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The Whitehall & Industry Group's

Environment & Climate Change Series:

Six months in review
April-September 2020





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Environment & Climate Change Series: Six months in review

At both the global and domestic level, companies, governments and citizens are now grappling with the challenges posed by keeping global temperature increases under the 1.5°C mark. Decarbonisation, energy transition, sustainable finance, and climate change mitigation and adaptation sit as central pillars to addressing this. With a demand for a 'green recovery' from COVID-19, this is now in even starker focus.

The contribution of the UK to each of these areas, as well as its role as a leader in environmental issues, will come into sharper focus as the UK hosts the COP26 Climate Summit in November 2021. Meanwhile, as renewable energy, low-carbon tech and sustainable finance mark a turning point in the global economy, emerging markets, clean growth and upskilling capabilities provide excellent opportunities across the sectors.

The events of the Environment and Climate Change Series have brought together cross-sector players to ensure that these challenges and opportunities are best addressed and utilised for the benefit of industry, government and wider society. Within the Environment Series, WIG have focused on four key areas which include:

- Decarbonisation, Clean Growth and Energy Transformation
- Sustainable Finance and Natural Capital
- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- Food, Farming, Agriculture and Biodiversity

The following reports are insights into webinars from WIG's Environment & Climate Change series that took place in April- September 2020. This document will give you an overview of the content covered, unique polling data from our members, and themes that emerged from questions that were raised throughout the presentations.

Best wishes,
Tom Sapsted

Head of Content & Events





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Environment & Climate Change Series

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Environment & Climate Change Series

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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

Understanding the Industrial Decarbonisation Challenge

6 May, 2020

Expert Insight

We were joined by Dr Bryony Livesey, Challenge Director, Industrial Decarbonisation at UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). Dr Livesey provided an overview of the challenge, where it sits within the wider context of the Industrial Strategy and the UK's aim of net-zero 2050, and where it presented opportunities for industry to get involved.

Some of the areas covered were:

- Total budget of £170m (public funding) + £260m (industry matched funding)
- Three workstreams: Deployment, Cluster Plans, and a newly established Research and Innovation Centre
- An overview of stage 1 projects

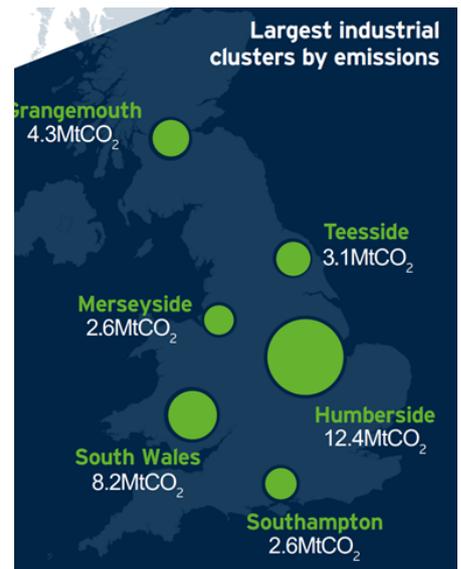


Presentation Spotlight

During the presentation, Dr Livesey explained how the challenge would focus on the 'industrial clusters' outlined in the graphic.

These are all located near the coast to allow for carbon dioxide storage in the ocean.

This raised the wider question of "Is carbon capture and storage a long-term, sustainable solution or is it a stop gap until we find ways to not produce the carbon in the first place?"



Our members' questions

Our members raised a number of questions around the challenge and decarbonisation, some of the big issues raised included:

- How the challenge was interacting with other government policies around decarbonisation
- Whether plans varied from region to region and what sort of role local authorities had to play
- The impact of COVID-19 on the decarbonisation agenda
- Whether there would be opportunity for cluster collaboration and where there would be incentive for industry

WIG members can listen to Bryony's presentation [here](#)
To see our full programme of webinars, visit www.wig.co.uk



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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

Increasing private sector investment into sustainable city infrastructure

12 May, 2020

Expert Insight

We were joined by Richard Abadie, Partner and Global Head of Capital Projects and Infrastructure, PwC, to share some insight into the role of private sector investment in sustainable city infrastructure development. During his presentation he touched upon points including:



- City infrastructure and the rapid increase in urbanisation - the impacts this has on both the environment and living standards
- Attracting investment - what are the enablers and the challenges
- The impact of COVID-19 on infrastructure development - what recovery looks like

Presentation Spotlight

A lack of investment in infrastructure is a key barrier to growth. Key observations from PwC:

- Need for implementation of integrated programmes of infrastructure investments, particularly housing and integrated local transport systems, with an overarching focus on sustainability
- Lack of influence over skills v policy, lack of investment in infrastructure and lack of affordable housing are barriers to local growth
- Autonomy to allow for local decision-making is key for empowering cities

Good Growth for Cities 2019

Highest ranking cities	Top 10 improvers
Oxford	Bradford
Reading	Liverpool
Southampton	Norwich
Bristol	Newcastle
Milton Keynes	Cardiff
Aberdeen	Swansea
Edinburgh	Wolverhampton & Walsall
Swindon	Brighton
Cambridge	Hull

Our members' questions

Our members raised a number of questions around attracting investment, some of the big issues raised included:

- The importance and ease in attracting investment into private micro-grids (power, water, waste) across households and small businesses
- How to attract investors into riskier greenfield projects given the preference is for lower risk projects and whether this was a problem because government borrowing appears relatively cheaper than private
- Whether the absence of pipelines of investible projects was a problem and should more be done to improve the quality of projects in pipelines and make them more visible to prospective investors
- Whether social changes as a result of Covid-19 will impact the overall demand for new infrastructure

WIG members can listen to Richard's presentation [here](#)
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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

Decarbonising Freight, the Challenges and Opportunities of Future Mobility

14 May 2020

Expert Insight

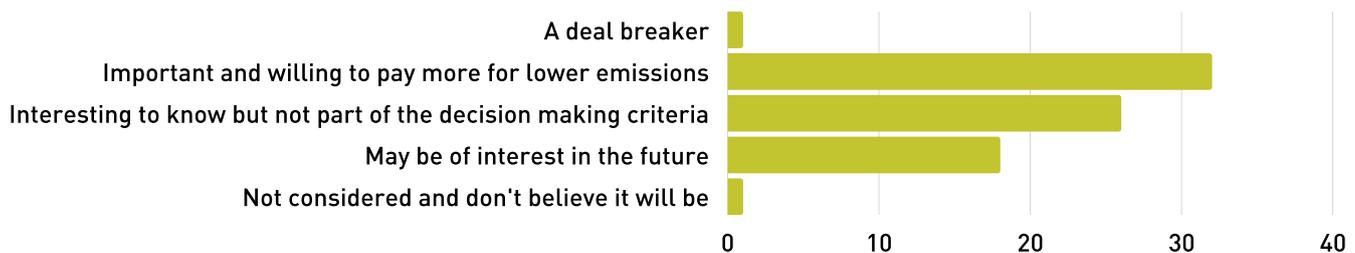
We were joined by Alan Tinline, Head of Environment at Associated British Ports, to discuss how the freight sector is progressing towards net-zero, and what the role of British ports will be in the UK's decarbonisation efforts. He touched upon points including:

- The need for industry and government to utilise existing low/zero-carbon technologies while they continue to innovate. Using the electric 'milk float' as an example, we must think creatively to get the most out of existing infrastructure.
- Though progress has been slow, low emissions in the supply chain and transportation of goods is increasingly becoming an important part of the decision making process for both business and personal purchasing. As public pressure mounts for movement on decarbonisation targets, we are also starting to see a situation in which client demands are pushing businesses to reduce their carbon intensity.
- To empower organisations to make concrete net-zero targets, there is still a great need for new technologies, capable of removing the current dependency on carbon and fossil fuels.
- Hydrogen clearly has significant manifold benefits environmentally, especially if it can be produced from the right source. With the ability to be carbon neutral, zero-emissions, and to store energy it is something that we should expect to see climbing the agenda rapidly over the next few years.



Cross-Sector Opinion

How important are low emissions in the supply chain/transport in your decision making during personal purchasing?



