, City of Paris, France

(Commentator)

Ayano TAKEUCHI, Toho University, Japan

Summary of the presentations:

- **Kenji Asakawa**

Mr. Kenji Asakawa presented the Climate Citizens' Assembly (CCA) in Suginami Ward as an innovative approach to strengthen citizen participation in local climate governance while avoiding the common "echo chamber" effect, where citizens merely repeat expert views. He explained that the Suginami CCA was carefully designed to balance expert input with citizens' lived experiences, emphasizing inspiration, reflection, and deliberation rather than information transfer alone. A stratified random selection ensured diversity among 77 participants, who discussed climate actions across energy, transport, circular economy, and urban green spaces. The process enabled participants to develop ambitious and original proposals, including ward-wide composting and local energy initiatives, fostering a strong sense of ownership. Asakawa concluded that well-designed citizens' assemblies can move beyond symbolic participation and meaningfully contribute to local climate action and policy-making.

- **Steve Pye**

Steve Pye presented the work of the EDRC Citizens' Panel as a deliberative approach to better understand the social mandate for energy demand reduction (EDR) in the UK's pathway to net zero. He highlighted that while UK emissions have declined significantly since 1990, future progress depends heavily on changes in end-use sectors such as buildings and transport, where policy attention has so far been limited. The Citizens' Panel brought together 40 representative participants to deliberate on EDR across sectors including homes, mobility, nutrition, and products, with discussions directly informing bespoke energy system modelling. Pye showed that citizens are generally willing to support substantial reductions in energy demand, but only under specific conditions, such as affordability, fairness, and adequate institutional support. He concluded that integrating deliberative processes with modelling can provide valuable, socially informed evidence for policymakers, although translating qualitative deliberation into quantitative models remains challenging.

- **André Duramois**

Andre presented the Paris Citizens' Assembly as an institutionalized participatory democracy mechanism that enables residents to directly contribute to municipal decision-making. The Assembly consists of 100 randomly selected citizens, designed to be socio-demographically representative, and operates through structured phases of deliberation, exploration, and monitoring. A key feature is the right to follow-up, which allows citizens to track how their recommendations are implemented after being submitted to the Paris City Council for voting. Through concrete policy topics such as building energy renovation, street reallocation, homelessness, and "streets as gardens," the Citizens' Assembly strengthens accountability and legitimacy while ensuring that citizen input meaningfully informs urban climate and social policies.

Summary of Ayano Takeuchi's Commentary

Ayano Takeuchi commented on the session by emphasizing the growing importance of citizen participation and deliberative processes in advancing effective and socially legitimate climate action. She highlighted that citizens' assemblies and panels are not only tools for gathering public opinion, but also mechanisms for building shared understanding, trust, and long-term engagement between citizens, experts, and policymakers. Takeuchi noted that meaningful participation requires careful design, including representative selection, clear mandates, and transparent links to policy processes, to avoid tokenism. She also stressed that insights from citizen deliberation should be better integrated into policy formulation and implementation, particularly at the local level, where climate actions directly affect daily life. Overall, she underlined the value of deliberative democracy as a complement to conventional policy-making in achieving inclusive and durable climate transitions.

Discussion Summary: Responses to Takeuchi-san's Comments

Kenji Asakawa emphasized that participant ownership of both the process and policy recommendations is essential, noting that strengthening this sense of ownership can help broaden public engagement in Japan.

Steve Pye highlighted the role of citizens' assemblies in enhancing legitimacy and accountability, particularly as net-zero policies increasingly affect daily life and become politically challenging. He noted that deliberative processes can build political buy-in, though time and resource constraints remain key challenges.

André Duramois stressed that public deliberation helps test the acceptability of climate measures and allows participants to better understand the complexity and trade-offs inherent in policy-making, countering simplistic or populist narratives.

