

# futuribles

N° 435 • March-April 2020

---

## Ecological Transition in France: An Unprecedented Challenge

*Sébastien Timsit  
and Alain Grandjean*

This issue of *Futuribles* — number 435 — opens up a new series on energy issues and climate change that is set to run over several months. As part of this series, Sébastien Timsit and Alain Grandjean outline the enormous challenge represented by ecological transition and its implementation in France. After telling us how extensive that challenge is at the global, European and French levels, they remind us of the current situation regarding CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and the drastic falls we would have to see to have any hope of keeping global warming below 2°C (as compared with pre-industrial temperatures) in the years to 2100.

France has adopted a very ambitious roadmap in this area, aiming to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. To keep to that objective, it is urgent, Timsit and Grandjean argue, for major sectoral developments to take place in the country — in forestry, construction, transport, energy etc. They sketch out the broad outlines of these, then go on to show how the de-carbonization of the French economy could be achieved without inflicting too much collateral damage on employment and social equilibria. They show, for example, how crucial finance and the direction of investment will be, together with a carbon

tax, which is essential but requires a real implementation as well as a campaign of public education if it is not to appear socially unjust. Lastly, they indicate the sectors that will be particularly impacted by ecological transition in France, and those that have to be relied upon to counterbalance the effects (particularly in terms of employment) of this enormous, unprecedented undertaking which urgently needs to be got underway.

---

## Energy Transition: the Unrelenting Carbon Crisis

*Interview with Jean-Marc Jancovici*

The interview we publish here, with Jean-Marc Jancovici, slots neatly into our new series on energy issues and climate change, attesting as it does to the urgent need for energy transition and, above all, to the need to bid a timely farewell to carbon in our ways of producing and living. As the now inescapable character of climate change and its multiple consequences stares us in the face, Jean-Marc Jancovici invites us to agree, as quickly as possible, to give up carbon-based energy sources and to start today to make efforts to adapt to climate change (and not just to combat it). Lastly, he shows that, in the face of such civilizational challenges, France is not without resources, but its actions have to form part of a clear, educative policy to convince all the citizenry and bring them together in a common energy transition programme.

---

## French Public Opinion on Climate Matters

*Solange Martin*

As in other countries, 2019 was notable in France for the regular mobilization of a section of the population to call the climate emergency to the attention of decision-makers and citizens. 'Climate Marches' repeatedly brought thousands of people on to the streets in French cities; young people (school and university students) initiated strikes and demonstrations to show their concern over global warming. These mobilizations are an interesting indication of the awareness of the issues and the demand for concrete action among a section of public opinion.

Yet is this mobilization significant? What is the overall position of the French public on climate issues? Are they ready to act concretely in the struggle against global warming? This article by Solange Martin — part of our new series on energy issues and climate change — shows how French public opinion is moving on these questions, with a distinct polarization on the issue and an increased risk of social tensions. It shows how far there still is to go before the ecological transition takes on any substance in France, both in public opinion and daily life.

---

## The Environmental Community: Who Can Advance the Environmental Cause in France?

*Daniel Boy*

With this issue 435 of *Futuribles*, we begin a new series of articles

on energy questions and climate change — an enormous subject, the systemic character of which became clear to us when the French Minister of Ecological Transition Nicolas Hulot resigned in late August 2018. Hulot deplored the lack of greater — political and popular — support to enable real influence to be exerted on government policy and an ambitious project of ecological transition to be promoted in the face of the challenges posed by climate change. In this first instalment, we concern ourselves with the question of the actors involved in environmental questions: who are they, what weight do they have, and what are their actual motivations?

Daniel Boy, a specialist in public opinion and political ecology in France, offers a broad conspectus of environmental actors, from the supranational to the local level and ordinary French citizens, taking in national public bodies, elected or consultative, on the way. He shows, for example, what their positions are on ecological questions, how that has evolved, and how it might put them in a position to act (or not) in this area.

