VENICE CONFERENCE

ON GLOBAL GOVERNANCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

5TH EDITION



VISION
CRAFTING THE FUTURE

BEYOND COP

15-17 OCTOBER 2026

BEYOND COP

SUSTAINABILITY AS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND A FRAME FOR ADAPTING TO A POST 1.5 DEGREE WORLD



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THE CONCEPT OF THE CONFERENCE

The climate agenda is stuck in the same political deadlock that has defined the last several COPs: Belém closed without even a roadmap to phase out fossil fuels. Meanwhile, Europe has just been through another scorching summer, and the technology and economics of the transition are moving faster than the politics around them, especially outside the West. Scientists warn that some climate tipping points, such as the collapse of the Antarctic ice sheet, may be closer than once thought, and that once triggered they can reinforce one another. Beyond COP rests on a simple wager: the divide that matters is no longer "good" versus "bad" on climate, but innovators versus defenders of a status quo that is becoming unsustainable on environmental, economic and security grounds alike.

Now in its fifth edition, the Conference sets out to overhaul the climate agenda. It will put new options on the table, from fifth-generation nuclear energy and geoengineering to a more pragmatic geopolitics for a warming world. It will also widen what the climate agenda is understood to cover, from energy security to the cost of the pollution we are already paying for today. As in previous editions, the Venice Conference brings together businesses, students and experts to develop concrete solutions that can actually be implemented and make a real difference.

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES OF THE 2026 CONFERENCE

Business at the centre. Every session is co-organised with a company that treats sustainability as a strategic lever, spanning agrifood, fashion, digital/AI, insurance, shipbuilding, highways, mobility, renewables, nuclear, waste management and real estate.

A direct line into COP. Climate Negotiation Workshops with the European University Institute aim to produce a working blueprint for reforming COP itself, ahead of COP31 in Antalya.

Problem-solving at scale. Six interdisciplinary working groups (PSSGs) of PhD candidates, students and tutors from our partner universities that work with businesses to develop solutions to the most pressing climate issues.

THE PARTNERS AND THE VISION ENDEAVOUR

The Conference is led by Vision, in partnership with a network of academic institutions spanning Università Bocconi, Politecnico di Milano, the European University Institute, Guangdong University, Nova School of Business and Economics and LUISS. Media partners The Conversation, illuminem, GEDI (La Repubblica, La Stampa) and RAI carry the Conference's proposals to a global audience. Our Founding Partner is AXA.

Beyond Venice, the Conference is one of three flagship initiatives run by Vision: alongside the Siena Conference on the Europe of the Future, and the first Conference on Skills for the AI World, launching this year in Dubai.

THE AGENDA

THURSDAY 15TH OCTOBER

Venue: San Servolo Island

Afternoon

14.30 - 15.00 ***Registration of participants***

15.00 - 15.10 **INSTITUTIONAL GREETINGS**

Carlo Carraro (Professor and Former Rector at Ca' Foscari and Former Vice-President of IPCC Working Group III), **Elisa Venturini** (Regional Minister for the Environment, Climate, Parks and Civil Protection of the Veneto Region)

15.10 - 15.20 **INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM**

Francesca Stefani (Vision Think Tank), **Alexandra Borchardt** (Board Member at Constructive Institute and Honorary Professor at TUM School of Management)

15.20 - 15.30 **OPENING REMARKS FROM AXA: AXA and the Venice Conference**

Stefano Suman (Chief Risk Officer at AXA Italia)

15.30 - 16:20 **A FEEDBACK TO VISION CONCEPT PAPER**

Introduction: Francesco Grillo (Director at Vision, Academic Fellow at Bocconi University)

Discussants: **Phoebe Koundouri** (Professor at Athens University of Economics & University of Cambridge), **Barbara Kolm** (Member of Austria's National Council with the Freedom Party, President of the Hayek Institute, and Director of the Austrian Economics Center), **Andrew Wyckoff** (EUI, Former Director of the Directorate for Science & Technology at OECD), **Kalypso Nicolaidis** (Chair in Global Affairs at the School of Transnational Governance, EUI), **Cliff Prior** (Ambassador for Global Steering Group for Impact Investment and City Bridge Foundation London)

Chair: **Alexandra Borchardt** (Board Member at Constructive Institute and Honorary Professor at TUM School of Management)

16.30 - 18.15 **FIRST PROBLEM SETTING/ SOLVING BREAKOUT SESSIONS | TRANSFORMING SYSTEMS: MATERIALS, MOBILITY AND URBAN ADAPTATION**

One of the Conference's distinctive features is the problem setting/solving groups (PSSGs). They offer a space for crafting possible solutions. The fifth edition of the Conference envisages two rounds of such activities: the first on Thursday 15th in the afternoon, and the second on Friday 16th in the afternoon.

They are prepared before the event by six groups of PhD candidates and professors/tutors (at Bocconi, Polimi, Ca' Foscari, LUISS, SDA Bocconi, Nova, EUI, Luav).
The groups are framed around different trade-offs/puzzles related to climate change. Each group will first try to better define the terms of the trade-off and then generate possible solutions. The Conference will respond to these proposals to better operationalize them.