Key messages in bullet points:

- Public participation plays multiple roles in climate governance, ranging from enhancing democratic legitimacy and policy accountability to strengthening implementation capacity and policy feasibility.
- Different participatory designs serve different functions, including institutionalized citizens' assemblies for long-term accountability, deliberative panels for testing social acceptability, and research-oriented participation to inform policy and modelling.
- The effectiveness of public participation depends on institutional embedding and follow-up, as clear mandates, adequate resources, and links to the policy cycle are essential to avoid symbolic consultation and enable substantive climate action.

Panel discussion: Ten Years After the Paris Agreement: What should we be doing next?

(Speakers)

- Emilio Lebre La Rovere, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Paul Watkinson, Independent international climate expert / Former member of COP21 presidency
- Céline Kauffmann, IDDRI
- Stefan Lechtenböhmer, University of Kassel, Germany
- Rob Gross, UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC), UK

(Chair)

- Toshihiko MASUI, The University of Osaka / National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES), Japan

Summary of the presentations:

- **Emilio Lebre La Rovere, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

Professor Emilio Lebre La Rovere provided an overview of the key outcomes of COP30 and their implications for future climate action, with a strong focus on the Global South and just transition. He highlighted broad support from over 80 countries for launching a roadmap to transition away from fossil fuels, alongside the establishment of the Global Implementation Accelerator to advance near-term actions such as methane reduction and nature-based solutions. Despite progress, he noted that current NDCs remain insufficient to align with 1.5°C pathways, covering only about 15% of the required emissions reductions by 2035. Climate finance featured prominently, including approval of the Baku–Belém Roadmap toward mobilizing USD 1.3 trillion and initiatives to strengthen carbon markets. From a social perspective, COP30 marked advances in just transition mechanisms, adaptation finance targets, and the Global Goal on Adaptation. He emphasized the unprecedented inclusiveness of COP30, particularly the strengthened participation of Indigenous peoples, underscoring equity and social dimensions as central to future climate governance.

- **Paul Watkinson, Independent international climate expert / Former member of COP21 presidency**

Paul Watkinson emphasized the need for a decisive shift from climate negotiations toward implementation, marking the 10-year milestone of the Paris Agreement as a moment for delivery rather than further pledges. While acknowledging the strength of the Paris framework, he stressed that climate outcomes depend primarily on national and subnational policy implementation involving governments, businesses, and citizens. He argued that the debate should move beyond ambition toward alignment with targets and concrete policy execution. Drawing on the UNEP Emissions Gap Report, he highlighted that existing policies fall short, but effective implementation could significantly narrow the gap. Watkinson suggested that COP30 may represent the limits of consensus-based negotiations, reinforcing the need for action-oriented collaboration. He pointed to innovations under the COP30 presidency, including thematic action agendas and sectoral acceleration plans, as a foundation for an implementation-focused COP process. Looking ahead to the next Global Stocktake, he stressed that political commitment, coordination, and research support are essential to overcoming barriers and delivering tangible climate progress.

- **Céline Kauffmann, IDDRI**

Céline Kauffmann argued that while the UNFCCC/COP remains essential, many key "enabling conditions" for implementation are shaped in parallel arenas such as the G20 and G7. She noted that

climate action is increasingly intertwined with economic, security, and digital transitions, making cross-platform coordination more important. Using South Africa's G20 as an example, she said direct climate outcomes were limited, but the G20 advanced "collateral" building blocks: (1) industrial policy and critical raw materials, including principles for sustainable industrial policy and a governance framework for critical minerals emphasizing value addition in producing countries; and (2) resilience and disaster-risk management, including ministerial declarations and principles on investment for risk reduction, with links to adaptation and insurability debates. She closed by outlining prospects and constraints under upcoming US, UK, and French leaderships.

