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Agriculture, Land, Water and Climate Solutions for a World in Transition

Guillaume Benoit

The rise in the ecological vote in the second round of the French municipal elections (even though this should be kept in perspective due to low turnouts) is no doubt revealing about the growing preoccupation of our contemporaries with environmental questions — particularly global warming and biodiversity loss, a concern also attested by most studies on the ‘post-Covid world’. Should such preoccupations immediately be seen as part of the trend in favour of economic de-growth? That is not the view of Guillaume Benoit who shows here what a substantial role land, water and agriculture — quite apart from their food-producing and sociocultural functions — can play in the battle against climate change and for sustainable development. Benoit provides us with a demonstration of the inexhaustible resources that nature could provide, if we took care of them in the way that is essential for the resolution of many of the challenges that face our contemporaries and their descendants now and in the future.

Energy-Transition Foresight Between Economic Modelling and the Analysis of Strategic Scenarios

Patrick Criqui and Henri Waisman

While many countries are pondering their responses to the economic crisis arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and as the question faces them of how to articulate these with strategies to fight climate change, what can energy-transition foresight bring to the table? Continuing the ‘Energy-Climate’ series of articles begun in these pages in March, Patrick Criqui and Henri Waisman offer an analysis of the various foresight tools developed over the last half-century to inform decisions in the area of energy transition.

After going back over the history of the development of integrated energy-economy-environment modelling studies, which had their golden age in the period 1992-2014, they stress the limits this kind of foresight has run up against internationally, beginning with the Paris Agreements, which encouraged the reintroduction of the ‘political-economy’ dimension into transition scenarios. Since then, a new approach has consisted in combining scoping based on the comprehensive integrated models approach with national modelling, in order to reconcile international objectives of decarbonization with the socio-economic priorities and context specific to each state. The authors outline the guiding principles of foresight exercises in

this area (which draw on the experience of the National Debate on energy transition in France) and present an example of implementation in the shape of the Deep Decarbonization Pathways Project. Lastly, they mention various lines of strategic thinking aiming towards carbon neutrality – a key point in these being a change in lifestyles – and the constraints inherent in having to gain society's acceptance for such measures. This broad conspectus of the evolution of energy-transition foresight will be an essential tool for taking long-term exigencies into account in the strategies currently being drawn up for overcoming the present crisis.

Global Energy Perspectives to 2040

The International Energy Agency's Scenarios

Laura Cozzi

Last March, *Futuribles* launched a new series on the climate and on ecological transition, which are essential long-term issues that seemed to us to be poorly factored in by governments or not considered at all. Just afterwards, the Covid-19 pandemic spread around the world, bringing with it a major international economic crisis that will drive most countries to draw up recovery plans to cope with it. The dramatic current situation is undoubtedly also an opportunity to combine the two challenges, the ecological and the economic, and, to do that, it will be crucial to have a long-term vision of global energy perspectives.

Laura Cozzi, who is in charge of developing these perspectives within the IEA, outlines the scenarios that may be envisaged to 2040, taking into account both the huge upheaval produced by

the Covid-19 crisis (economic crisis, interruption to transport, reduced consumption etc.) and international climate objectives. After reminding us of the shock this crisis represents for the global energy system, she stresses the urgency of resolving the old problems that play a major role in greenhouse gas emissions (particularly, coal-fired power stations). She then shows the degree to which electricity is strategic today, and hence how important it is to increase the share of renewables in electricity production and invest in storage technologies (batteries). In this way, she emphasizes the key role of energy technologies in eventually decarbonizing our economies and making them more resilient, calling on states to invest substantially in this field.

Egypt, a Giant on the Verge of Breakdown?

Didier Billion and Alain Parant

As part of a project (entitled 'Observatory of the Geopolitical Challenges of Demography') entrusted to *Futuribles* and IRIS in 2018 by the French Defence Ministry, Didier Billion and Alain Parant examined in some depth the demographic situation of Egypt with reference to the country's socio-political and geopolitical context. They present the lessons of this work in this article, updated using the U.N.'s latest population projections.

With more than 100 million inhabitants, Egypt is the most populous state on the Mediterranean and the third most populous in Africa (after Nigeria and Ethiopia). Despite the revolution of 2011, it still has a strong authoritarian regime and its economy is in a parlous state. The prospect of demographic growth that would add

between 45 and 75 million inhabitants to the population by 2050 poses a risk of overpopulation that could have very serious environmental, health, social and other consequences. As the authors stress, if the UN's demographic projections turn out to be correct, the question will arise of where and how this additional population will live, since the geography of the (mainly desert) country causes most of Egypt's people to live along the Nile valley at an already very high population density.

What should European Policy be in the Mediterranean?

Jean-François Drevet

The new European Commission, which came into office in late 2019,

quickly displayed an intention to strengthen the geopolitical role of the EU. In the context of Brexit, resurgent rivalry between the USA and Russia, and the ambitions of China, it will be essential, but not at all easy, to make Europe's voice heard. Among the most troubling objects of concern — and the closest to its territorial space — the Mediterranean region occupies a special place. In this piece, Jean-François Drevet points to the most pressing problems to consider in the region, distinguishing between its Western and Eastern parts (in particular, Turkey and Iran), and shows how the EU might set about the task. He argues for the soonest possible establishment of a common strategy for action, stressing also the local lines of cooperation that might be explored (for example, in the energy sector) away from the conflict zones. ■

***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.

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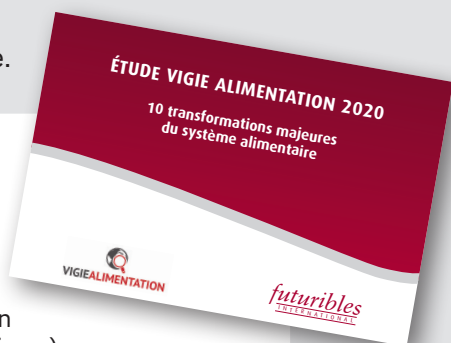
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Cette étude analyse en profondeur et avec un recul critique, les transformations majeures à l'œuvre dans l'ensemble des maillons de la chaîne alimentaire, en se basant sur :

- ▶ les données les plus récentes : enquêtes de consommation, données statistiques et commerciales, innovations produit, programmes de recherche en cours ;
- ▶ les points de vue d'acteurs et d'experts du système alimentaire.

Les 10 transformations majeures

- ▶ Déstructuration des modèles alimentaires et montée du *snacking*
- ▶ La végétalisation de l'alimentation (végétarisme, véganisme, flexitarisme)
- ▶ Les substituts aux produits animaux
- ▶ Les nouvelles sources de protéines
- ▶ Vers une démocratisation du bio ?
- ▶ Produits locaux et circuits courts : la consommation locavore
- ▶ La révolution de l'e-commerce
- ▶ La bataille de la livraison de repas
- ▶ Alimentation et santé : vers une nutrition personnalisée
- ▶ L'obligation de transparence



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- ▶ l'analyse de l'impact de la crise du Covid-19 sur le système agroalimentaire

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