---

## An End to Corporate Philanthropy?

*François Debiesse*

Our series on the part to be played by companies in producing the common good, which began in Autumn 2018 (issue 426), has in recent months provided *Futuribles* readers with various articles on the way companies and organizations are contributing to the general interest today. This article by François Debiesse fits seamlessly into that series, casting light as it does on one of the

first areas in which companies began to contribute to the general good: corporate philanthropy. Reminding us how this kind of philanthropy works, how it has been encouraged over the last 20 years and the way it is practiced by companies, François Debiesse points to the main fields targeted by companies involved, and their motivations. He sketches out the underlying trends at work for some years now (particularly greater local rootedness, a more collective style of philanthropy and concern for the social impact of the activities financed). Most importantly, at a time when incentives for corporate philanthropy have been coming under critical scrutiny, he calls on public authorities not to backslide and to keep open this path along which many companies work for the common good by strengthening the dialogue around— and the ethics of — corporate philanthropy practices.

---

## Is Violence on the Increase around the World?

*Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos*

The question of indicators has been a longstanding concern for *Futuribles*, since the robustness of an analysis of a social phenomenon or trend can vary appreciably depending on the data and indicators employed. This has frequently been highlighted with regard to employment figures, for example, the question being whether the rate of *unemployment* or of *employment* is the more informative. In this column, the indicators issue arises with regard to the measurement of violence across the world.

Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos demonstrates here that, contrary to

an image frequently conveyed by the media and originating in the major international organizations, violence hasn't necessarily been rising over the long term. Once again, it all depends on what the indicators include: the civil and/or military victims of conflict, direct and/or indirect casualties, related to the number of countries (though this has changed over time), to a population that is itself rising, the definition of the notion of armed conflict and protagonists concerned, etc. This column enables us to revise downward the idea that violence was increasing in the world over the long term, to stress the complexity of the measurement of violent phenomena on an international scale and, in that context, the difficulty of research on international conflict and criminality.

---

## The Conference on the Future of Europe

*Jean-François Drevet*

In late 2019, a year when the composition of the main European institutions was undergoing renewal, agreement was reached to set up a conference on the future of Europe, to begin in 2020 and run for two years. That conference, to be organized by the Parliament, Council and European Commission, is among the main commitments made by the President of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen and aims to strengthen the European democratic process, as it is meant to involve a representative sample of society and thus give European citizens an opportunity to contribute to reforming the European Union. What outcome can we hope to see? What major subjects should be discussed? How can the member states develop

the EU's operation after Brexit? Jean-François Drevet takes a first look here at the areas of work that might be

addressed over the next two years by the Conference on the Future of Europe. ■

**Futuribles** is a bimonthly independent transdisciplinary policy oriented journal (6 issues a year), also available in electronic form on the Futuribles website.

Its objective is to provide its readers with a better understanding of contemporary societies dynamics, those facts, ideas and trends shaping their medium and long term possible futures.

**Chief Editor:** Hugues de Jouvenel

Futuribles • 47, rue de Babylone, 75007 Paris, France • Tel. +33 (0)1 53 63 37 70  
Fax +33 (0)1 42 22 65 54 • E-mail [revue@futuribles.com](mailto:revue@futuribles.com) • Website [www.futuribles.com](http://www.futuribles.com)

## TABLES RONDES FUTURIBLES INTERNATIONAL

### Le tic-tac de l'horloge climatique

Mercredi 11 mars 2020 • Paris • 17h30-19h30

Avec **Christian de Perthuis**, professeur d'économie à l'université Paris-Dauphine, fondateur de la chaire Économie du climat et auteur du récent ouvrage *Le Tic-tac de l'horloge climatique. Une course contre la montre pour le climat* (Bruxelles : De Boeck, 2019).

### La dimension stratégique de la transition énergétique en Europe

Mardi 31 mars 2020 • Paris • 17h30-19h30

Avec **Marc-Antoine Eyl-Mazzega**, directeur du Centre Énergie de l'Institut français des relations internationales (IFRI).

### Pour une écologie numérique

Lundi 27 avril 2020 • Paris • 17h30-19h30

Avec **Éric Vidalenc**, conseiller scientifique de Futuribles International et auteur de *Pour une écologie numérique* (Paris : Les Petits Matins, 2019).

Les abonnés de la revue Futuribles et les membres de Futuribles International ayant acquitté leur cotisation sont invités aux tables rondes. Une participation de 20 euros est demandée aux autres personnes.

Contact : Aude Houguenague • E-mail : [ahouguenague@futuribles.com](mailto:ahouguenague@futuribles.com)  
Futuribles International - 47, rue de Babylone - 75007 Paris - France • Tél. : + 33 (0)1 53 63 37 73  
Fax : + 33 (0)1 42 22 65 54 • Site Internet : <https://www.futuribles.com/fr/agenda/>