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G20 Saudi Arabia's Chief Climate Negotiator outlines climate-strategy at the Digital Global Solutions Summit

At the 4th Global Solutions Summit, that is held digitally in 2020, Saudi Arabia's Chief Negotiator on Climate Change Issues, Khalid Abuleif, shared the plans of the Saudi Arabian G20 Presidency to advance a Circular Carbon Economy. "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is committed to advancing common climate solutions in full recognition of the global nature of climate challenges and in full recognition of the Paris Climate Agreements' emphasis on diverse pathways for action and nationally-determined contributions," Abuleif said.

He presented the CO₂ reduction options for meeting the Paris Climate Agreement goals in the panel discussion of the Global Table on "[What can the G20 do to promote a circular carbon economy?](#)". The G20 Saudi Arabia Presidency sees the concept of a Circular Carbon Economy as an important addition in the fight against climate change. The G20's focus is expanding renewable energy systems, managing emissions from carbon-heavy industries, such as transport and agriculture, in addition to the implementation of nature-based solutions.

The fight against climate change is also the key focus of the keynote of **Germany's Environment Minister, Svenja Schulze**. Schulze argues that the current COVID-19 crisis clearly demonstrates that stopping habitat loss and species extinctions can play a role in preventing future pandemics.

Looking ahead to Germany's upcoming 2020 EU Council Presidency, she adds, that it is critically important to use existing tools, such as renewable energy sources and energy efficiency, to compliment structural changes, such as the taxation of CO₂.

"In the aftermath of the crisis, we need a sustainably-structured economy," German Minister Svenja Schulze said. "Climate action can be a key driver of growth and innovation."

A sustainably-structured economy requires ongoing exchange and cooperation at the global level and a uniform set of rules that can guide long-term solutions to climate change. The G20 and the European Union have a special responsibility to take action to mitigate the consequence of climate change and move towards carbon neutrality, she said in her keynote for the Global Table, "[What can the G20 do to prepare the road to COP26 and ensure functioning global carbon markets?](#)"

Ottmar Edenhofer of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Research also voiced support for increased international cooperation with special focus on the European Green Deal: "The role of global public goods, like climate or public health, has been grossly underestimated. We need to urgently think about how to manage those global public goods internationally. This is a matter of life and death. We need make the Green Deal a European solidarity project."

In other Global Table panel discussions, it was made clear that digitalization plays a key role in the fight against climate change, while at the same time, posing a problem.

Christoph Meinel of the Hasso Plattner Institute explains: "The carbon emissions of digital technologies are rising steeply, even more than global air travel." Data transfer, AI technologies and other internet-related technologies are set to grow in the coming decades, he adds, arguing it is time to reconsider how



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IT-systems are designed and constructed in the Global Table [“What can the G20 do to reduce the carbon footprint of IT?”](#)

Adair Turner of Energy Transitions Emissions expressed optimism when addressing questions on reimagining hard to abate sectors from the Australian Young Global Changer Brianna Kerr: “I don’t think you have to completely reimagine things. We don’t have to imagine [a situation] where we don’t fly and ship, and don’t have chemicals, because we know how to make zero carbon steel. By 2030, we will have further massively driven down the CO2 intensity of electricity, and electric vehicles will be cheaper than conventional cars by mid-2020.” The Global Solutions Initiative’s Young Global Changers are an engaged global network of young innovators from across the world. Every year, around 100 individuals are invited for a Summer School, where they engage with global thought-leaders and work together on finding solutions to the global challenges. This year, the Summer School is also taking place digitally.

