

Medborgarråd om Klimatet: Sweden's first national Climate Assembly

MISTRA Sustainable Consumption Webinar 2023-12-05

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The overarching objective of FAIRTRANS is to promote transformations to a fair and fossil free future.

Mission to develop **science-based and fair roadmaps** for rapid decarbonisation, consistent with the Swedish carbon budget, through **collaboration with key actors from civil society**.

FAIRTRANS ▶

Rättvis omställning till ett fossilfritt samhälle

Civil society partners with 5 million members



Hyresgäst-



Naturskyddsföreningen



FAIRTRANS board decided to organise a climate assembly in spring 2022, several months *before* the national election



Röda Barnens
Ungdomsförbund



Swedish Investors for Sustainable Developme



SVENSKES
KONSUMENTER



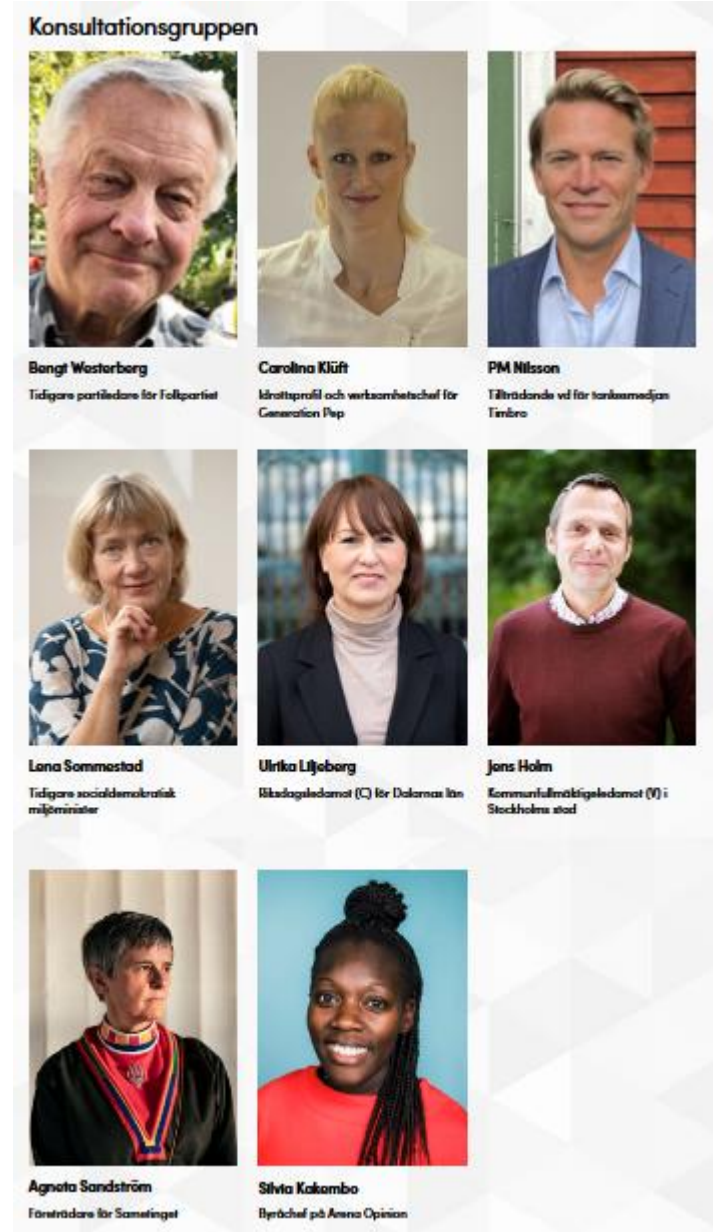
<https://fairtrans.nu/>

Medborgarrådet om Klimatet (MoK)

- **Purpose:** a group of randomly-selected citizens to deliberate, identify and present suggestions for how Sweden can meet its commitment to the Paris agreement.