The three PSSGs envisaged for Thursday will run in parallel. All participants will be asked to join one of the three. This session will use the Fishbowl method: students sit in the inner circle to present and debate proposals, while experts and participants join the discussion in rotation to react and enrich the ideas. This ensures focused participation and delivers actionable insights for the Venice Manifesto.

The six groups will report on Saturday and will directly feed the Venice Manifesto.

16.30- 16.45 **INTRODUCTION TO THE 3 TRANSFORMING SYSTEMS RELATED PROBLEM SETTING/ SOLVING GROUPS (PSSGS)**

Giuseppe Collino (Managing Director and Senior Partner at BCG), **Marco Caporale** (Head of Service Planning Department at AMSA), **Giovanna Martinelli** (Research Fellow at Iuav University)

16.45 - 18.15 **PARALLEL BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

PSSG 1 **THE MOBILITY OF THE FUTURE – A BUSINESS CASE FOR THE ETERNAL CITY – HOW TO INTEGRATE THE TIBER INTO ROME'S PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

PSSG WITH TUTOR AND STUDENTS FROM BOCCONI/ POLIMI

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BCG

Introduction: **Giuseppe Collino** (Managing Director and Senior Partner at BCG) and **Caterina Morganti** (Student of Transformative Sustainability at Bocconi/Polimi)

Amongst the approximately 30 discussants of the PSSG paper: **Miriam Allena** (Director of Master of Transformative Sustainability at Bocconi/Polimi), **Frans-Anton Vermast** (International Smart City Ambassador and Advisor to Amsterdam City Council), **Li Yangyang** (Macao International Carbon Emission Exchange and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies), **Ágnes Kovács Tahy** (Associate Professor at PPCU Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, PPKE JÁK), **Cliff Prior** (Ambassador for Global Steering Group for Impact Investment and City Bridge Foundation London)

Chair: **Laura Hood** (The Conversation)

Rapporteurs: **Caterina Morganti, Filippo Angiolini, Valerio Spiniello, Chiara Sena, Victoria Fiumi, Eleonora Andreoli, Vittoria Marino** (Master's students of Transformative Sustainability at Bocconi/Polimi)

PSSG 2 REBUILDING VENICE - HOUSING, CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND PRACTICAL URBAN RETROFITTING - A PLAN

PSSG WITH TUTOR, STUDENTS FROM LUAV

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH VENEZIA CITY COUNCIL

The historic centre of Venice – the most famous lagoon in the world – is facing a paradox that is paradigmatic of a crisis the whole of Europe is living. According to a recent Vision paper, 170,000 inhabitants lived there in the early fifties; today the figure has shrunk to less than 50,000, and it can be estimated that, on average, approximately 32,000 people sleep in Venice (adding residents, tourists, and students). This means that, in theory, 26% of its houses are not used. Yet prices for renting (or buying) are amongst the most expensive in Europe. The paradox points to a much-debated problem of "affordability" which is, indeed, a question of adapting and reusing real estate that had been abandoned because of high

water (and that the MOSE, the gigantic infrastructure built to protect the city from floods, now makes usable again), of obsolescence and low energy efficiency, and of market failures that prevent demand and supply from being efficiently matched and investments from being feasible. Housing is a question where sustainability, energy, and affordability come together in a way that brings the entire climate change agenda much closer to the needs of everybody.

This PSSG aims to develop a practical project that brings these elements together. Iuav will work on feasible retrofit and adaptation strategies for Venetian building types, while Ca' Foscari will focus on housing models, economic viability, and governance tools that could support implementation. The goal is to produce a concrete plan that shows how Venice can combine affordable housing, climate resilience, and sustainable retrofitting in a realistic, replicable way.

Introduction: **Filippo Magni** (Assistant Professor in Urban Planning at Iuav University) and **Giovanna Martinelli** (Research Fellow at Luav)

Amongst the approximately 30 discussants of the PSSG paper: **Elisa Bottoni** (Senior Sustainability Specialist, Business Development & Sustainability at Istituto per il Credito Sportivo e Culturale), **Lorenzo Fioramonti** (Former Minister of Education, Universities and Research in Italy), **Márk Vargha** (Advisor at Directorate General for International Affairs, Ludovika University of Public Service), **Giovanni Cecconi** (Founder, CORE Venice Lab APS; Director, AIDA – International Water Academy), **Alena Myshko** (Postdoctoral Researcher at GSSI – Gran Sasso Science Institute and Venice Lab), **Andrey Shlyakhtenko** (Program Manager for Resource Mobilization, Communications and Partnerships at the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage)

Chair: **Andrea Gori** (CEO, Illuminem)

Rapporteurs: **Abdullah Ahmed Bajwa, Denisa Ionela Ivanusca, Zainab Ismail Mohammed Alqritli, Sofia Bertello Hernández, Alisea Succi** (Master's Students of Urban and Spatial Planning for Transition at Luav)

PSSG 3 BEYOND DIFFERENTIATION: THE ROBOTIZED SELECTOR AND THE FUTURE OF WASTE

PSSG WITH TUTOR AND STUDENTS BOCCONI/ POLIMI

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AMSA

Introduction: Marco Caporale (Head of Service Planning Department at AMSA) **and Connor Mika Van Heulen** (Student of Transformative Sustainability at Bocconi/Polimi)

