

Jean Monnet Atlantic Network 2.0 - Dialogues

Panel 2 - Energy and Sustainability.

A Transatlantic Vision of the Green Agenda for Post-Pandemic Recovery.

The dialogue in this panel was developed around two papers presented by: **Daniela Stevens**, Research Professor of the Division of International Studies in CIDE (Mexico) and **Rim Berahab**, economist at the Policy Center for the New South (Morocco) and was conducted by **Anna Ayuso**, senior research fellow in CIDOB (Spain). The dialogue was enriched with the comments of **Ruderic Pimentel**, on behalf the FGV-IIU (Brazil); **Frank Mattheis**, Institut of European Studies, in the Université Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium) and **Carmen Fonseca**, IPRI-NOVA from Instituto Português de Relações Internacionais (Portugal)

Daniela Stevens presented the paper **“New ‘green winds’ coming from US?”**.

She addressed Joe Biden’s attempts to Reconstruct the International Climate Change Agenda and the implications of these efforts for Transatlantic cooperation. She alleged that democrat president Joe Biden of the United States has the historical opportunity of addressing climate change like none of his predecessors. In his first weeks at office, he assured that his country would produce carbon-free electricity by 2035 and reach zero net emissions mid-century. Given the magnitude of the challenges, the US cannot reach these goals alone, and is already seeking to harness global alliances to pursue a more ambitious international climate change agenda. The paper explored the implications of these efforts for Transatlantic cooperation by first, outlining the key domestic institutions that can buttress the administration’s objectives abroad; and second, by highlighting the continental international conditions under which a deeper coordination could be bolstered, and in turn, contribute to climate change mitigation. Daniela analyzed Biden's first measures both internally and externally. At the internal level, she highlighted the regulatory measures aimed to improve supply efficiency and to reduce vehicle emissions, which include credit aid for investments and requirements for greater transparency for companies. Regarding external actions, she highlighted the return of the USs to the Paris Agreement and the expectations generated by the establishment of new long-term goals that will be taken to the next Climate Change Summit (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021. This creates new opportunities for multilateral collaboration with the EU and it is expected that new support will be announced for initiatives such as the Green Climate Fund or the Adaptation Action Agenda.

Rim Berahab paper was **“Towards a Green Recovery in Africa? The Case of Nigeria.”**

She highlighted that the issue of green recovery in Africa after the pandemic is very important, given the current context that the world has been experiencing since 2020. Africa must simultaneously address the triple challenge of fighting the pandemic, reviving the economy, and ensuring its sustainability. While the energy transition is inevitable, it is complex because there is no universal strategy applicable to all countries. It must be adapted to specific political and socio-economic contexts, available energy resources, and whether or not there is a regulatory and legal framework conducive to this change. The presentation was focused on the case of Nigeria, given its position in the Atlantic basin and its weight in the African economy. Despite its significant energy resources, Nigeria is facing a persistent energy crisis. The under-utilization of

available energy resources is a common phenomenon and is exacerbated by a chronic imbalance in electricity and petroleum product markets as well as a significant infrastructure gap. The reflection on the case of Nigeria was structured around three main axes: 1/- The structural energy crisis pre-covid-19; 2/- the impact of Covid-19 on the energy industry; 3/- the way to build a better and resilient energy future. The persistent energy crisis in Nigeria is due to: the volatility of oil prices, security threats, lack of infrastructures and disruptions in supply. She said that, as other countries in the continent, it is very unlikely that Nigeria could abandon oil in the short term. And the transformation in medium term, will mostly be in the direction to a more diversified energy mix, a stronger regulatory and policy framework and the support to the development of new energy technologies. But all this will require significant investment and financing, so strengthening transatlantic cooperation will be necessary. Nigeria and the EU have already concluded many partnerships including energy issues. Now there is the question of the implications of the European Green Deal on oil exporting countries, like Nigeria. This point needs to be further investigated.

During the discussions throughout the session the issue of China's influence in the Atlantic South (Africa and Latin América) was discussed. Although it was recognized that there is competition between different countries and concerns about the lack of transparency of some Chinese investments, it was also pointed out that windows of opportunity can be opened for greater collaboration in the establishment of international goals and regulations. There were also concerns about how China's geopolitical actions affect energy supply chains and specially the development of renewable energies.

Regarding regional and interregional cooperation on energy and green transition, there are difficulties derived from the difficulties of consolidating certain processes in Africa and Latin America due to the lack of complementarity and incentives to cooperate because their exports are directed to the international market. This is especially the case in oil producing and exporting countries. An alliance between the Atlantic countries and the south-south cooperation would be very profitable, but still, it's difficult. There are some experiences but difficulties are seen due to problems of political instability, particularly in Africa. The energy transition can also lead to increased instability; A first issue is the effects on the governance of oil-exporting countries that see their income reduced. Another issue is the conflicts of interest between winners and losers of the energy transition.

With regard to the future increase in cooperation between the EU and the United States thanks to a more multilateral approach, questions arose as to whether the views of both actors are compatible. An example are taxes on emissions, of which the EU is a firm supporter and will hardly be accepted by the US administration. In general terms, during the discussions four types of great challenges for energy cooperation were identified:

- The challenges related to guarantee to all countries access to the technology necessary to make the energy transition.
- The resources needed to invest in infrastructures necessities to ensure energy security access for all for the population.
- Regulatory measures, both internally and internationally, for greater transparency and to ensure the compliance with the established goals.



- Changes in the citizens culture on sustainable use in the production and consumption of energy.

For all this challenges, stronger and better international cooperation in the Atlantic and beyond is required and as well as building partnerships for technological solutions. If you missed the dialogue and want to know more you can see the webinar [here](#).