Our members' questions

Our members asked some challenging questions. Some of the issues raised included:

- Creating a global dialogue between port and freight operators from different countries, to compare and share approaches on decarbonisation
- Ensuring that businesses and customers collaborate to achieve carbon reduction targets
- Harnessing automation to assist the industrial decarbonisation process

WIG members can listen to Alan's presentation [here](#)

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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage, a Cross-Sector Approach

20 May 2020

Expert Insight

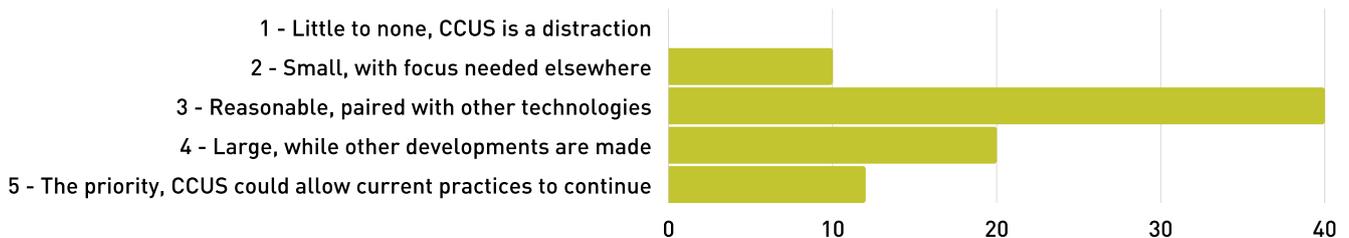
We were joined by Torbjørng Klara Fossum, Low Carbon Solutions Lead, Equinor and Will Lochhead, Deputy Director, Hydrogen and Industry CCUS Business Models and Projects, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, to discuss the role of Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) in the decarbonisation process. Our speakers touched upon many points including:

- The need for industry and government to utilise existing low/zero-carbon technologies while they continue to innovate. Using the electric 'milk float' as an example, we must think creatively to get the most out of existing infrastructure.
- CCUS is not only central to achieving current net-zero targets, but also has a powerful role in transitioning to a low-carbon economy. On top of its revenue generating potential, CCUS projects could create high-value jobs across the UK and enhance industrial regions and competitiveness.
- With great storage capacity on the Continental Shelf, strong natural gas infrastructure that could be used for Hydrogen, and some of the world's leading research and innovation centres, the UK is well placed to become a world-leader in CCUS capabilities.
- International collaboration is vital to the complex task of accelerating CCUS globally. The successful deployment of CCUS will require trust, openness and transparency between governments and vast collaboration across the sectors.



Cross-Sector Opinion

On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being considerable, 1 being little to none), how large a role should CCUS play in decarbonisation planning?



Our members' questions

Our members asked some challenging questions. Some of the issues raised included:

- The role that carbon utilisation could play in reducing storage costs and generating revenue from carbon capture
- Ensuring large industries that would benefit from CCUS, but are based away from 'decarbonisation clusters', can participate in the future of green technologies and CCUS
- Including the public in the deployment of CCUS to create healthy dialogue around the fears of green technology

WIG members can listen to Torbjørng and Will's presentation [here](#)
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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

The Future of Natural Capital

9 June 2020

Expert Insight

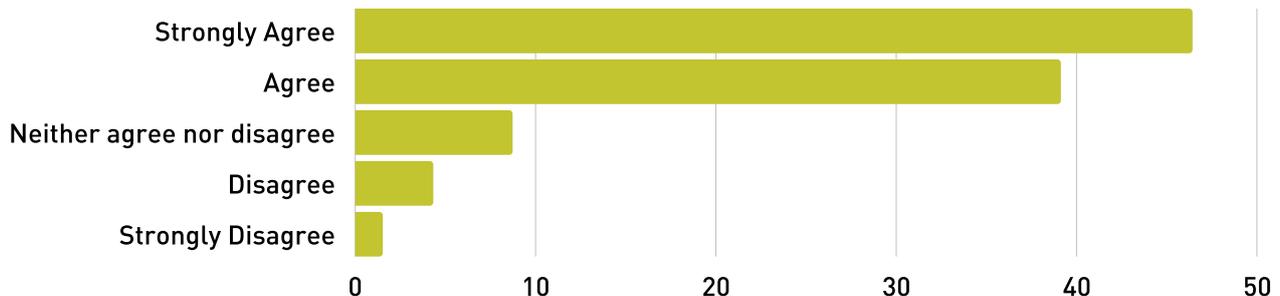
We were joined by Prof. Dieter Helm, Chairman of the Natural Capital Committee, for a webinar reflecting on the concept of Natural Capital Accounting. He touched on many points, including:



- The importance of a generational plan to improve the state of the natural environment for the next generation. The 25 Year Environment Plan, Office for Environmental Protection and the current Environment Bill are important steps towards achieving this.
- There is a risk that the concept of Natural Capital could be used by organisations to 'Greenwash' their activities. For Natural Capital Accounting to be successful it must learn the lesson from other environmental concepts such as sustainability.
- Natural Capital is an asset-based concept. It is not, as commonly thought, about habitats or ecosystem services (though these may determine the value of the 'asset'). This framework is crucial as it allows us to account for and place value on the natural environment in a way that has never happened before. Combined with appropriate legislation, this also creates new opportunities to hold those acting on the environment to be held accountable.

Cross-Sector Opinion

Attendees from the breadth of our cross-sector membership listened in, we asked them: to what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement, "Industry and business should be legally bound to environmental net-gain targets, to ensure meaningful levels of corporate scrutiny"?



Our members' questions

Our members asked some challenging questions. Some of the issues raised included:

- How to ensure that decision-making processes approach the environment holistically, and consider environmental gains and losses together
- Whether measures need to be taken to prevent organisations from 'offshoring' emissions or other environmentally damaging activities to keep a clean natural capital balance sheet
- Understanding how the cultural values of environmental assets are as robust and appropriately accounted for as other areas of natural capital

WIG members can listen to Dieter's presentation [here](#)
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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

Driving Climate Action Ahead of COP 26

11 June, 2020

Expert Insight

We were joined by Nigel Topping, the UK's High-Level Climate Action Champion for COP26 to discuss how industry, government and civil society can collaborate on climate change ahead of COP26. Nigel touched on many points, including:

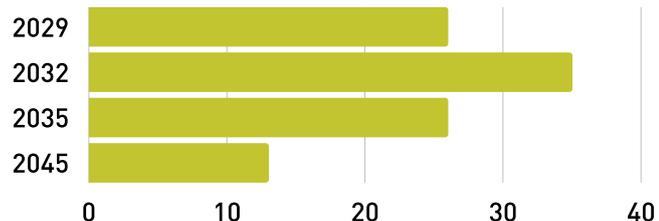


- COP26 will be the first test of the Paris Agreement, which created a way for countries to review progress and 'upgrade' targets through 'Nationally Determined Contributions' (NDCs). 5 COPs later, we're seeing these enhanced ambitions.
- The success of COP26 will heavily depend on what happens between now and November 2021, with the commitments made by local government, industry, and civil society playing a significant role.
- The first objective of the COP26 Climate Champions is to increase the number of organisations - from states to sports clubs - committed to their own pathway to net-zero. Serious actors around the world committing to net-zero creates an enabling condition for bolder policy on net-zero.
- The second is to accelerate the path to zero at a granular level, working sector-by-sector. Building momentum around decarbonisation roadmaps effectively 'derisks' them.
- What can businesses do? Publically commit to your own net-zero target as early as possible; be clear about short term plans to deliver on this in the next 5 years; switch to renewable energy and electric vehicles; redesign and decarbonise your products and services; spread your influence by engaging with your supply chain; and use your voice to support a green, resilient recovery from the COVID crisis.

Cross-Sector Opinion

Over 100 attendees from the breadth of our cross-sector membership listened in, we asked them:

When do you think the last new car with a combustion engine will be sold?