Amongst the approximately 30 discussants of the PSSG paper: Riccardo Parrini (CEO NEST), **Luca Stecca** (Site Operations Manager Eco+Eco Valorizza at Veritas Group), **Luca Marchesi** (Director General, Environment and Land Protection Area, Veneto Region)*, **Hu Tao** (Vice President, Shanghai Tiangong Institute of Industrial Green Development), **Liliana Smiech** (Director General for International Affairs at Ludovika University of Public Service), **Sandra Romboli** (Program Manager, Knowledge Management, Monitoring & Evaluation at the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage)

Chair: Alexandra Borchardt (Board Member at Constructive Institute and Honorary Professor at TUM School of Management)

Rapporteurs: Connor Mika Van Heulen, Jule Franziska Jessen, Gabriele Coppa, Gabriele Ghilotti, Mathieu Camille Lionel Echevin, Edoardo Pietro Sibilla (Master's Students of Transformative Sustainability at Bocconi/Polimi)

18.30 - 19.15 THE MOBILITY OF THE FUTURE. BETWEEN SCIENCE FICTION BECOMING TRUE AND INERTIA HOLDING US BACK.

PRESENTATION OF A BCG - VISION PAPER

"The humans call themselves homo sapiens to highlight their superior intelligence. And yet when I observe the technology that they use to move themselves, I do wonder if they deserve that name". That is what a visitor from Mars might well say and this is the incipit of the paper Vision and BCG are presenting at the Venice conference on the "mobility of the future". It will be about the crisis of the automotive industry that BCG and Vision tackled in previous editions of the Venice conference. But it will not be just about the radically important switching between fossil and electricity which consumes most of the media and political attention but other five not less transformative innovations are possible:

- a shift from private ownership to sharing so that the space occupied by idle vehicles is reduced;
- self-driving cars which would allow optimization of travel;
- vehicles which could even distribute themselves into empty spaces (somebody even argues that flying cars/ small helicopters may become a convenient way to move people around in megacities).

Not less fundamental, however, is the redesign of infrastructures (roads, squares, ..) and entire cities. After all, old cars could only become the cornerstone of industrial civilization thanks to the redesign of cities which were meant to host carts carried by horses.

Introduction: **Giuseppe Collino** (BCG) and **Francesco Grillo** (Director at Vision, Academic Fellow at Bocconi University)

Discussants: **Pierfrancesco De Rossi** (CEO at Siemens Mobility Italy), **Frans-Anton Vermast** (International Smart City Ambassador), **Elena Sofra** (Head of Sustainability at Ferrari Group)*

Chair: **Laura Hood** (The Conversation)

19.45 ***Dinner***

20.00 ***PODCAST TIME – WITH ILLUMINEM, THE CONVERSATION AND AVANZA***

FRIDAY 16TH OCTOBER

Venue: San Servolo Island

Morning

09.15 - 09.25 **INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND DAY**

Linus Wendel (Vision Think Tank), **Alexandra Borchardt** (Board Member at Constructive Institute and Honorary Professor at TUM School of Management)

09.25 - 10.15 **INTERVIEW IBRAHIMA CHEIKH DIONG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE FUND FOR RESPONDING TO LOSS AND DAMAGE**
THE FUND'S JOURNEY AND FUTURE

The Fund for responding to Loss and Damage is most likely one of the greatest achievements of the last COPs. In addition, the Fund is pioneering new methods for fine-tuning its instruments and becoming an interesting case for new forms of global governance.

Yet governments' hesitancy to commit resources leaves it short of what is needed to cover the losses climate change is already causing, and it faces governance challenges within the MCF and UNFCCC environment. In this interview, the Fund's Executive Director reflects on the Fund's journey so far and the changes planned for the future.

With **Ibrahima Cheikh Diong** (Executive Director of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage) interviewed by **Pilita Clark** (Associate Editor and Business Columnist, FT)

10.20 - 10.30 **INSTITUTIONAL GREETINGS**

Marco Sgarbi (Rector of Ca' Foscari University)

10.35 - 11.35 **PLENARY 1**

INSURANCE AT A STRATEGIC CROSSROAD: CLIMATE UNPREDICTABILITY, NEW PRODUCTS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AS A TRIGGER OF PERSONALIZED RISK MANAGEMENT - Feedback to Vision paper based on data from McKinsey Global Institute

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AXA

50' Panel + 10' Q&A

Two disruptions are reshaping the foundations of the insurance industry. On one hand, climate is making forecasts based on the past much more complex. On the other hand, artificial intelligence is promoting individualized risk management, with the potential to completely change the nature of insurance as a business that has focused on pooling and mutualizing risks.

