



**Think
2030**

Science-policy
solutions for a more
sustainable Europe

Event report

A future-proof European Green Deal: Overcoming crises, increasing ambition

Third edition of the Think2030 conference

29 and 30 June 2022, Sciences Po, Paris

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Institute for
**European
Environmental
Policy**

Event report

A future-proof European Green Deal: Overcoming crises, increasing ambition

Introduction

For this third edition, experts and policymakers from the Think2030 platform met in Paris at Sciences Po to discuss the state of the European Green Deal and the role of the Trio Presidency and Spain in its implementation. The discussions built on the results of the second edition of IEEP's European Green Deal Barometer, and on the draft policy briefings prepared by experts from the network of sustainability think tanks, Think Sustainable Europe.

Now that the von der Leyen Commission has reached the halfway point of its mandate and that France has passed the torch of the Presidency of the Council to the Czech Republic, this was a good time to take stock of the implementation of the Green Deal and examine together what efforts are still needed to turn its flagship initiatives into concrete action. That is precisely the objective of the European Green Deal Barometer, now at its second edition: to track progress on the Green Deal files, to reflect with sustainability experts on how the implementation is developing in the current geopolitical and economic context, and to make recommendations on what can be adapted and improved moving forward.

IEEP and IDDRI, co-organisers of the conference on 29 and 30 June, welcomed high-level EU and national policymakers, experts, representatives of civil society and the private sector looking to make a difference in sustainability in Europe and to help carry the ambitions of the Green Deal beyond 2024.

Day 1

Making the Green Deal a reality: Halfway there?

In a video statement, **Commissioner for the Environment Virginijus Sinkevičius** provided insights on the current work and priorities of the EC on the implementation of the Green Deal and welcomed both the cautious optimism and the various concerns expressed by respondents to the Green Deal Barometer in regard to the success of the green transition in Europe. He stated that instead of a reason to hold off on the implementation, the ongoing war in Ukraine should be seen as an incentive for intensifying the work towards making the European Green Deal a reality, as it contains solutions to make the EU more resilient to this crisis and future ones.



You can watch Commissioner Sinkevičius's video statement at this [link](#).

Diederik Samsom, Head of Cabinet to European Commission

Executive Vice President Frans Timmermans opened this first round of discussions by underlining the extraordinary resilience of the European Green Deal, which faced, in only two years of existence, a global pandemic and a war on the European continent. On climate, he applauded the recent developments in the Fit for 55 legislative procedure, and promised that the European Commission would gear up to defend the Farm to Fork and the Biodiversity Strategy, under heavy fire in current debates on how to best respond to the food and energy crisis.



“While it was supercharged by the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, the European Green Deal did not end up in the lowest drawer of policymakers; it was used as the answer to the urgency.”

– Diederik Samsom, Head of Cabinet to Executive Vice President Timmermans

But do experts share Samsom’s optimism? The results of the Green Deal Barometer show an increase in scepticism among sustainability experts, as 45% of respondents believe it is unlikely that the Green Deal will be implemented by 2024. **IEEP’s External Impact Director Faustine Bas-Defossez** explained that this trend appears to be largely fuelled by concerns over the short-term impacts that the war in Ukraine will have on the level of ambition of the upcoming pieces of legislation that derive from the Green Deal. Indeed, it is first and foremost the level of commitment by Member States to the Green Deal agenda that is perceived as the biggest barrier to a successful implementation of the package, followed closely by the lack of political consensus on what constitutes sustainability, and the lack of

A future proof European Green Deal: Overcoming crises, increasing ambition

policy consistency across the Green Deal. When asked about what the top 3 priorities of the European Commission should be moving forward, experts identify healthy food systems and the preservation of our environment as the sectors in which efforts need to be increased. Only 17% of the respondents believe that what has been done so far on healthy food systems meets what science requires.

The summary of the results of the Green Deal Barometer can be found [here](#), and Faustine Bas-Defossez's presentation slides [here](#).