Our members' questions

Our members asked some challenging questions. Some of the issues raised included:

- How to ensure transparency when measuring the impact of business and civil activities on climate change
- Whether industry can afford to make the necessary investment into climate change mitigation and adaptation, or whether it could afford not to
- What the consequences might be for countries failing to meet their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

WIG members can listen to Nigel's presentation [here](#)

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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

COVID-19 Sector Updates: Energy

22 June, 2020

Expert Insight

We were joined by Peter Mather, Group Regional President of Europe and Head of Country, UK at BP, as he discussed the impact that COVID-19 has had on the energy sector, and what this means for BP's net-zero commitment. Please find some key points of the discussion below:

- With an oversupply in oil and gas of around 10%, prices were already dropping below many companies' break-even points before the COVID-19 pandemic created a huge loss of demand.
- The combination of over-supply, COVID-19, demand shock, and net-zero efforts presented the energy sector with a perfect storm. Since then, supplies of oil and gas have decreased with the oversupply problem being eased, while demand has steadily picked up again.
- With the pressure to keep the economy going, the energy industry was incredibly strict on the spread of COVID-19 and began testing very early on, taking a 'test-and-wait' approach.
- With an international flow of workers and products, there has been an enormous need for collaboration with government, which has been very successful. For example, collaboration with Westminster and the Scottish Government allowed international shipping to continue.
- After the 2008 financial crisis, the climate agenda fell away. This may have been due to the fact that a commitment to net-zero was not embedded in policy and civil society. In 2020, we have strong environmental commitments, and this time round, the energy sector has been driving towards net-zero, looking at how to 'build back better'.
- However, while there is optimism across the industry, there is a long road to recovery for the energy sector. Small and medium-sized firms are set to struggle, with bigger companies already announcing job losses of up to 25%.



Our members' questions

Our members raised some challenging questions to be answered, some of the big issues raised included:

- The nature of a clean, resilient recovery and the spending commitments needed to achieve it
- Reskilling and new jobs as a huge benefit of the 'new' energy sector, and their role in a COVID recovery
- As relatively renewable-energy-intensive, the challenges of kickstarting a green hydrogen economy

WIG members can listen to Peter's presentation [here](#)
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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

COP26: The Role of Cross-Sector Collaboration

24 June, 2020

Expert Insight

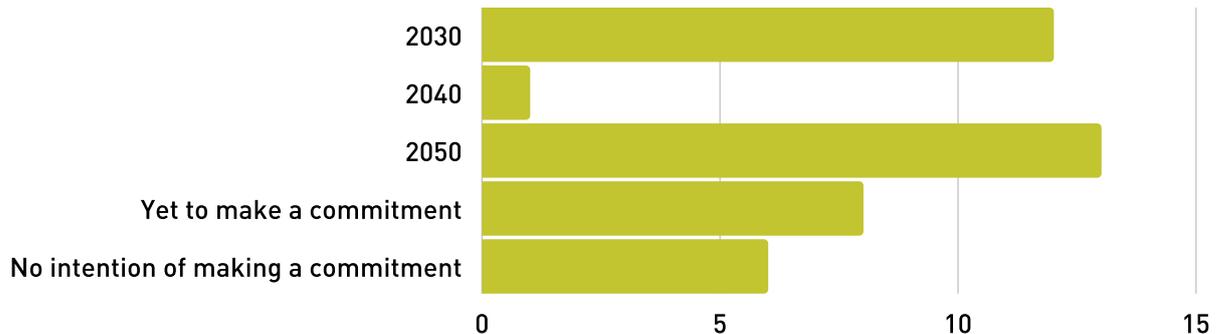
We were joined by Matt Toombs, Director of Partnerships & Engagement, COP26 to discuss how industry, government and civil society can collaborate in the fight against climate change ahead of COP26. Matt touched on some of the following:



- COVID-19 has dramatically shown the need for countries to prepare and build for future shocks, including the effects of climate change and the need for stress-testing.
- COP 26 is a fantastic opportunity to showcase UK business and show what is possible. Businesses should try to set net-zero targets as early as possible and not wait until the statutory 2050 target. The earlier they can achieve this, the more influence they will have, especially when working with their supply chains to drive up ambition from a much broader number of organisations.
- Working with local government and cities will be a priority, as they have a key role to play in committing to specific climate actions.
- Engaging wider civil society is also critical in ensuring that COP26 is genuinely inclusive. Barriers need to be removed to give a voice to a diverse network within global civil society.

Cross-Sector Opinion

Over 100 attendees from the breadth of our cross-sector membership listened in, we asked them:
By when has your organisation set a net zero commitment?