As the probability of extreme weather events increases and so, thus, the average loss that such events produce, entire areas of both developed and developing countries become less insurable. Recent discussions at COP30 and UNEP's latest calls for action underline a clear message: safeguarding insurability requires stronger prevention, broader resilience, and shared responsibility across society. Today, the challenge is not only quantifying rising risks but also ensuring that households, businesses, and public systems can withstand them. Adaptation infrastructure, early warning systems, resilient supply chains, and nature-based solutions are becoming essential to limit losses before they occur. Yet funding gaps and uneven preparedness continue to widen the climate protection gap. AI can be a solution, yet it poses a challenge that may require a reinvention of insurance itself.

This panel will explore how insurers and reinsurers can respond to this shifting landscape by rethinking adaptation investment and driving risk-reduction measures. It will also examine how public–private collaboration can help keep climate risks insurable and maintain accessible protection in a world undergoing rapid environmental and technological change. The evolution of new products (parametric insurances) will also be explored.

What is at stake is not just about making a certain category of risks insurable but also about enabling a transformation which has to do with both private (insurance) and public means.

The session will also explore the possibility that insurance may partner with the "fund for loss and damage" (as for the paper that Vision and McKinsey produced for the conference). The vision is that such a partnership may transform the Fund into the pivot for globally coordinating local strategies for adaptation to climate change.

Introduction: **Maud Deschamps** (Chief Customer, Brand and Sustainability Officer – AXA Europe & Health), **Francesca Maria Claudio** (Partner, McKinsey & Company), **Rithika Clifford** (Vision)

Discussants: Dario Mangili (Head of Sustainability at IMPact SGR SpA), **Lucia Silva** (Group Chief Sustainability Officer, Assicurazioni Generali), **Alessandra Peres** (Customer & Distribution Manager at Swiss Re Corporate Solutions), **Colin Mayer** (Emeritus Professor of Management Studies at the Blavatnik School of Government and Saïd Business School, University of Oxford)

Chair: Pilita Clark (Associate Editor and Business Columnist, FT)

11.40 - 12.40 **PLENARY 2**

CLOUD, AI AND THE CLIMATE TRANSITION: TURNING AI'S ENERGY CHALLENGE INTO EFFICIENCY, RESILIENCE AND MEASURABLE CLIMATE VALUE

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SUSTAINABLE AI GROUP

50' Panel + 10' Q&A

Artificial intelligence and climate change are two of the three great spectres haunting global policy (the third being the threat of global warfare). Naturally, a fierce debate has emerged over how these two forces interact. Is artificial intelligence primarily an environmental villain, its insatiable hunger for electricity driving up emissions and roasting the planet? Or is it a saviour, offering hyper-precise forecasts to predict where climate disasters will strike next?
Artificial intelligence is no longer only a software revolution: it is becoming a new layer of physical infrastructure, built on cloud capacity, data centers, energy, water, networks and advanced chips. This creates a strategic tension. The same infrastructure that enables generative AI at scale also places growing pressure on power systems and local resources. The challenge is therefore not whether AI should expand, but how it can expand responsibly while proving its value for the climate transition.
This plenary will explore how cloud infrastructure can turn AI's energy challenge into a platform for climate intelligence. With Amazon Web Services bringing to the debate its experience in scalable cloud infrastructure, data-center efficiency and digital tools for sustainability, the discussion will address how more efficient design, carbon-free energy procurement, water stewardship, custom AI chips, workload optimization and transparent carbon measurement can reduce the environmental intensity of digital growth.

At the same time, the session will examine how AI can help companies, cities and public institutions act on climate: optimizing energy use, improving forecasting, supporting resilient grids, accelerating carbon accounting, reducing inefficiencies across logistics and buildings, and enabling scalable tools for mitigation and adaptation.

The central question is whether AI can move beyond hype by delivering measurable climate value. If digital infrastructure becomes more efficient, transparent and useful to the real economy, AI can become not just compatible with decarbonization, but one of its practical engines.

Introduction: **Sasha Luccioni** (Co-Founder and CEO at Sustainable AI Group) and **Linus Wendel** (Vision Think Tank)

Discussants: **Boris Gamazaychikov** (Co-Founder and CEO at Sustainable AI Group), **Andrew Wyckoff** (EUI, Former Director of the Directorate for Science & Technology at OECD), **Colin Mayer** (Emeritus Professor of Management Studies at the Blavatnik School of Government and Saïd Business School, University of Oxford), **Giovanni Caturano** (Board Member, Innovation and Communication Director at MARE Group)

Chair: **Rachael Jolley** (Environment Editor at The Conversation)

12.40 - 14.00 ***Lunch***

FRIDAY 16TH OCTOBER

Venue: San Servolo Island

Afternoon

14.00 – 14.05 **INTRODUCTION TO THE AFTERNOON**

Rithika Clifford (Vision and Master's Student in Sustainability Management, SDA Bocconi), **Alexandra Borchardt** (Board Member at Constructive Institute and Honorary Professor at TUM School of Management)

14.05 – 15.30 **SECOND PROBLEM SETTING-SOLVING BREAKOUT SESSIONS: GLOBAL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE**

This second round of problem setting/solving groups follows the same approach as Thursday's: each group first defines the terms of a trade-off related to climate change and then generates possible solutions, which the Conference will respond to in order to better operationalize them.

The three PSSGs envisaged for Friday will run in parallel. All participants will be asked to join one of the three. The six groups will report on Saturday and will directly feed the Venice Manifesto.