SECOND EDITION

Launched by way of a 2019 communication from the European Commission, the Green Deal covers several environmental objectives, with the ultimate aim to make the EU climate neutral by 2050. Now in its second edition, the European Green Deal Barometer identifies barriers and opportunities for the implementation of the Green Deal. Picking up on the numerous ongoing negotiations on Green Deal files in the legislative procedure, as well as the impact of the war in Ukraine and the energy price hike, the Barometer paints a picture of the Green Deal as it currently stands.

This summary provides a first look at the results of the 2022 edition of the European Green Deal Barometer. They build on the evidence of the survey and recommendations in its previous editions, including results from four national and European forums: the Czech Republic, Sweden and Spain.

METHODOLOGY

The European Green Deal Barometer is based on a survey of its audience. By experts, it is a 2022 survey. The survey is a 2022 survey. The responses were collected from April to May 2022. The survey is a 2022 survey. The responses were collected from April to May 2022. The survey is a 2022 survey. The responses were collected from April to May 2022.

HIGHLIGHTS

As the current European Commission crosses the halfway point of its mandate, the European Green Deal Barometer shows that sustainability experts are losing confidence in the ability of the EU institutions to implement the Green Deal by 2024 and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

The European Parliament and the Council of the EU are trying to reach agreement on a multi-faceted package, translating the Green Deal into a concrete set of laws. At times passes, however, sustainability experts think that the progress made so far on the thematic areas of the Green Deal backtracks on what the science requires.

Green Deal Implementation
Sustainability experts are losing confidence in the ability of the EU institutions to implement the Green Deal by 2024 and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

War in Ukraine
Experts are losing confidence in the ability of the EU institutions to implement the Green Deal by 2024 and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

2024 EU elections
Experts are losing confidence in the ability of the EU institutions to implement the Green Deal by 2024 and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

Member States
Experts are losing confidence in the ability of the EU institutions to implement the Green Deal by 2024 and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

Future of food
Experts are losing confidence in the ability of the EU institutions to implement the Green Deal by 2024 and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

Investing in a green future
Experts are losing confidence in the ability of the EU institutions to implement the Green Deal by 2024 and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

Energy transition
Experts are losing confidence in the ability of the EU institutions to implement the Green Deal by 2024 and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

A successful Green Deal
Experts are losing confidence in the ability of the EU institutions to implement the Green Deal by 2024 and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

FIGURES

- 45% think it is likely that the Green Deal will be implemented by 2024.
- 35% think that the lack of commitment by member states to the Green Deal is the biggest barrier to its implementation.
- 47% think that the EU will not reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030.
- 61% think that the EU institutions are not doing enough to implement the Green Deal.

PRIORITY AREAS VS. PROGRESS MADE

INCREASE EFFORTS	BUILD UP/ACCELERATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A healthy food system for people and planet Preserving our environment An industrial strategy for competitiveness, green, digital Europe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clean energy transition Investing in a green future Research and innovation driving transformative change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public climate security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing efficient, safe and smart mobility (digital transport)
<p>PROGRESS MADE (Green Deal)</p>	<p>PROGRESS MADE (Green Deal)</p>

LEVEL OF PRIORITY (1 = Low priority, 5 = High priority)

LEVEL OF PROGRESS MADE (1 = Low progress, 5 = High progress)

Sébastien Treyer, IDDRI's Executive Director, led the conversation in the second panel to take stock of the progress of the Green Deal in light of the legislative initiatives currently at play.

Pascal Canfin, Member of the European Parliament and Chair of the ENVI Committee, praised the agreement reached by the Council of the EU (Council) on the Fit for 55 package, and expressed his confidence in the upcoming trilogues. On the main challenges in greening the agricultural sector, Canfin admitted that the concept of green transition, when applied to European food systems, was still

very much challenged in Parliament, making it difficult to find a common pathway with farmers and the food value chain.

Jan Dusík, Czech Deputy Minister of Environment, echoed Canfin's optimism for the upcoming trilogue negotiations on the Fit for 55 package of legislative proposals. Dusík ensured the Czech Presidency's intentions of finding the best ways to engage with Ukraine on ending the conflict, including through dialogues on environmental priorities, and of making progress on the Nature Restoration Law, as well as on other priorities of the Green Deal, e.g. the Industrial Emissions Directive, the Batteries Regulation and the Ecodesign Directive.

