With five months to go until Paris Climate 2015 (COP21), the international forum “Our Common Future Under Climate Change” reviewed the current state of knowledge about scientific innovations in terms of climate change.

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BRUNO LECHEVIN
PRESIDENT OF ADEME

The recent adoption of the “Energy Transition for Green Growth” law in France is an important milestone, but it will only be effective if the measures are fully appropriated and implemented by the local stakeholders.

The same applies for the COP21: besides an ambitious agreement between all the participating countries, its success will also depend on the mobilisation of non-state actors, which have shown so far an unprecedented involvement in every step of the Lima-Paris Action Agenda. With less than 100 days to go until COP21, it has become evident that local authorities play a major role in setting out responses and solutions to climate change, as their strong involvement in the World Summit Climate & Territories also clearly demonstrated (see p.2-3). Through its missions ADEME is the natural partner of local authorities for implementing their environmental and energy policies. For instance, ADEME provides tools and methodologies to develop local energy and climate action plans, not only in France but also at international level. Governments, as well as local authorities, businesses and citizens, let’s all work together towards a successful COP21!

Held under the aegis of UNESCO, ICS and Future Earth, the conference on climate change titled “Our Common Future Under Climate Change” brought together the international scientific community from 7 to 10 July in Paris. ADEME organised a round table to allow representatives from four countries, as well as France, to discuss their priorities in terms of technological innovation.

With five months to go until Paris Climate 2015 (COP21), the international forum “Our Common Future Under Climate Change” reviewed the current state of knowledge about scientific innovations in terms of climate change. “The participants, mainly top
scientists, wanted to highlight the fact that their work represents a solid basis for the implementation of concrete and efficient solutions,” underlines Daniel Clément, Deputy Scientific Director of ADEME. Following an invitation by François Moisan, Executive Director of Strategy, Research & International Affairs, the representatives of four government agencies in charge of funding technological innovation (USA, Germany, China and Japan) took part in a round table on 9 July. This was the opportunity to highlight the similarities in approaches as well as their respective priorities.

A COMMON GOAL AND COMPLEMENTARY PRIORITIES

In China, energy efficiency and carbon-free energy are all the rage. Besides, “the Chinese objective for 2030 is to increase biomass stocks by 4.5 billion cubic metres compared with 2005,” explains Daniel Clément. The United States, however, are focusing on electric transport and the country aims to produce 80% of its electricity from clean energy sources. One of Germany’s priorities is the “Power to Gas” scheme, which consists in storing excess renewable energy with the use of an energy carrier, such as methane or hydrogen. As for Japan, the country aims to “invest in the valorisation potential of hydrogen-based energy for the development of sustainable mobility,” explains Daniel Clément.

The French approach was detailed by François Moisan: “If we consider funding granted to the various sectors of research and technology, two main priorities emerge: the integration of smart grids and smart technologies for the building industry and the production of renewable energy via offshore wind power and marine energy,” sums up Daniel Clément.

Following this event, the participants have decided to put forward a recommendation for COP21: these exchanges should be sustained in order to align their respective strategies in a coherent manner.

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Focus on...

INNOVATING TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE IS EVERYONE’S BUSINESS

ADEME aims to mobilise private individuals and encourage them to engage with technology issues alongside politicians and scientists. The Agency has thus created the Innov’Climat initiative, a series of exhibitions dedicated to innovations in the fight against climate change. The first of these was held from 3 to 8 July on the front court of the Hotel de Ville in Paris. Around two dozen demonstrators were there to showcase electrical networks, new prototypes of cars and ships, floating wind farms, marine-current power installations...

The exhibition will also be held in December 2015, at the Bourget’s Galerie de l’Innovation and as part of the Solutions COP21 at the Grand Palais.