14.05 – 14.20 **INTRODUCTION TO THE 3 GLOBAL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE PROBLEM SETTING/ SOLVING GROUPS (PSSGS)**

Jesse Scott (Visiting Fellow at Florence School of Transnational Governance, EUI), **Gianfranco Pellegrino** (Director, AXA Luiss Lab on Climate Change, Risk and Justice) and **Matteo Di Castelnuovo** (Professor of Practice in Energy Economics at SDA Bocconi)

14.20 – 15.30 **PARALLEL BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

PSSG 4 **REFORMING COP**

PSSG WITH TUTOR AND STUDENTS AT EUI

The Mutirão Decision, the final political draft of COP30, remains lackluster and vague, making no explicit mention of fossil fuels and ignoring calls from President Lula and more than eighty countries for a clear roadmap to phase out fossil fuels and halt deforestation. Instead, it simply reiterates the trajectory outlined in Dubai, vaguely referring to a "transition away" from coal, oil, and gas to be achieved by 2050, without concrete mechanisms or accountability.

"The barely adequate result achieved in the final hours of COP30 keeps the Paris Agreement alive but highlights the resounding failure of developed countries to meet their commitments under that agreement," commented Rachel Cleetus of the Union of Concerned Scientists.

The outcome in Belém exposed structural limits of the COP process: slow decision-making, weak accountability, persistent North–South divisions, and the constraints of the unanimity principle. Strengthening the COP architecture may require moving beyond strict unanimity, introducing decision-making mechanisms that allow progress even amid disagreements, while safeguarding the voices of vulnerable countries, indigenous communities, and key ecological territories. Linking negotiation outcomes to funding, technical support, and local implementation can transform symbolic agreements into effective climate action.

Taking inspiration from three ideas outlined by a recent Vision position paper19, the Problem Setting/ Solving Group developed a practical framework for reforming the COP process: connecting negotiation design with enforcement, inclusivity, and tangible climate outcomes, it aims to create scalable models for global climate governance capable of delivering real, measurable, and just progress.

Introduction: **Jacopo Bencini** (Research Associate at Florence School of Transnational Governance, EUI) and **Fanta Darboe** (Student at the School of Transnational Governance, EUI)

Amongst the approximately 30 discussants of the PSSG paper: **Enrico Giovannini** (Former Italian Minister of Infrastructures and Sustainable Mobility, and Professor of Economic and Statistics at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata"), **Maja Groff** (Executive Director and Convenor at Climate Governance Commission and Co-Founder

and Senior Leader at Mobilizing an Earth Governance Alliance), **Benito Müller** (Managing Director at Oxford Climate Policy, Environmental Change Institute), **Li Yangyang** (Macao International Carbon Emission Exchange and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies), **Márk Vargha** (Advisor at Directorate General for International Affairs, Ludovika University of Public Service), **Lorenzo Fioramonti** (Former Minister of Education, Universities and Research in Italy)**, Simone Borghesi** (Director of the Florence School of Regulation – Climate, Part-time Professor at the EUI, and Vice-Rector for International Relations at the University of Siena), **Kalypso Nicolaidis** (Chair in Global Affairs at the School of Transnational Governance, EUI), **Jesse Scott** (Visiting Fellow at Florence School of Transnational Governance, EUI)

Chair: **Rachael Jolley** (Environmental Editor at The Conversation)

Rapporteurs: **Fanta Darboe, Helena Marschall, Katie Nemergut, Matei Marcu, Saad Nahid** (Master's Students at Florence School of Transnational Governance, EUI)

PSSG 5 MANAGING GEOENGINEERING: RISK, RESPONSIBILITY AND GLOBAL OVERSIGHT

PSSG WITH TUTOR AND STUDENTS FROM LUISS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH STARDUST

Geoengineering raises profound questions at the intersection of justice, geopolitics, and climate strategy. Decisions about whether and how to intervene in Earth's climate bring to the forefront issues of legitimacy, unequal exposure to risk, and the vulnerability of communities that may bear the consequences without having shaped the choice. In a context marked by diplomatic fragmentation, even small-scale experiments can become sources of tension, with the potential to trigger disputes over authority, territorial impacts, or the strategic use of climate modification.

At the same time, the mere availability of these technologies reshapes the political landscape of mitigation, tempting governments to postpone emission cuts in the expectation of future technological fixes. Ensuring that experimentation proceeds responsibly therefore requires clear boundaries, transparent criteria, and shared procedures for risk assessment, monitoring, and accountability, especially when potential effects extend beyond national jurisdictions.
Fostering a space in which these dilemmas can be examined collectively is essential for identifying governance pathways that safeguard equity, prevent geopolitical escalation, and reinforce, rather than weaken, global commitments to climate mitigation.