Practicalities

- Overseen by a consultation group of well known individuals from across political spectrum and civil society.
- Advisors: Graham Smith, Claire Mellier-Wilson, Marina Lindell, Stephan Elstub
- Recruitment of 60 participants by Enkatfabrikan
 - Stratification by political party support, climate concern, demographics, education, geography, postal code income quartile
- Design and facilitation by Digidem Lab with support of Danish Board of Technology
 - 2 weekends in person, 5 evenings online



Particular features of the MoK

- Politically independent
 - Not connected to any formal decision process
 - Members have influence on agenda and discuss broader systems perspective
- **Impact strategy:** support a more informed and nuanced public and political discussion:
 - Provide fellow citizens, media, civil society, and government with an informed view independent from organised interests,
 - Provoke discussion on relevant principles (e.g. fairness, growth, sufficiency/efficiency, limits, competitiveness),
 - Demonstrate proposals agreed on by a diverse group of citizens
 - Explain the reasoning behind the supported proposals.
- Explicit aim to support and create space for 'systems thinking'...

Frontiers of climate assembly practice

- Some critique of assemblies for missing the bigger picture of structures and systems change (Mellier & Capstick 2023)
 - Sectoral topic groups, time-pressure to produce recommendations
- Most national CA have been *government-mandated*
 - Independent CAs, may have more transformative potential with scope to critique existing structures and raise controversial perspectives (Mellier and Capstick 2023)
- Most citizen assemblies rely on textual and discursive evidence (KNOCA 2022)
 - Limited experimentation with experiential or interactive learning