Our members' questions

Our members asked some challenging questions. Some of the issues raised included:

- If the UK's exit from the European Union will impact our ability to work in a collaborative way, and if so, how this can be helped.
- What the role of digital technology is in achieving net-zero targets.
- How businesses can directly engage with COP26, both during and in the run-up to the conference.

WIG members can listen to Matt's presentation [here](#)
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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

Incident Response and Crisis Management
at the Environment Agency

7 July, 2020

Expert Insight

We were joined by Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive at the Environment Agency, to discuss some of his organisation's recent experiences with incident management. He touched upon points including:

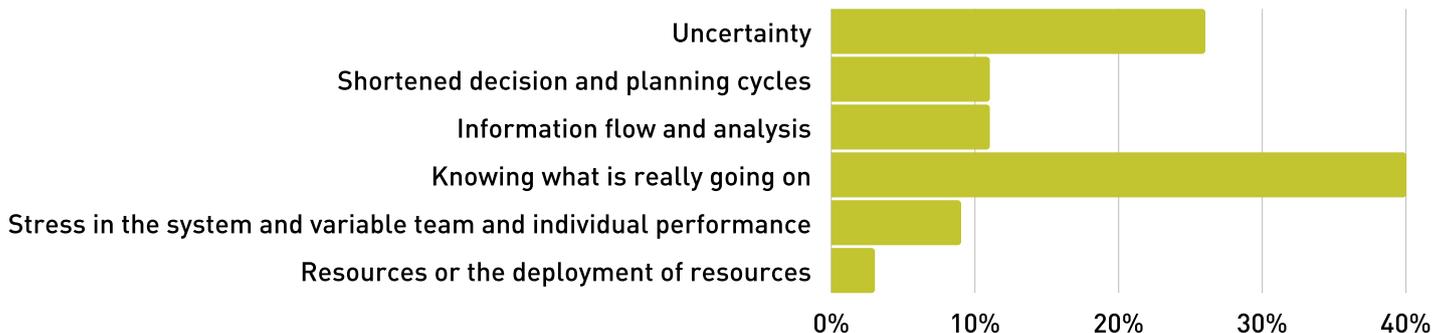


- The Environment Agency responds to over 75,000 incidents a year and has been set up to respond through pre-agreed plans and standard incident management procedures. These include daily reporting, agreed command and control, and resources such as trained staff and dedicated facilities. The EA also regularly practices managing incidents, and has tools for measuring performance.
- Sir James advised incident response leaders to be decisive, to move fast and over-resource at the start, and to be present and visible. Being ready beforehand and having a strategy is key, but you must be prepared to adjust it. Finally, it is important to use the media, but keep your message simple; ensure you and your staff stay well; and to always learn from your experience.
- Responding to COVID-19 has presented three main challenges: managing in ambiguous circumstances, managing changes in how work is carried out, and managing staff well-being and morale. To overcome these the EA's response has been to be agile, to move with deliberate pace, and to practise maximum empathy, relentless over-communication, and practical steps for improving staff experience.

Cross-sector Opinion

Attendees from the breadth of our cross-sector membership listened in, we asked them:

Which do you consider to be the greatest challenge in your organisation's ability to cope with crisis?



Our members' questions

Our members raised some challenging questions to be answered, some of the big issues raised included:

- Collaboration across sectors, organisations and borders in incident management
- Running effective tabletop exercises and general crisis management training
- Advice for how to prepare to react to a variety of potential climate disasters
- Responding to crises occurring in succession and advice for managing the next one whilst still dealing with the fallout of the previous one

WIG members can listen to Sir James' presentation [here](#)
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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

