

10 NOVEMBER 2021

# EMPOWERING POLICY MAKERS

WITH INFORMED SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE TO ADDRESS THE  
CLIMATE CRISIS

ONLINE PANEL – SIDE EVENT TO COP26



## INTRODUCTION

### ABOUT COP26

The United Kingdom will host the twenty-sixth United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) at the Scottish Event Campus in Glasgow from 1 to 12 November 2021. The climate talks will bring together over 30,000 delegates, including heads of state, climate experts and campaigners to agree coordinated action to tackle climate change. The challenge is significant and we must hence rise to it in order to save the environment we all live in. The UN Climate Change process is central to that collective action.



**UN CLIMATE  
CHANGE  
CONFERENCE  
UK 2021**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

### ABOUT THE PANEL

UKRI and Science Europe are convening this international panel of senior government officials and eminent scientists to discover how lessons from the COVID19 pandemic can help us to address the climate crisis, especially in the context of the UK Presidency COP26 campaign areas.

A panel of this type will bring home the value of international collaboration as well as the importance of drawing on local, regional, national and international expertise. It will highlight the need to increase global cooperation between the research community and policy makers and explore how research and innovation can most effectively inform decision-making on climate change. Coming so soon after the pandemic, it underlines the importance of policy makers and researchers working together in an exchange of objectives and knowledge in a timely way.

The panel's deliberations will help to ensure that the right structures are in place to leverage expertise, capabilities and any new knowledge that can contribute to both practice and policy in times of crisis. Collectively, this working relationship underpins action taken at national and multi-national level at both COP26 and beyond.

The panel will discuss how best to mobilise scientific communities across the world in response to climate change. It will seek to accelerate action and encourage 'political ambitions, tools, finance and coordination' through debate. Finding solutions through shared best practice will enable rapid, robust, decisive, yet deliverable, action. Funding and supporting organisations to ecological, economic and social sustainability. For this reason, we joined forces and co-organise this symposium in the fringe of COP26.

# PROGRAMME

All times are in CET.

- 11.00–11.10**      **Opening of Workshop**
- **Professor Melanie Welham**, Executive Chair of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, UK Research and Innovation, and Governing Board Member of Science Europe
- 11.10–11.20**      **Welcome and Keynote Introduction**
- **Professor Dame Jane Francis** (Panel Moderator), Director of the British Antarctic Survey
- 11.20–11.30**      **Keynote speech**
- **Manuel Heitor**, Portuguese Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education
- 11.30–11.50**      **Panel Session**
- **Professor Sir Robert Watson**, former IPCC Chair and IPBES Chair
  - **Professor Christian Apfelbacher**, member of the Coordinating Group of the German Network Public Health for COVID-19
  - **Professor Karin Bäckstrand**, Stockholm University, Researcher at the Institute for Future Studies (IFFS), and member of the Swedish Climate Policy Council
  - **Professor Zbigniew Władysław Kundzewicz**, Professor of Earth Sciences at the Polish Academy of Sciences
- 11.50–12.25**      **Open plenary debate**
- Chaired by **Professor Dame Jane Francis**, Director of the British Antarctic Survey
- 12.25–12.30**      **Closing statement**
- **Lidia Borrell-Damián**, Secretary General of Science Europe
- 12.30**              **End of event**

## BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS

In order of appearance on the programme:



### MELANIE WELHAM

**EXECUTIVE CHAIR AT UK RESEARCH AND INNOVATION, AND GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER OF SCIENCE EUROPE**

From 1 April 2018, Professor Melanie Welham has been Executive Chair of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), part of UK Research and Innovation, and for two years prior to this she served as Interim Chief Executive of the Council. Melanie joined BBSRC in October 2012 as Director of Science, initially on secondment from the University of Bath. At the University of Bath Melanie was a leading researcher in molecular signalling and stem cell science and was the first woman to be appointed a professor in her department. She obtained her first degree in Biochemistry from Imperial College London before undertaking a PhD at University College London, followed by post-doctoral research at the University of British Columbia, Canada.