- **Stefan Lechtenböhmer, University of Kassel, Germany**

Stefan Lechtenböhmer welcomed the growing integration of climate and trade discussions, viewing it as a sign of a more implementation-oriented agenda, catalyzed partly by debates around ETS and CBAM-type measures. He stressed that heavy industry—especially steel, cement, and petrochemicals accounts for over 20% of global direct CO_2 emissions and is rising, making industrial transition urgent. Because these commodities are traded globally, "green" products (e.g., near-zero steel) face competitiveness challenges against conventional production. He argued that negotiations can help by defining and verifying what counts as "green" (MRV), improving interoperability among carbon pricing and CBAM systems, and using generated revenues to fund the large investment needs of industrial transformation. He also highlighted the need to manage protectionism intelligently and address just transition in industrial regions to avoid region-versus-region political conflict.

- **Rob Gross, UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC), UK**

Rob Gross used the UK's "Clean Power by 2030" plan to illustrate how the politics of energy transition has shifted and now constitutes a core barrier to accelerating national transformation after COP30. He highlighted that UK emissions have halved since 1990 largely through power-sector decarbonisation, renewables expansion and coal phase-out while balancing is still supported by gas and interconnectors. Looking ahead, he stressed that large-scale electrification of heat and transport is essential by 2050, but progress to 2030 will be limited; if electrification stalls, countries risk building an expensive power system with too few users. Gross emphasized rising infrastructure and integration costs, congested renewable supply chains, and falling gas prices versus the post-Ukraine spike, all of which complicate the "renewables are cheaper" narrative. He warned that cross-party consensus is eroding as mainstream politics shifts toward "too expensive, go slower," making it crucial to communicate trade-offs honestly while sustaining a positive public narrative to prevent climate action from faltering.

Summary of the discussion:
During the discussion, Masui invited brief reflections on how international outcomes connect to domestic implementation, then moved to audience questions and closing "final comments" from each speaker. Emilio Lebre La Rovere emphasized that implementation ultimately happens nationally and requires active engagement from non-state actors; he highlighted COP30's action-oriented initiatives involving cities and subnational governments (e.g., CHAMP), bioeconomy-related platforms, and Amazon/AFOLU-linked commitments such as strengthening land tenure recognition for Indigenous peoples and local communities, forest-fire cooperation, and finance for forest and land restoration while stressing that "delivery" remains the key uncertainty. Stefan Lechtenböhmer answered a question on CBAM by noting it is already being implemented and will continue, but that its scope and detailed execution still have significant room for adjustment and alignment through international dialogue. He also echoed concerns about the "perfect storm" for electrification higher costs from inflation, supply chains, and capital—while suggesting that better funding models and clearer links to economic opportunity (including electricity demand growth such as AI-related investment) can strengthen the political case. Paul Watkinson reinforced that the critical challenge is rebuilding a credible, hopeful narrative that resonates with public concerns about fairness, resilience, and prosperity, and he argued COP30's value lies in consolidating existing

initiatives into a more coherent implementation agenda (again citing CHAMP and just transition). Céline Kauffmann added that climate strategy must be embedded into governments' competitiveness and security priorities, and she flagged the importance of finance–climate minister coordination and more effective "bridge" platforms between trade and climate institutions (WTO/UNCTAD/UNFCCC). Rob Gross concluded by urging closer analysis of how political economy, interest groups, and public opinion interact—since alignment with climate policy varies by issue making narrative and coalition management central to sustaining net-zero progress.

Key messages in bullet points:

- From negotiation to implementation: Climate progress now hinges on concrete delivery rather than new agreements, with action required at national and sub-national levels and strong engagement from cities, businesses, and other non-state actors.
- Narrative, political economy, and public support matter: Sustained momentum depends on framing climate action within competitiveness, energy security, resilience, and social fairness to maintain political feasibility and public trust.
- Cross-platform coordination and coalitions are essential: Aligning UNFCCC processes with G20, G7, trade, finance, and industrial policy—through initiatives such as CHAMP, just transition mechanisms, and trade–climate dialogues—can accelerate practical implementation.