The Impact of Climate Change on Nature:
Challenges for Industry and Government

14 July, 2020

Expert Insight

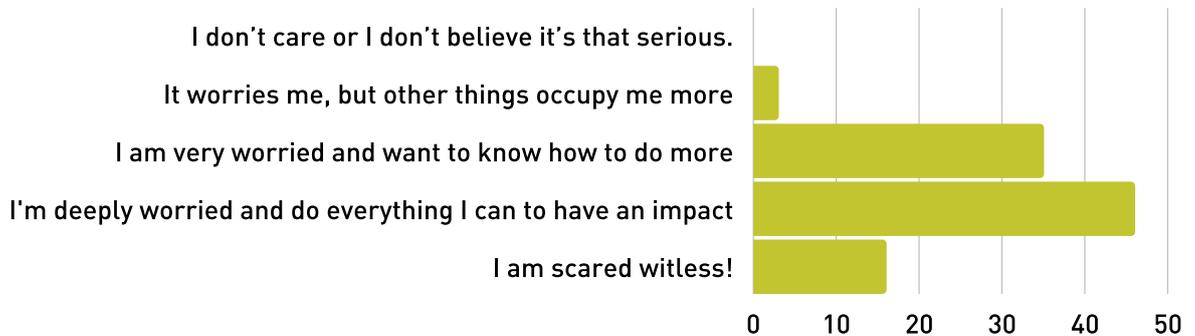
We were joined by Gareth Redmond-King, Head of Climate Change at WWF-UK, to discuss the impact of climate change on the natural environment. Taking a look at the major challenges faced by industry and government, Gareth touched on many points:



- Over the last 100 years, global temperatures have increased by more than they did in the previous 12,000; 19 of the 20 hottest years on record took place in the 21st Century; and from 1974-2014, we saw wildlife populations decline by 60%.
- The resulting impact includes extreme weather events that have displaced populations across the world; a rapid decline in the services provided by the natural world, such as carbon sequestration; and a rate of global warming that is twice the safe limit, as set out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
- In the midst of this climate crisis, businesses and governments must decide whether they want to prepare for 1.5-degree warming, or climate breakdown. Fortunately, the steps necessary to combatting climate change are also very good for the global economy: investing in green technologies, renewable energy, and resource efficiency, will provide significant savings over the long run as well as reskilling opportunities for the world's workforce. Moreover, for every £1 invested in green technologies, we can expect to see a return of 3-8 times that amount.

Cross-Sector Opinion

Over 100 attendees from the breadth of our cross-sector membership listened in, we asked them: How worried are you about the climate & nature crises?



Our members' questions

Our members asked some challenging questions. Some of the issues raised included:

- The ways in which a new regulatory regime could minimise the wrong types of consumption - fast fashion, polluting products, disposable/non-repairable products
- Whether businesses are prepared to coordinate and share examples of best practice to improve climate change policy
- How Brexit could be used to advance the climate agenda rather than it being another complicating/impeding factor

WIG members can listen to Gareth's presentation [here](#)

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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

COVID-19 and the Climate Crisis: Initiating a green, clean, resilient recovery

12 August, 2020

Expert Insight

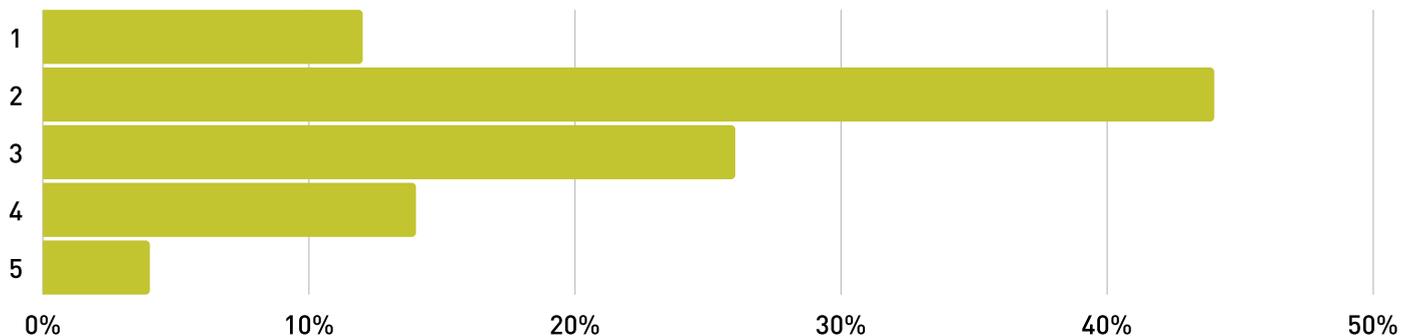
We were joined by Lord Deben, Chair of the Committee on Climate Change, to discuss the UK's pathway to a clean, green resilient economy. Speaking on the turning point in the fight against the climate crisis, Lord Deben touched on many points, including:



- COVID-19 hasn't changed what we need to do on climate change. It presents an opportunity to form a greener economy, precisely because this is necessary for resilience after the pandemic.
- There is no choice for how we 'bounce back better'. It has to be green and resilient, as no other pathway is financially possible, cost-effective, or sustainable.
- COVID-19 has changed the way that the public perceive threats as the virus went from an abstract concern, to a dangerous reality. This gives strength to the call to tackle the real and present threat of climate change.
- With cleaner air through lockdown and further record temperatures across the globe, the world is seeing that climate change is not on the horizon, but is here now and is a result of human activity.

Cross-Sector Opinion

Over 300 attendees from the breadth of our cross-sector membership listened in, we asked them: on a scale of 1-5 (1 being not at all, 5 being very), how confident are you that the UK's plans for economic recovery will prioritise tackling climate change?



Our members' questions

Our members asked some challenging questions. Some of the issues raised included:

- The issues constraining the UK to Net-Zero by 2050, which gives only a 66% chance of avoiding warming above 1.5 degrees
- Whether recent housing reforms are doing enough to account for the impact of property development on the environment, resource use, climate change, and a circular economy
- Where the investment for CCUS projects has been redirected, and whether the UK is lagging behind its European counterparts when it comes to climate spending

WIG members can listen to Lord Deben's presentation [here](#)
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'Environment & Climate Change' Series

The Impact of Climate Change on the Global Economy

4 September, 2020

Expert Insight

We were joined by Jean-Francois Coppenolle, Head of Credit and Sustainability Risk at Aviva, to discuss the impact that Climate Change could have on the global economy. Speaking on the costs of inaction, Jean-Francois touched on many points, including:

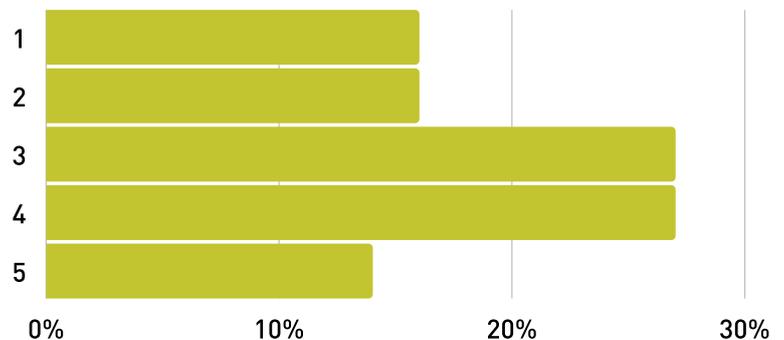


- If we are to avoid the worsening of climate change related impacts, global temperature increases must be kept below 1.5°. We are currently on track to surpass this by the mid 2030s, with most of London set to be below the flood level as soon as 2050.
- This will create severe economic shocks across the world, as environmental damage and extreme weather events cause supply chain disruption, resource scarcity and weakened market participation (especially in poor countries).
- Addressing climate change should therefore not be seen as incompatible with growth, but essential to it. Quicker action on mitigating climate change will result in a smoother transition to a green economy, and lower physical risk from the effects of climate change (such as from rising sea levels and natural catastrophe).
- To meet the 1.5° benchmark, countries must half their carbon emissions every 10 years, starting now. This is the 'carbon low'. If we fail to meet this target, we will fail in the fight against climate change.

Cross-Sector Opinion

Over 130 attendees from the breadth of our cross-sector membership listened in, we asked them:

On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not at all, 5 being very), how concerned are you about the cost of a green, climate-friendly economy?



Our members' questions

Our members asked some challenging questions. Some of the issues raised included:

- The global nature of climate change and the role of international policies such as 'carbon border taxes'
- Whether GDP needs to be replaced by a new measure of economic health that accounts for the environment
- What must happen at COP26 to ensure that existing targets are met, and appropriate new ones created
- The role of hydrogen, nuclear, wind and solar in the world's energy mix, and where economic tensions exist within the energy sector

WIG members can listen to Jean-Francois' presentation [here](#)
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