Melanie has a well-developed understanding of the requirements and demands of catalysing, supporting and delivering bioscience research, especially the interface between the Council and the research and innovation community. Earlier in her career she was awarded a BBSRC Research Development Fellowship and for more than four years she served on BBSRC peer review committees, including periods as either chair or co-chair. Professor Welham also served on the advisory committee for the UK National Stem Cell Network from 2009-11. She is currently a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Human Frontiers Science Program Organisation and a Member of the Governing Board for Science Europe.

Professor Welham has long been an advocate for equality, diversity and inclusion, playing a leadership role and engaging in activities to promote the EDI agenda. Alongside leadership of BBSRC, Melanie is also UKRI Executive Champion for People, Culture and Talent



### DAME JANE FRANCIS

**DIRECTOR OF THE BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY**

Professor Dame Jane Francis is Director of the British Antarctic Survey, a research centre of the Natural Environment Research Council (UKRI-NERC). In 2017, Jane Francis was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George in recognition of services to UK polar science and diplomacy. She was also awarded the Polar Medal by H.M The Queen and in 2018 became Chancellor of the University of Leeds. In 2021 she was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society.

She is involved with international polar organisations such as the Antarctic Treaty and European Polar Board and on several advisory boards for national polar programmes. Jane is a geologist by training, having undertaken research projects in the universities of Southampton, London and Adelaide, Australia. Her research interests include ancient climates and fossil plants from the Arctic and Antarctica, for which she has undertaken over 15 science expeditions to the polar regions.



**MANUEL HEITOR**  
**PORTUGUESE MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

Manuel Heitor has been the Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education of Portugal since November 2015. From March 2005 to June 2011, he served as Secretary of State for Science, Technology and Higher Education.

Manuel Heitor is full Professor at Instituto Superior Técnico, IST, in Lisbon, and was the founder and director of the IST's 'Center for Innovation, Technology and Policy Research', and director of the IST's doctoral Programs in 'Engineering and Public Policy, EPP' and in 'Engineering Design'. In 2011–12 he was a Visiting Scholar at Harvard and since 1995, a Research Fellow of the IC2 Institute of the University of Texas at Austin.

He earned a PhD at Imperial College, London, in 1985 in combustion research and did post-doctoral training at the University of California San Diego.

He is a founding member of the S&T Council of the 'International Risk Governance Council', IRGC and a co-founder of the European network 'science, technology, education and policy for Europe, step4EU'.



**SIR ROBERT WATSON**  
**FORMER IPCC CHAIR AND IPBES CHAIR**

The career of Sir Robert Watson, CMG, FRS, has included being scientific advisor in the Office of Science and Technology Policy, White House; chief scientist, World Bank; chief scientific advisor, UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; and strategic director for the Tyndall Center, University of East Anglia, UK.

He has chaired, co-chaired or directed the WMO/UNEP stratospheric ozone depletion assessments, Global Biodiversity Assessment, Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, UK National Ecosystem Assessment and its Follow-on, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Assessment of Agricultural Scientific and Technology for Development, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and UNEP's Making Peace with Nature.

His awards include a Knights Bachelor (2012), Companion of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George (2003); Fellow of the Royal Society (2011), member of the American Philosophical Society (2020), honorary member of the AMS (2021), UN Champion of the World for Science and Innovation (2014), and the Asahi Glass Blue Planet Prize (2010).



**CHRISTIAN APFELBACHER**

**MEMBER OF THE COORDINATING GROUP OF THE GERMAN NETWORK PUBLIC HEALTH FOR COVID-19**

Prof. Christian Apfelbacher is public health scientist with a background in epidemiology, medical sociology and health services research. He is currently Director of the Institute of Social Medicine and Health Systems Research at Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg. Prof. Apfelbacher has long standing experience in the conduct and analysis of epidemiological studies, both in patient and general populations, with a special focus on chronic diseases.

He is also experienced in the conduct of health care research, with a special interest in intensive care, and maintains that ethical reflection within public health is important.

Further, he is spokesperson of a DFG funded research group on health literacy across Germany. As managing director of the German Society of Social Medicine and Prevention Christian Apfelbacher contributed to establishing the Competence Network Public Health for COVID-19 in Germany and has been co-producing policy briefs and fact sheets for policy making.