Introduction: **Silvia Menegazzi** (Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science, LUISS Guido Carli), **Roby Yahav** (Head of Technology and Policy at Stardust)

Amongst the approximately 30 discussants of the PSSG paper: **Gianfranco Pellegrino** (Director, AXA Luiss Lab on Climate Change, Risk and Justice), **Kim Campbell** (Former Prime Minister of Canada) and **Yelena Yermakova** (Postdoctoral Researcher on ethics of ocean geoengineering at LUISS Guido Carli University and Earth System Interventions Fellow at UCLA School of Law)

Chair: **Oliver Morton** (Briefing Editor at The Economist)

Rapporteurs: **Leonardo Sannibale** (Student at LUISS Guido Carli)

PSSG 6 DEVELOPING RENEWABLES IN AFRICA: GRIDS, FINANCE AND DISTRIBUTED SOLUTIONS (FOCUS ON SOLAR)

PSSG WITH TUTOR AND STUDENTS SDA BOCCONI

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RES4AFRICA

Africa has one of the greatest geographic advantages for generating renewable energy, yet it receives under 2% of global clean-energy investment. Today, over 600 million people still lack access to electricity, and the IEA estimates that achieving full access will require around USD 15 billion per year in new power and grid infrastructure.

The main barriers are weak grids, limited interconnections, high financing costs, and uneven regulation. Africa is also a strong demonstration that the energy transition is not just about mitigation: it is about development, enabling better food production, and literally saving hundreds of thousands of people who do not have access to basic electricity-powered services (for instance, in healthcare).

There are positive signs: Kenya, Morocco, and South Africa are expanding utility-scale renewables, and nearly 700,000 people gained electricity through renewable mini-grids between 2016 and 2019. This leads to a central question: how can African countries scale renewables faster, both large-scale and distributed while addressing grid constraints, financing challenges, and regulatory fragmentation? The PSSG will examine grid expansion, new financing models, distributed systems, regional power pools, and regulatory frameworks to outline practical, investment-ready solutions for accelerating renewable deployment across the continent.

Introduction: **Matteo Di Castelnuovo** (Professor of Practice in Energy Economics at SDA Bocconi)

Amongst the approximately 30 discussants of the PSSG paper: **Jean Francis Sempore** (Fundraising and Project Manager at WASCAL), **Andrey Shlyakhtenko** (Program Manager for Resource Mobilization, Communications and Partnerships at the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage), **Giuseppe Zammarchi** (Head of ESG Metrics, Policies and Disclosure at UniCredit), **Cliff Prior** (Ambassador for Global Steering Group for Impact Investment and City Bridge Foundation London)

Chair: **Andrea Gori** (CEO, Illuminem)

Rapporteurs: **Melody Dean**, **Shrikant Bacha**, **Katrina Davis** (Master's Students in Sustainability Management, SDA Bocconi).

15.30 - 16.00 ***Coffee Break***

16.00 - 16.50 **PLENARY 3 - FORESIGHT**

SMALL MODULAR REACTORS (SMRs) AT THE EDGE OF THE ENERGY TRANSITION: RELIABLE LOW-CARBON POWER, INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS AND THE TEST OF TECHNOLOGICAL CREDIBILITY

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE INSTITUTE FOR FREE ENTERPRISE

30' Panel + 20' Q&A

Small Modular Reactors are moving from technical debate to strategic choice. As electricity demand rises, industrial systems decarbonize and grids integrate larger shares of renewables, the need for reliable, low-carbon and flexible power is becoming increasingly urgent. SMRs promise a new generation of nuclear solutions: smaller, potentially faster to deploy, more adaptable to industrial sites and capable of supporting electricity, heat, hydrogen and other energy-intensive uses.
This plenary will examine whether SMRs can genuinely become a game-changer for the energy transition, or whether expectations are running ahead of technological, regulatory and financial reality. EDF's work on SMRs and low-carbon energy systems makes this debate especially relevant, as the discussion will focus on how proven technologies, safety standards, licensing processes, supply chains and public acceptance can determine whether modular nuclear becomes scalable and bankable.
The session will also address the trade-offs that remain unresolved: capital costs, regulatory harmonization, waste management, construction timelines and the relationship between nuclear and renewables in a decarbonized energy mix. The central question is not whether SMRs are promising, but under what conditions they can become credible infrastructure for climate neutrality, energy security and industrial competitiveness.

Introduction: **Christophe Grudler** (Member of the European Parliament – Renew Europe Coordinator for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy)

Discussants: **Wolfgang Müller** (Executive Director of the Institute for Free Enterprise), **Liliana Smiech** (Director General for International Affairs at Ludovika University of Public Service), **Florian Wagner** (CEO and Founder of Emerald Horizon)

Chair: **Matt Steinglass** (Europe Editor, The Economist)

16.55- 17.55 **PLENARY 4**

THE PARADOX OF AGRIFOOD: FROM COMPLIANCE TO REGENERATION - CORPORATE STRATEGIES FOR CLIMATE RESILIENT SUPPLY CHAINS.

N PARTNERSHIP WITH CEREAL DOCKS

50' Panel + 10' Q&A

Food supply chains connect billions of consumers to producers worldwide — and few large food companies are as exposed to climate risk in their own backyard as Italy's pasta makers, whose core input, durum wheat, has already been hit by drought and heat stress at home. This is the paradox at the heart of agrifood: an industry that is both a meaningful contributor to emissions and among the most immediately and physically vulnerable to the crisis it contributes to.