The following climate-focused Global Tables are now [available online](#):

- **Global Table:** [What can the G20 do to prepare the road to COP26 and ensure functioning global carbon markets?](#)
 - **Keynote:** Svenja Schulze, German Minister for the Environment
 - **Keynote:** Ottmar Edenhofer, Potsdam Institute for Climate Research (PIK)
 - **Vision:** Josef Aschbacher, European Space Agency
 - **Panel:** Amar Bhattacharya (Brookings), Ottmar Edenhofer (PIK), Environment Minister Svenja Schulze, Laurence Tubiana (European Climate Foundation)
- **Global Table:** [What can the G20 do to promote a circular carbon economy?](#)
 - **Keynote:** Khalid Abuleif, Chief Negotiator on Climate Change Issues, G20 Saudi Arabia
 - **Panel:** Khalid Abuleif (G20 Saudi Arabia), Gunnar Luderer (PIK), Miranda Schreuers (Technical University, Munich), Adair Turner (Energy Transitions Commission)
- **Global Table (German Federal Environmental Foundation):** [What can the G20 do to support green investment in emerging and developing economies?](#)
 - **Panel:** Michael Dittrich (DBU), Mafalda Duarte (Climate Investment Funds), Manuel Pulgar-Vidal (WWF International)
- **Global Table (Hasso Plattner Institute):** [What can the G20 do to reduce the carbon footprint of IT?](#)
 - **Keynote:** Christoph Meinel, Hasso Plattner Institute
 - **Keynote:** Jochen Flasbarth, German Ministry for the Environment
 - **Keynote:** Salem Avan, United Nations Information & Communication Technology
 - **Panel:** Mei Lin Fung (People Centered Internet), Christoph Meinel (HPI), Richard Perez (The School of Design Thinking), Ann Rosenberg (SAP Next-Gen)

Additional comments from climate experts:

Khalid Abuleif, Chief Negotiator on Climate Change Issues, Saudi Arabia: “The G20 is uniquely positioned to address the circular carbon economy with our approaches. The G20 has a crucial sharing of knowledge and experiences, which can help enrich and better coordinate actions of other multilateral processes.”





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Michael Dittrich, DBU: “Affordable clean energy is at the heart of strategies for economic development and for reducing emissions. Investments in renewable energy must increase; we are still in danger of losing the race for growing energy demand around the world.”

Mafalda Duarte, Climate Investment Funds: “On the renewable energy side, [the World Bank] has seen really significant improvements. It is important to convey there is work to be done in the business and regulatory departments but conveying progress impacts the risk perception.”

Jochen Flasbarth, German Ministry for the Environment: “The European Green Deal and national decarbonization strategies have huge potential to build economies back up after the COVID-19 crisis. Such an opportunity should be seized by the G20.”

Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, WWF International: “We know that Europe has adopted the Green Deal aiming for a clear reduction [of emissions] by 2030, by 2050. It should be clear for developing countries that if [they] are not able to do the same, [their] products will be rejected in the new economy. It is not just about a tool, it is about the economy and the survival of the economy.”

Laurence Tubiana, European Climate Foundation: “This is the moment for moving from climate diplomacy to a more holistic green recovery agenda: The climate issue can contribute to renaissance of multilateralism. We have to put the Green Deal at the center of our diplomacy.”

About the Global Solutions Summit

The [Global Solutions Summit – the World Policy Forum](#) – is an international conference aimed at addressing key policy challenges facing the Group of Twenty (G20) and other global governance fora.

Due to the COVID19 virus, this year’s Global Solutions Summit is being held digitally and is centered around Global Tables that contribute to the Think20 and G20 agenda. [Global Tables](#) cover issues such as the Future of Multilateralism, Fighting Climate Change, Infrastructure Investment, and consist of keynotes, panel discussions, vision statements and interviews.

[Speakers](#) at the Global Solutions Summit are leading experts from international research organizations, thought leaders and decision-makers from political, business and civil society communities.

The [Global Solutions Summit program](#) features 25 Global Tables, more than 100 speakers and G20 Sherpas from Saudi Arabia, Italy, Canada, Germany and more.

About the Global Solutions Initiative

The Global Solutions Summit – The World Policy Forum – is hosted by the Global Solutions Initiative, a global collaborative enterprise that proposes policy responses to major global problems, addressed by the G20, the G7 and other global governance fora. The policy recommendations and strategic visions are generated through a disciplined research program by leading research organizations, elaborated in policy dialogues between researchers, policymakers, business leaders and civil society representatives. Most recently, the GSI proposed an alternative to measuring prosperity through GDP, [the Recoupling Dashboard](#).





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The entire Global Solutions Summit is open to the press: [Register online now.](#)

Press Information: <https://www.global-solutions-initiative.org/press/>

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