**KARIN BÄCKSTRAND**

**STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY, RESEARCHER AT THE INSTITUTE FOR FUTURE STUDIES (IFFS), AND MEMBER OF THE SWEDISH CLIMATE POLICY COUNCIL**

Karin Bäckstrand is a Professor in Environmental Social Science at the Department of Political Science at Stockholm University, researcher at the Institute for Future Studies and member of the Swedish Climate Policy Council. Her research revolves around the democratic legitimacy of global environmental politics and non-state actors in climate change governance.

She has held positions as professor in political science, Lund University and Wallenberg Fellow at MIT. Her recent publications include Legitimacy in Global Governance. Sources, Processes, and Consequences (Oxford University Press 2018, co-edited with Tallberg and Scholte), Governing the Climate-Energy Nexus. Institutional Complexity and its Challenges to Effectiveness and Legitimacy (Cambridge University Press, 2020, co-edited with Zelli et al).



**ZBIGNIEW WŁADYSŁAW KUNDZEWICZ**

**PROFESSOR OF EARTH SCIENCES AT POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**

Zbigniew W. Kundzewicz is Professor of Earth Sciences (since 1993), a Corresponding Member of Polish Academy of Sciences (since 2010) and a Member of Academia Europaea (since 2017). He holds a Master's degree in automatics from the Warsaw University of Technology (1974), as well as a doctorate (1979) and habilitation (1985) in hydrology from the Institute of Geophysics, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland.

He led the Climate and Water Department in the Institute for Agricultural and Forest Environment, Polish Academy of Sciences in Poznan, Poland in 1990–2018. He is an Honorary and Visiting Professor in the School of Geographical Sciences, Nanjing University of Information Science & Technology (NUIST). He was a Senior Scientist in the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) in Potsdam, Germany (part time, from 2001 to April 2016) where now he has guest status.

His main scientific contributions have been in the areas of extreme hydrological events (and floods in particular) and climate change impacts on water resources. He has been a four-fold Coordinating Lead Author of publications of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), so he takes pride in having contributed to the collective effort that was awarded Nobel Peace Prize for IPCC in 2007. He was a Member of the Advisory Group on Environment (including Climate) for 7th Framework Programme of the European Commission.

Now, he is a Member of the Assembly of the Horizon Europe (European Commission). He is a recipient of a Dooge Medal of the IAHS/UNESCO/WMO International Hydrology Prize (2017) and Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz International Prize for Water – The Surface Water Prize (2020). He has received Polish state orders: Golden Cross of Merit and Knight's Cross of Polonia Restituta, a Great Golden Seal of the City of Poznań (Poland), a Tison Award of the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS), and awards of the Polish Academy of Sciences. In 2018 he received a Honorary Doctorate in Warsaw University of Life Sciences (WULS – SGGW).



### **LIDIA BORRELL-DAMIÁN** **SECRETARY GENERAL OF SCIENCE EUROPE**

Lidia Borrell-Damián is Secretary General of Science Europe, the association representing major public organisations that fund or perform excellent, ground-breaking research in Europe. Previously, she worked for the European University Association (EUA) (2006-2019), serving the last five years as the Director for Research and Innovation (R&I).

Her areas of experience cover a wide range of European and global R&I priorities, namely EU Framework Programme; European Research Area; research infrastructures; research ethics and integrity; research assessment processes; university-business cooperation; regional innovation; gender and diversity; Open Science; doctoral education; energy science policy. She was a member of the EOSC Executive Committee between September 2019 and December 2020, and co-chair of the related Sustainability Working Group.

Lidia Borrell-Damián holds a Doctorate in Chemistry (Chemical Engineering Specialty; Solar Energy) from the University of Barcelona (1995). She was Director of Research at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (2003-2005). Formerly, she was a Visiting Scholar at the University of Western Ontario (Canada, 1999-2001) at North Carolina State University (USA, 1997-1998) and an Assistant Professor at the University of Barcelona (1990-1998).



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