Climate Change and Renewable Energy Policy in the EU and Canada Workshop*

Presentation Abstracts

Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada
October 1-2, 2015

Keynote Panel: ***Sustainable Energy Transition: Role of Renewables in Europe and Canada***

"Comparing EU Climate Governance: 2008 and 2014," by **Christian Hey**

A systematic comparison of the constellation of key factors that led to the EU 20-20-20 agenda and the emerging EU agenda for 2030 provides an ideal test case to identify conditions for benign and malign multilevel governance. The emerging agenda for 2030 is rather a case of policy deceleration. The targets suggested for 2030 can be interpreted as a cautious adaptation to the new economic and political conditions within the EU, while trying to keep the direction of change at a somewhat lower speed.

"Accelerating the Transition to a Low Carbon Emission Society: Reflections on the Canadian Context," by **James Meadowcroft**

During the past decade, new renewables have made important progress internationally as prices have fallen and the scale of deployment has increased. Overall, Canada's policy engagement with climate change has been weak and fragmented, and the idea of a deliberate transition away from GHG emitting fossil fuels has yet to be placed on the political agenda. Critical challenges include framing current policy debate in terms of a long-term transition, decarbonizing electricity systems and promoting societal electrification, making strategic interventions in the transport and built-environment sectors, and developing green industrial policy.

*This event is organized by the Centre for European Studies (European Union Centre of Excellence) and the Canada-Europe Transatlantic Dialogue. The event is supported by Carleton University and by grants from the European Union and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

"The Politics of Decarbonization and the Shifting Context of Global Climate Governance," by **Matthew Hoffmann**

We are in the midst of two significant transformations in the global response to climate change. The first is a shift in focus from emissions reductions as the goal of climate policy and governance to decarbonization. The second is a change in the nature and role of global climate governance from a centralized, top-down approach to a multilevel and bottom-up dynamic. These shifts have considerable implications for the global context of renewable energy and climate policy, as well as opportunities for leadership in the global response to climate change. My remarks will trace the broad outlines of these transformations and highlight two key implications. First, the familiar, if vexing, global commons problem of emissions reductions is giving way to the new challenges of decentralized, multilevel politics of decarbonization. This is uncertain terrain, but opportunities abound for catalytic action on renewables to come from multiple sources. Second, we retain the need for big defining moments like Paris 2015 in an era of fragmented and multilevel climate governance, but the opportunities for different kinds of leadership have emerged and should be seized.

Panel 2: ***Top Down or Bottom Up?: Institutional and Political Contexts for Decision-Making in the EU and Canada***

"Opportunities and Limits of Climate Leadership by Canadian Provinces," by **Kathryn Harrison**

In the Canadian context, in which climate change policies at the national level have been limited and largely ineffective, optimism can be found in provincial leadership. Québec has established an emissions trading system in collaboration with California, one that Ontario is poised to join. British Columbia has adopted a carbon tax. Provincial governments can devise and experiment with innovative approaches, provide economic reassurance to their more reluctant neighbours, and, as in the Québec-California-Ontario case, coordinate their efforts absent federal intervention. However, in celebrating provincial and state action on climate change, many have overlooked the fundamental limits on subnational leadership that remain. In particular, provinces with high greenhouse gas-emitting economies, such as Alberta, have very different political incentives that dictate against aggressive action. In that context, policy diffusion and provincial collaboration inevitably are truncated. A critical question is thus whether the federal government will intervene by establishing standards that either complement or preempt provincial policies. The presentation will compare the context of the EU and Canada, where the expectation of federal-provincial consensus has contributed to Canada's profound failure to date to arrest its emissions growth.

"How Europeanised are European Renewable Policies?" by **Francis McGowan**

This presentation will explore the multilevel relationship between the EU and member states in the development and implementation of renewable policies. The presentation seeks to establish the extent to which renewable policies in member states are "governed" by EU policies and the nature of that governance. While there is a tendency to focus on the role of EU legislation, which has specified binding targets for member states to meet to increase the share of renewables in their

energy balances, EU-level governance of renewable policy is both more and less than these formal commitments indicate. The presentation analyzes the different dimensions of EU policy and their impact on national conduct, using concepts drawn from the Europeanisation literature as well as from the policy learning and policy convergence literatures.