"We need expertise from think tanks, pressure from NGOs, and concrete proposals to make alliance with the progressive part of the business community to help us deliver on the various texts that are part of the European Green Deal."

– MEP Pascal Canfin, Chair of the ENVI Committee



Måns Nilsson, Executive Director of the Stockholm Environment Institute pointed out the burden that falls on administrations of smaller European countries to keep up and implement heavily technical European legislation at the national level. He also stressed the unpredictability of the upcoming national elections in Sweden as it will inevitably influence the priorities of the Swedish government when taking over the Council Presidency in January 2023.

From 2024 to 2050: The Green Deal after the EU elections

The second half of the first day welcomed representatives from academia, civil society, youth organisations and the private sector to discuss the future of the European Green Deal after the end of the von der Leyen Commission mandate in 2024.



Using [data from the European Environment Agency](#), **Luc Bas, Head of Coordination & Strategy at the European Environment Agency**, kicked off this panel discussion with a reminder of the high ambitions of the European Green Deal, and linked to that, the immensity of the efforts that remain to be done in order to reach Europe's objective of net-zero emissions in Europe by 2050.

Dr. Charlotte Halpern, tenured researcher at the Centre for European Studies and Comparative Politics of Sciences Po University, argued that to counterbalance the fragmented nature of the environmental governance system in the EU and its impact on the Green Deal implementation as we move forward, more important resources need to be dedicated to a true implementation strategy, i.e. through redefining the relationship between EU institutions and Member States, and through multi-level capacity-building.

Lars Holmquist, Executive Vice President for Sustainability & Communications at Tetra Pak and representative of the business community in this panel, called for an integrated stakeholder approach to policymaking as a prerequisite for a successful transition to healthy, sustainable and resilient food systems, including through

platforms such as Think2030. He sees the contribution of companies to the transition efforts as threefold: increase access to safe and nutritious food, reduce food loss and food waste, and decarbonisation and circularity initiatives.

Read the statement by private sector partners of Think2030 [here](#).

The points raised by **Ester Asin, Director of WWF European Policy Office**, resonated with the results of the Green Deal Barometer survey. Asin stressed that the very EU-centric Green Deal political agenda appears to lack ownership in most Member States. This translates clearly, she said, into how legislative negotiations are being played: with a lot of pushbacks once we get to discussing the details of the Green Deal proposals, echoing Halpern's analysis. Because the Green Deal was first and foremost presented by the von der Leyen Commission as a *growth strategy*, she also pointed out the too little social provisions that would enable a green transition centred around people's wellbeing.

Joe Elborn, Secretary General of the European Youth Forum, followed on the possibility for the transition to a liveable, fair European society by highlighting the importance of putting wellbeing and mental health of the next generation at the forefront of the policies that will be implementing the Green Deal, to compensate for its lack of social provisions. He stressed that there can only be action if it is inspired by hopes for a liveable future, for which a systemic change is required that only the current leadership can take responsibility for. This fundamental change also encompasses a paradigm shift, as we will be moving to a *post-growth* economy, a reality still to be incorporated in the discussions on the Green Deal.



"The compass for the Green Deal needs to target a post-fossil fuel system change, a circular economy revolution, a true commitment to zero pollution without harmful chemicals in our products, and a commitment to a regenerative wellbeing economy."

— Ester Asin, Director of WWF EPO

Day 2

Roundtable 1

Delivering climate targets: How can EU policy support a Just Transition?

Speakers:

- Nicolas Berghmans (IDDRI) – *moderator*
- Mikel Gonzalez-Eguino (BC3)
- Leonie Hass (DG CLIMA)
- Julien Viau (French Ministry for the Energy Transition)

Just a couple of days after the Council of the EU reached an agreement on key proposals in the Fit for 55 package, this first roundtable looked at the 'leave no one behind' principle in this context of increase of energy prices. To accommodate the entry into force of the Emissions Trading System (ETS) for the buildings and road transport sector, speakers argued that the priority should be put on finding alternatives to carbon pricing, and that carbon tax revenues should be used to invest in long-term solutions (energy renovation, clean mobility, etc.) in addition to direct payments. Participants emphasized the need for measures to target the middle class as well as low-income households for the system to accommodate the majority of society and build wider social welfare. In terms of investment, it was suggested not to rely entirely on the Social Climate Fund, but to look at climate-mainstreaming in the overall EU budget to ensure the suitable amount for fostering the transition.