The response increasingly being tested by large food companies is not simply tighter compliance and due diligence, but a shift toward regenerative agriculture as a business model — moving from auditing suppliers against a standard to co-investing with farmers in soil health, biodiversity, and water resilience, on the logic that a more resilient supply chain is also a more secure and cost-competitive one. This panel will use Cereal Docks' experience — its multi-crop regenerative sourcing targets, its farmer-partnership charters, and its parallel investments in packaging circularity and renewable energy across its plants - as a working case study, alongside other corporate perspectives, to ask: can regenerative and circular models scale fast enough to outrun the climate risk to the crops themselves, and can that shift be replicated across a fragmented, smallholder-heavy global supply base?

Introduction: Giovanni Fanin (President and CEO of Cereal Docks)**, Vitaliano Fiorillo** (Director of Invernizzi AgriLab, Bocconi)

Amongst the Discussants: Camilla Lunelli (Vice President of Ferrari Trento and Director of Communications, External Relations and Sustainability, Lunelli Group), **Ágnes Kovács Tahy** (Associate Professor at PPCU Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, PPKE JÁK, Department of Environmental and Competition Law), **Suruchi Bhadwal** (Director of the Earth Science and Climate Change Division at TERI), **Andrea Conzonato** (CEO at Herita Marzotto Wine Estates),

Andrea Illy (President of Illy Caffè), **Massimiliamo Giansanti** (President of COPA the Committee of the European Agrifood Organizations – COPA – and of Confagricoltura, President of Agricola Giansanti and Managing Director Di Muzio Farm)*

Chair: **Andrea Gori** (CEO, Illuminem)

18.00 - 19.00 **PLENARY 5**

A NEW GREEN DEAL IN A POST-2.5 DEGREES EUROPE: ACCELERATING AND STEERING THE ENERGY TRANSITION - THE IBERIAN APPROACH

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AVANZA

50' Panel + 10' Q&A

As the concept paper for the fifth Venice conference on Global Governance of Climate Change notes, summer 2026 was a stark reminder that Europe is among the regions hit hardest by climate change. According to Copernicus, the continent has already passed the 2.0-degree red line and is nearing 3.0 degrees above pre-industrial levels. Heatwaves are making European cities increasingly uninhabitable, excess mortality in June 2026 reached Covid-19 levels, and tourism in Southern Europe is suffering.

Europe must not only speed up the transition but also steer it. Who should lead the investment, who should bear the costs, and how can energy policy drive industrial renewal and social fairness? This panel examines Spain's experience linking cheaper clean energy to industrial strategy, the case for a stronger public role in power systems, and the role of development banks and private capital.

Introduction: Bernardino León Reyes (Director of Future Policy Lab at Avanza and Adjunct Lecturer at Sciences Po)

Discussants: Roy Cobby (PhD Candidate in Digital Humanities at King's College London and advisor of the Spanish Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and 2030 Agenda)**, Simone Gasperini** (PhD, UCL and Associate Fellow, IPPR), **Luca D'Agnese** (Policy Evaluation and Advisory Director at Cassa Depositi e Prestiti)

Chair: Lucía de Castro (Director of Communication at Avanza)

20.00 ***Dinner***

SATURDAY 17TH OCTOBER

Venue: Aula Tafuri, Palazzo Badoer, Iuav University

Morning

09.30 - 09.40 **INSTITUTIONAL GREETINGS**

Francesco Musco (Full Professor of Urban and Territorial Metabolism at Iuav and President of Corila), **Daniele Franco** (Scientific Director of the Giorgio Cini Foundation and former Italian Minister of Economy and Finance)*

09.40 - 09.45 **INTRODUCTION TO THE FINAL DAY**

Alice Filippini (Vision Think Tank)**, Alexandra Borchardt** (Board Member at Constructive Institute and Honorary Professor at TUM School of Management)

09.50 - 10.20 **FIRESIDE CHAT - HOW TO ACCOUNT FOR THE FUTURE?**

The causes of climate change lie in decisions inherited from the past; its devastating effects are unfolding in the present and its more far-reaching consequences will be borne by the generations to come. It therefore challenges societies to look beyond electoral cycles and immediate interests, recognizing that every decision made today is also a decision about the world future generations will inhabit. Accounting for the future means making this intergenerational connection visible. It requires institutions, markets, and political systems to incorporate long-term risks and opportunities into present choices, rather than treating the future as distant, uncertain, or economically negligible. Climate change exposes the limits of frameworks designed around the short term and raises a fundamental question: how can those who hold power today exercise responsibility toward those who will live with the consequences tomorrow?

