

## Plenary at the Solutions Gallery

### « Is it possible to design a sound climate policy while ignoring science?» 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2015

#### Dr James Hansen : Professor at the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Columbia University and former head of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies

- On Political will: More than possible it is essential that we do not ignore science. But we are ignoring it.
- On Scientific communication: Our parents didn't know that by using fossil fuels they were causing problems to the future generations. We can only pretend not to know.
- The public doesn't see the climate crisis. We are not proposing solutions that are available. The public needs to get honest communication, yet it is now political. Scientists should try to communicate more.
- On Fossil fuels true costs: Fossil fuels don't include their cost to society, so we keep burning them, they look cheapest to the user. What we need to do is to include the social cost, so add a fee to fossil fuel, which you would collect at the mine or port of entry. And you would give that money to the public, an equal amount to resident, it would actually spur the economy and would move us off fossil fuels.
- On Carbon pricing: there is nothing simpler than that, but we need a carbon price across the board. Unless major nations come to an agreement that they will put on a flat across the board carbon fee I don't see we can solve the crisis.
- On The US politics on Climate: The US energy secretary and Obama's specialist on Climate change have said that they are very optimistic now because China and the US have agreed to work together on CCS. That is not true. It makes the energy twice as expensive and nobody wants to have this carbon stored under them. If we keep fracking in America, we can't solve the climate problem, but the public is not made aware of that. My hope is that China will lead the climate revolution, I don't see the USA doing it. The conservatives are considering a revenue neutral carbon fee.
- On Nuclear: We have a lot of nuclear fuel, especially if you go to thorium. But nevertheless you should close the fuel cycle. I don't think an energy transition is possible without nuclear.
- Let the alternative energies compete.



#### Sir David King: the Foreign Secretary's Special Representative for Climate Change

- On Climate change policy: Problems can be resolved with good science. There is a need for a team, not only one person that gives that science. The fossil fuel era has to be over now. We have to keep moving away from this wasteful ways that are destroying our ecosystem that actually provides for us. Where science is at the best level and where governments are also at the best level, there is still an enormous gap. Regarding consumption, the circular economy is the only one available.
- On his career as scientific advisor: Started in that position during the foot and mouth disease crisis, and then accepted a position on climate change in order to raise the profile of climate change in the British government. He said to the then prime minister, Tony Blair, he would only take the job if he could put all the advice that he gave him in the public domain. Moreover, what they managed to do was to keep the public, parliament and the government concerned. Governments tend to worry that an appointed chief scientist in their administration would overrun their ability to make decisions.
- On Britain and Climate change Policy: He wanted to do in Britain what he thought every country should do and not wait to negotiate. So they committed to reducing emissions by 80% in 2050. They do not think that development without climate resilience is the answer.
- On the results of their efforts: We have reduced our emissions by 30% by 1990. We will likely succeed because we have a carbon budget set by an independent group of experts.
- On funding the fight against climate change: In the last 4 years they have spent 4 billion pounds on avoiding deforestation, adaptation and mitigation. Now the fund has been reestablished at 6 billion pounds. They spend 18 billion a year on development. The British government will use its money, with the French and American, to roll out electricity to every village in Africa using solar, smart grids. This is really dramatic, they are talking about reaching more than 600 million people who have no electricity. They will provide reliable electricity across Africa because they coordinate this development with capacity building.
- On the relationship between UK and China : The Chinese policy bureau is very receptive to advice from outside China. No other government, except the UK has invented climate attachés. They now work with other countries, notably China. It is critical for the Chinese government to arrive at Cap and Trade.
- On Climate change outreach: What is needed is a far better interaction with young children about the challenges they have to face. Because frankly these challenges are the biggest that they have ever had, and have so many forms: food and water security.
- On the media: It is vested interest and the power of vested interest.
- On Energy mix: He doesn't think that nuclear is the only solution, it varies according to countries. In Europe not much sunshine, so need nuclear, but not the case for every country. If a country has a significant desert area, they can provide using solar energy, virtually all the electricity they need for the country.

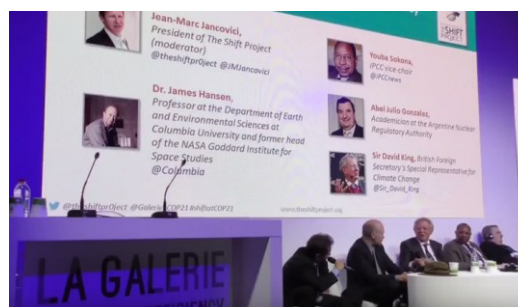
## Plenary at the Solutions Gallery

### Dr. Youba Sokona: IPCC Vice-Chair

- On The power of IPCC: IPCC is policy relevant and not policy prescriptive
- On IPCC's mission in 1988: it needed to prepare a comprehensive review with the available knowledge of climate change and to start to think about a convention on climate change. Many see the IPCC as doing the research, IPCC is assessing the available literature and the findings for a period of time.
- On The results of IPCC : Increasingly the IPCC has strengthened the proof of the influence of Human activities on climate change. By the 4th assessment report: Most of the warming is likely due to GHG.
- On the relationship between IPCC and Policy makers: IPCC is science at the service of policy makers. So clear relationship with UNFCCC. policy makers are navigators, they need a map, provided by the IPCC. The policy maker doesn't have time to read all of the report, so IPCC tries to capture a key message. Throughout the report there is a dialogue with policy makers. The report is based on the issues and perspectives policy makers are looking for. In the summary for policy makers, there is no influence by them, because there is no summary for policy makers that is not supported by an underlying report.
- On Outreach: From the report, the IPCC has done an outreach report. This is also an area where we are putting more emphasis. In Africa we are in a better position to take the Carbon neutral route.

### Abel Julio Gonzalez: Academician at the Argentine Nuclear Regulatory Authority

- On the role of UNSCEAR: Like the IPCC, it does not provide prescriptive policy, only science. But there are bodies that make the prescription that are heeded by the international atomic agency and supported by the bodies.
- On the effect of nuclear accidents: it is mainly social and psychological. The psychological effect of Fukushima has been tremendous. Regarding numbers, the health effects are barely there. In Chernobyl there was an impact on the workers, on the public; there was a big impact on children because of big mistakes of the legal authorities.
- On the communications strategy of UNSCEAR: it works with universities and science, but at the level of public knowledge UNSCEAR is not known, and it is our fault, because we have small secretariat. But it is getting better.
- On the obstacle of climate science: UNSCEAR has also talked about the limits of science.
- 2 problems with scientists: They tend to be technical and too focused on the far future, also people usually don't recognize the limitations of science. Need to move from science to policy in climate change, like we did in nuclear.
- On international conventions: You do not get international prescriptions from conventions that are just a legal document with little enforcement, you need concrete standards, numbers.
- We need to use the full cycle and wind and solar, but I also agree that we have enough resources to go to nuclear now.



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