"Ontario Renewable Energy and Climate Change Policy in the Canadian Intergovernmental and North American Contexts," by **Douglas Macdonald**

In the 1960s era of Premier John Robarts, Ontario saw itself as working in partnership with the federal government to further Canadian national interests. By the closing years of the century, however, Ontario was often articulating its own particular regional interest ahead of the national interest. During the 1990-2002 unsuccessful attempt to develop co-ordinated national, federal, and provincial climate change policy, Ontario made no effort to work in partnership with the federal government, and at one point actively sabotaged the process. The Ontario policy decision to end coal-fired electricity generation and the 2009 Green Energy and Green Economy Act were products of Ontario domestic politics, with no coordination with other governments. In 2015, however, Ontario announced it would join the Quebec-California trading system, hosted the Climate Summit of the Americas, and supported the provinces-only Canadian Energy Strategy. How do we explain this mix of Ontario unilateral and collaborative action? The presentation will discuss conditions that might lead Ontario to play a leadership role in development of North American subnational and Canadian national renewable energy and climate policy, including the challenge of reaching agreement on equitable sharing of the total policy cost.

Panel 3: ***Social Acceptance and Public Attitudes toward Renewable Energy and Climate Change in Canada and Europe***

"Popular Support and EU Climate Policy," by **Mats Braun**

There are several reasons why the EU has developed a comparatively ambitious climate policy. Strong public support has traditionally been a contributing factor to the EU taking action in the field. However, since 2007, the public attitude on this issue has changed. According to surveys, such as the Eurobarometer, the number of Europeans who view climate change as the most important issue to deal with has declined. Moreover, there is a big variation between different parts of the Union regarding how concerned the populations are about the climate. The EU's climate policy is based on a strategy that can be described as one following the ideas of ecological modernization. Support for the EU's climate policy tends to be highest in countries having a longer tradition working with policies following this line of thought. This presentation discusses some of the reasons for the variation in popular attitudes to climate change in Europe and makes some suggestions regarding the consequences of this for EU decision making in the field.

"Divided Power: Social Friction and Green Energy Development in Ontario," by **Stephen Hill**

This talk reflects on six years of policies that strongly supported renewable energy deployment in Ontario by reducing the financial risk to developers. These included fiscal incentives for renewable energy, along with consolidated and centralized planning and environmental approvals. This

presentation outlines the nature of the social friction that accompanied this deployment by discussing the experiences of rural communities with wind deployment, with small hydro development, and with solar photovoltaic development. Social friction has impacted the social license of the renewable sector in many parts of Ontario and increased the social obstacles to renewable energy deployment in the future. This presentation suggests policies that might have mitigated or reduced this friction.

"Energy Transition and Challenges for Wind Energy in Switzerland," by **Maya Jegen**

Seeking to phase out nuclear energy, Switzerland needs to replace almost 40% of its electricity over the coming decades. Despite the commitment of the government to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy, the challenges for a sustainable energy transition are considerable. A recent survey indicates significant support for wind energy, even near people's backyards. But there are important obstacles, notably because the country is characterized by a large number of veto points that slow down the authorization process, create uncertainty for investors, or facilitate the effectiveness of opposition, even when it is small.

Panel 4: ***Cities, Energy, and Climate Change: Experiences from Europe and Canada***

"A Lot of Hot Air? Measuring the Climate Change Initiatives of Canadian Cities," by **Elizabeth Schwartz**

Urban areas produce a disproportionate share of per-capita greenhouse gas emissions. In the face of repeated failure of global climate change negotiations to produce binding commitments and robust responses by national governments, there has been an increase in the potential for sub-national governments, including cities, to substitute for national action. Cities around the world have enacted climate action plans, but few have taken meaningful action that is likely to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This presentation will argue that, to move beyond the symbolic rhetoric of climate change targets and strategies, we must be more rigorous in the measurement of municipal climate change policy. In comparing climate change actions, we should consider the likely impact that municipal climate policies will have on greenhouse gas emissions. Measuring municipal climate policy as a combination of three factors – ambition, scope, and coercion – provides a more detailed picture of the policies adopted by Canadian cities, and shows that most cities have not adopted many high impact policies.