Colin Mayer (Emeritus Professor of Management Studies at the Blavatnik School of Government and Saïd Business School, University of Oxford), **Enrico Giovannini** (Former Italian Minister of Infrastructure and Sustainable Mobility, and Professor of Economic and Statistics at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata"), **Bernd Huber** (Board Member of Venice International University and President of Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)*

Chair: **Pilita Clark** (Associate Editor and Business Columnist, FT)

10.25- 11.05 **ADAPTING TO A POST 1.5 DEGREE WORLD: THE PARADIGM OF THE OLDEST CITY OF THE FUTURE**

Adaptation is the challenge for a world that is inexorably crossing the 1.5 and, most likely, also the 2.0 degree threshold (in terms of global temperature increase vis-à-vis the pre-industrial average). Venice is the "oldest city of the future", a city that has managed to use necessity as the mother of innovation – the trigger to invent the techniques that gave Venice the power to create a magnificent maritime empire lasting five centuries. Venice is, in a sense, a possible capital of adaptation: from the construction techniques that allowed a city to float magically on the lagoon, to its role as the historical blueprint of the even more powerful British Empire, to the MOSE barrier that protects it today.
This session moves from the global to the local, using Venice as a paradigmatic story – a city that has chosen to adapt rather than surrender. Its future will be about the preservation of artistic and cultural heritage, the management of mass tourism in a city fighting for its survival, the regeneration of state-owned buildings (including barracks to be transformed into student housing, as well as sport and cultural infrastructure), and the search for a new soul in which students and universities may play the central role.

Introduction : **Francesco Musco** (Full Professor of Urban and Territorial Metabolism at Iuav and President of Corila).

Discussants: **Antonella Baldino** (Managing Director at Istituto per il Credito Sportivo e Culturale), **Pierpaolo Campostrini** (Managing Director at Corila), **Jacopo Galli** (Project Manager at the Venice Sustainability Foundation and Professor at Iuav), **Giovanni Cecconi** (Founder, CORE Venice Lab APS; Director, AIDA – International Water Academy), **Alena Myshko** (Postdoctoral Researcher at GSSI – Gran Sasso Science Institute and Venice Lab)

Chair: **Andrea Gori** (CEO at Illuminem)

11.10 - 12.00 **PSSG PROPOSALS PRESENTATION – NAVIGATING THE KEY TRADE-OFFS OF THE TRANSITION**

One representative from each of the six PSSGs will open the session with a concise presentation of the key proposals and outcomes developed in their group.

The Chair will then lead a round-table discussion to compare the different initiatives and explore:

- shared priorities that emerge across the projects,
- common trade-offs and practical implementation challenges,
- governance choices needed to advance solutions.

To enrich the conversation, additional discussants will join the panel, bringing external expertise and cross-cutting perspectives (e.g. governance specialists, policymakers, stakeholder practitioners). An exchange with the audience will conclude the session.

Discussants: Representatives of the six PSSGs

Chair: **Oliver Morton** (Briefing Editors at The Economist) and **Alexandra Borchardt** (Board Member at Constructive Institute and Honorary Professor at TUM School of Management)

12.05- 13.00 **PRESENTATION TO MEDIA AND PARTICIPANTS OF THE DRAFT VENICE MANIFESTO**

The Venice Manifesto is Vision's effort to turn the Conference's insights into a document that can be shared and built on in future projects. Vision will present the draft, while the discussants, as external voices, reflect on the Conference as a whole or comment on the draft itself.

Introduction: Francesco Grillo (Director at Vision, Academic Fellow at Bocconi University), **Yesi Xu** (Vision, EUI and IE and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies).

Discussants: Francesco Perrini (Associate Dean for Sustainability at SDA Bocconi School of Management, Full Professor of Management at the "Management & Technology" Department, Bocconi University), **Alessandro Perego** (Vice Rector for Sustainable Development and Societal Impact, Full Professor of Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Politecnico di Milano)**, Sandra Romboli** (Program Manager, Knowledge Management, Monitoring & Evaluation at the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage), **Hu Tao** (Vice President, Shanghai Tiangong Institute of Industrial Green Development)

Chair: Matt Steinglass (Europe Editor, The Economist)

13.05 – 13.30 **MARCO POLO AWARD FOR RISING GLOBAL AWARENESS**

Marco Polo's voyage crossed cultural and political boundaries, and expanded Europe's understanding of a world far larger and more interconnected than previously imagined. Climate change confronts humanity with a comparable journey: this time, through time. It requires us to look beyond the immediate horizon, understand how today's choices will shape the lives of future generations and recognize the long-term consequences of actions taken in one part of the world for communities everywhere. Global awareness begins with this capacity to see beyond the limits of one's own place, interests and present moment. It transforms distant risks into shared responsibilities and scientific evidence into narratives capable of mobilizing citizens, institutions, and businesses. As climate change increasingly affects economies, security, health, and everyday life, leadership also depends on the ability to make complex global challenges understandable, relevant, and urgent. The Marco Polo Award for Rising Global Awareness recognizes individuals who have broadened public understanding of sustainability and strengthened the sense that humanity is part of a single, interdependent world. Through political leadership, advocacy, culture, entrepreneurship or public engagement, the nominees have helped climate action cross geographical, generational, and social boundaries. Like Marco Polo, they have encouraged society to look beyond familiar horizons, inviting us not merely to observe change, but to imagine and shape the future toward which we are travelling.

With: **Francesco Grillo** (Director at Vision, Academic Fellow at Bocconi University) and **Laura Hood** (The Conversation)

Nominees: **Kim Campbell** (Former Prime Minister of Canada)**, Ibrahima Cheikh Diong** (Executive Director of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage)

13.30 - 14.30 ***Light Lunch***

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