You can download the slides of this roundtable [here](#).

Roundtable 2

Towards an EU Sustainable Food Systems Legislative Framework

Speakers:

- Harriet Bradley (IEEP) - *moderator*
- Pierre-Marie Aubert (IDDRI)
- Wim Debeuckelaere (DG SANTE)
- Nikolai Pushkarev (EPHA)
- Jennifer Lewis (IBMA)
- Johan Krallis Anell (Swedish Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation)

Recognizing the importance of using science as the way out of the crisis, speakers in this roundtable discussion exchanged views on how to achieve long-term viability in the production of food, namely in the form of a Sustainable Food Systems Legislative Framework. Panellists welcomed the systemic approach of the proposal, emphasizing the need to include a participatory governance system, in order to involve a wider range of stakeholders than what has traditionally been at play in the making of EU agricultural policy. While agreeing on the importance of a just transition and improving access to healthy food, there was a discussion on the nature of the relationship between this overarching law and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), as well as on the question of more or less regulation.

You can download the slides of this roundtable [here](#),
and Wim Debeuckelaere's presentation [here](#).

Roundtable 3

Restoring EU ecosystems: Recommendations for the successful implementation of the proposed EU Nature Restoration Law

Speakers:

- Evelyn Underwood (IEEP) – *moderator*
- Laura Baroni (IEEP)
- Denis Couvet (Fondation pour la Recherche sur la Biodiversité)
- Prof. Aveliina Helm (*Tartu University & Society for Ecological Restoration – Europe*)

This roundtable discussion touched upon the opportunities offered by the Commission's proposal for an EU Nature Restoration Law, published at the end of June. The majority of participants welcomed the level of ambition of the Commission's text. This new law would include not only solutions for restoring EU's biodiversity, but also for bringing nature back into our cities for people's wellbeing, and into our farming landscapes for long-term climate-resilient production. Experts would expect the Common Agricultural policy (CAP) to play a big role in terms of funding – as would be the private sector. The question of monitoring the law's implementation was also mentioned, as well as possibilities for using Artificial Intelligence and satellite technology in this context.

You can download the slides of this roundtable [here](#).

Roundtable 4

State of the EU CBAM after the French Presidency: A reality check

Speakers:

- Pierre Leturcq (IEEP) - *moderator*
- Laura Berthet (French Treasury)
- Isabelle Garzon (Europe Jacques Delors)
- Dr. Markus Gehring (University of Cambridge)
- Dr. Camilla Bausch (Ecologic Institute)

Participants of this roundtable looked at the ongoing political state of play on the CBAM and discussed upcoming challenges for its implementation. First, some recommendations were presented from the [Green Trade Network](#)'s upcoming policy brief "State of the EU CBAM after the French Presidency: A reality check". The speakers then explored topics ranging from the latest Council's agreements related to CBAM, to questions concerning the way in which CBAM can become more compatible with WTO law, and how it should sit within the frameworks provided by existing EU FTAs. Looking forward, the speakers recommended that maintaining transparency throughout the implementation and monitoring process was key. They advised that attention should be paid to the pace with which the CBAM scope expands. The last speaker looked at the newly proposed climate club and its potential interactions with the CBAM. The members of the G7 would all have to clarify their intentions regarding CBAM in order for the club to truly fulfil its capabilities in fostering climate solidarity to ultimately better drive industrial transformation, especially in countries that need the most support.

You can download the slides of this roundtable [here](#).

About Think2030

Launched by IEEP and its partners in 2018, Think2030 is an evidence-based, non-partisan platform of leading policy experts from European think tanks, civil society, the private sector and local authorities.

By focusing on producing relevant, timely and concrete policy recommendations, Think2030's key objective is to identify science-policy solutions for a more sustainable Europe.

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