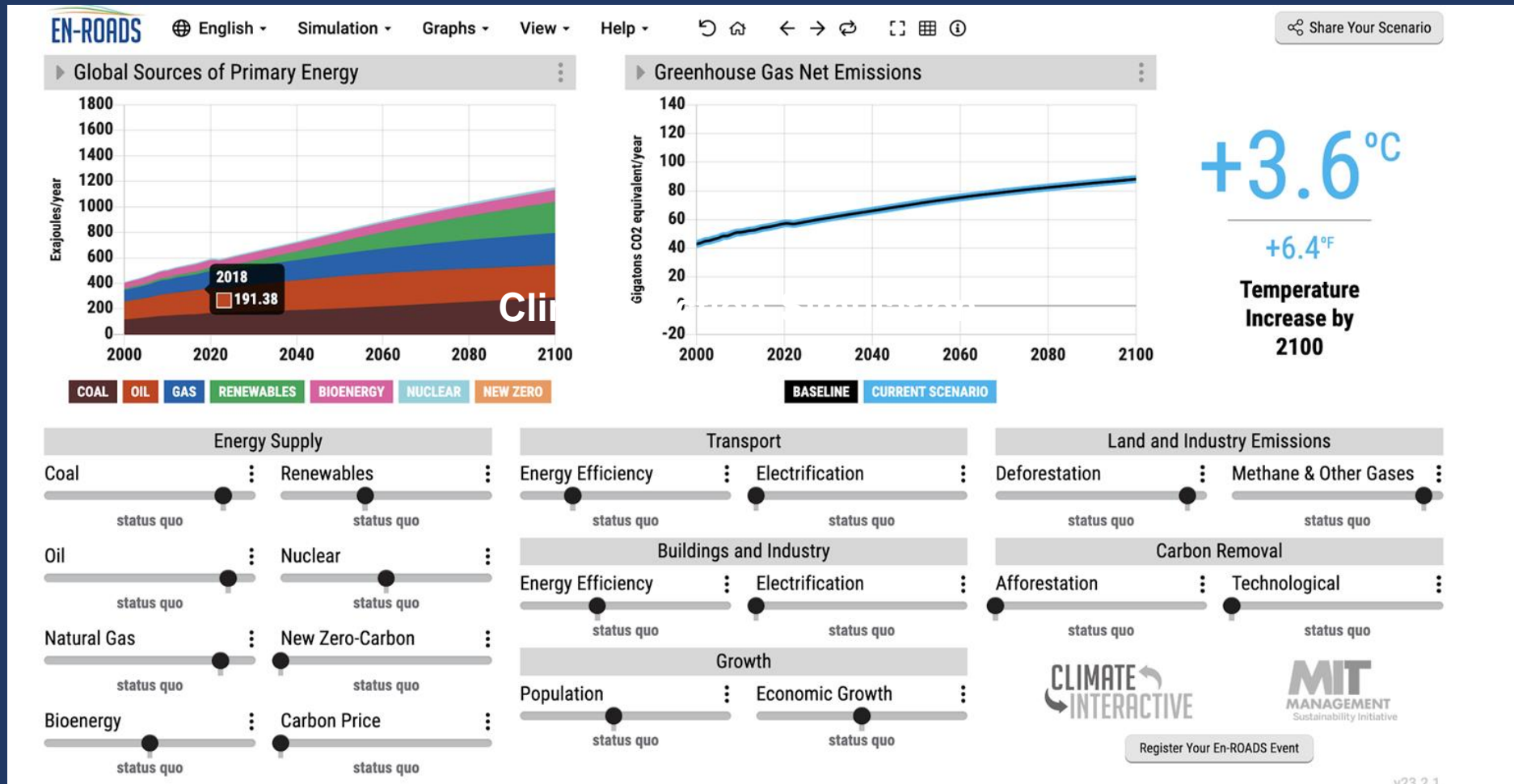


Mellier, C., and S. Capstick. 2023, May 23. How can citizens' assemblies help navigate the systemic transformations required by the polycrisis? Knowledge Network on Climate Assemblies workshop.

KNOCA. 2022. Are backcasting and scenario-based planning compatible with climate assemblies? - An exploration of possibilities and boundaries. Report on KNOCA workshop, November 14, 2022.

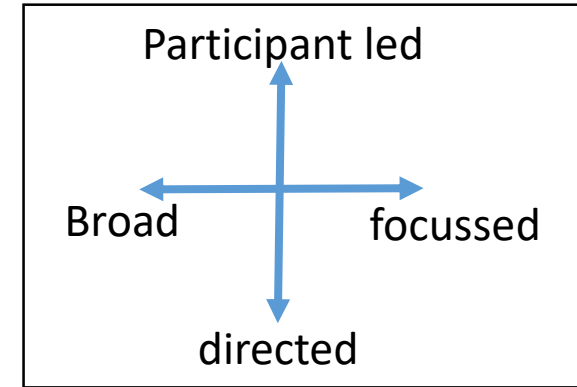
EN-ROADS

Climate Action Simulation



Design trade-offs

- between focussed and broad remits
 - FOCUSSED (e.g. transport): specific and tangible recommendations, more time for learning, diverse experts and deeper deliberation.
 - BROAD: citizens can be empowered to drive agenda, more systemic structural consideration, more generally interesting for participants



- between directed and participant-led focus
 - DIRECTED: more efficient – more time for deliberation and learning, ensures MoK focusses on 'most relevant areas'
 - PAF

Broad intro with systems perspective, members choose focussed controversial topics to discuss in detail (such as transport and energy)

Risks and mitigations

1. **The Climate Assembly is ignored**

- Interact with media (newspapers and broadcast)
- Well known consultation group
- Aiming for champion
- Participants feel ownership and supported to speak on behalf of the assembly

2. **The Climate Assembly is hijacked** by special interests groups (too much love), or opposed vividly by other groups (too much critique) and therefore loses in legitimacy

- Maintain integrity as a university-led Climate Assembly
- Ensure quality and non-bias in selection of participants and experts

What are the risks and how can these be mitigated?

3. The participants are perceived as a biased sample

- Aiming to mirror nation in terms of party sympathy and climate worry
- pay everyone 1000 SEK/day

4. The evidence and experts are perceived as biased

- If a majority of participants vote to invite a particular expert, we will do so.
- Decisions around evidence will be anchored in the consult the **Consultation Group**



Next steps...

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Rättvis omställning till ett fossilfritt samhälle

FAIR TRANSformation to a fossil-free future

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FORMAS 

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