CLIMATE CHANGE

THE NON–STATE STAKEHOLDERS IN THE FRONT LINE

As a key part of the 2015 global climate calendar, the World Summit Climate & Territories event brought together non–state stakeholders from all over the world in Lyon on July 1st and 2nd. Keen to stress their commitment to the issues at hand, the participants highlighted the importance of a territorial perspective on climate change.

The territories play an important role in the fight against climate change, through the actions they take to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to environmental change. Local authorities, NGOs, unions, scientists... There are many stakeholders that will not be directly taking part in the 2015 Paris Climate Summit (COP21) in early December and who consequently decided to get together ahead of the event to come up with concrete proposals to be included in the Paris agreement.

AN UNDENIABLY SUCCESSFUL EVENT

Organised by an international network of territorial local authorities and hosted by the Rhône-Alpes region, the Summit was held under the High Patronage of the President of the French Republic. The event managed to draw over 800 participants from the local authorities and NGOs of some 80 countries. In fact, it became quickly obvious that the host venue might not be able to comfortably accommodate that many people. “The success of the event has exceeded the organisers’ expectations,” said Cécile Martin-Phipps.

ADEME LENDS A HAND

The aim of the meeting was to come up with concrete proposals so that the territories have their voices heard in the COP21 agreement. To achieve this, “ten workshops were set up around major topics such as low carbon economy, forestry, agriculture, mobility and transportation,” explains Cécile Martin-Phipps. For two of the workshops, titled “Territorial planning” and “Decentralised cooperation...
“The success of the event has exceeded the organisers’ expectations.”

and partnerships between territories,” the organisers called upon ADEME’s experience in non-state stakeholders’ support (see boxed text).

“Following the organisers’ request, we contacted our international partners and invited guests whose expertise is relevant to the various workshops,” explains Cécile Martin-Phipps. For example, Diogo Franco, the president of the State Foundation for the Environment for Minas Gerais (FEAM) in Brazil came to talk about his experience of decentralised cooperation with the Nord-Pas de Calais region on the elaboration of a Territorial Climate-Energy Plan (PCET) in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais.

ON THE ROAD TO COP21

At the end of the Summit, the participants stressed, in a final declaration, that “without a real territorial approach taking into account economic, social, environmental realities; without a coherent strategy to coordinate public policies and actions by all non-state actors, (...) it won’t be possible to tackle climate change effectively.”

Putting words into action, many participants have registered their contributions on Nazca, the platform launched by Peru and the United Nations last December to show governments the steps taken by local stakeholders. Finally, the Summit attendees chose to address COP21 participants directly: they asked governments to acknowledge the added value of territorial partners and for easier access to international funding dedicated to the fight against climate change.

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To find out more:
Electricity, gas and the renewable energies/energy efficiency combination are the three pillars of the Euro-Mediterranean energy policy. In order to ensure a competitive and sustainable supply of energy throughout the region, the European Commission ratified the creation of three cooperation platforms. The aim is to encourage dialogue and strengthen partnerships between the various Mediterranean countries. The platforms’ hosts will be in charge of identifying, supporting and then overseeing the development of regional projects. MEDENER, which oversees energy performance in the Mediterranean, was chosen by the European Commission to host the platform dedicated to energy efficiency. Along with the Regional Centre for Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency (RECREE), the non-profit will also contribute to the renewable energy working group. By throwing its weight behind the energy transition process, this new organisation should eventually give a lasting boost to the economic development of the whole region.

**MEDENER INCREASES ITS EFFORTS**

Since its creation in 1997, the MEDENER network has been supporting the development of regional and national energy efficiency indicators in the Mediterranean. “Since 2012, MEDENER has developed a database of regional and national energy efficiency indicators in the Mediterranean,” explains François Gréaume, ADEME’s head of the International Geographic Coordination Service. “Coordinated by ADEME and its Tunisian counterpart, ANME, this pilot scheme enabled Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia to follow and evaluate their energy policies.” As part of its new mission statement, MEDENER aims to extend this experiment to all the countries of the Mediterranean region.

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