"Municipal Reactions to European Energy and Climate Governance: The Case of German Cities," by **Anne Tews**

Despite EU efforts to regulate and coordinate urban climate and energy policies, cities and municipalities display varying reactions to European policy instruments and coordination efforts. Key to understanding this variance is to study how local actors perceive EU energy and climate governance instruments and their role in the EU multilevel governance system. Based on in-depth comparative case studies of the three major German cities of Frankfurt am Main, Munich, and Stuttgart, this presentation looks at findings from document analysis and interviews with representatives of these cities. The analysis concentrates on how local actors perceive the vertical

and horizontal dimensions of the European multi-level governance system and how they react to the challenges and opportunities that are provided. It focuses on the impact of regulative policies, funding programs, promotion of transnational coordination, and channels of urban interest representation, concluding with implications for types of policies and conditions that may contribute to effective local action against climate change.

"The Covenant of Mayors Experience: Lessons for Fostering Local Climate Policy," by **Lena Bendlin** (by video)

The Covenant of Mayors aims to involve municipalities in mitigating climate change and achieving the emissions reduction target of the European Union. The self-described 'official movement' brings together governmental and non-governmental actors from various levels of governance on a voluntary basis. What lessons for fostering local climate policy can be drawn from this experience? The Covenant of Mayors has exceeded expectations in membership numbers, but has disappointed some of its members. This analysis contrasts the motivations of the European Commission to fund, and of municipalities to sign, the Covenant. It concludes that, in order to overcome diverging interests in a multi-level context, it is essential to create and maintain tangible co-benefits for all actors involved. These can relate to internal and external politics and to different stages of implementation.

"Cities and Climate Governance: From Experimental Initiatives to Reshaping Urban Development," by **Matthew Paterson**

Cities have become an increasingly important site of climate governance for a number of reasons. Our knowledge of how cities have responded across the world has focused, on the one hand, on the emergence of important transnational city networks like C40, and on the other hand, via the focus on experimental initiatives. This presentation focuses on the need to complement this focus with a rethinking of urban development per se. It illustrates the point by exploring some aspects of climate governance and politics in the city of Ottawa, particularly what the politics of urban intensification in Ottawa reveals about climate change politics.

A View from Cities: Ottawa and Osnabrück

"Renewable Ottawa? So Much to Do, So Little Time!" by **David Chernushenko**

Ottawa is starting to do the hard work of implementing its 2014 air quality and climate change plan and developing a Renewable Energy Transition Strategy that involves the community in its development and implementation. Many cities have adopted a goal of 100% Renewable by 2050, or some such incredibly ambitious target. If this transition to renewable energy by municipal governments and stakeholders in a short time frame is indeed necessary, and if Ottawa is serious about tackling climate change, where does one start?

"Towards 100 % Climate Protection – a Challenge for Cities and Counties," by **Detlef Gerdts**

Osnabrück, situated in the North of Germany, with 160,000 inhabitants, is one of 19 German cities and counties besides, for example, Frankfurt and Hanover, that is engaged in a Federal Research scheme to determine if and how it will be possible to stay below the 2 degree goal until 2050. This

means to cut greenhouse gases by 2050 by 95% and energy demand by 50% in comparison with 1990. This presentation will demonstrate how Osnabrück is tackling this challenge.

"The Role of Renewable Energy Co-ops in Ontario," by **Janice Ashworth**

Community ownership of renewable energy has played a significant role in the renewable energy transition in European countries such as Denmark and Germany. Ontario is the leading jurisdiction in North America for renewable energy co-operatives because of the enabling policy environment. These co-ops play a role in legitimizing and democratizing renewable energy; in Ontario, there are 10,000 members of renewable energy co-ops who have invested over $30 million in over 30 MW of renewable energy generation assets. The Ottawa Renewable Energy Co-op has been at the forefront of this transition and has enabled 450 individuals to directly invest, partially through their registered investments, in solar projects in Ottawa.

Panel 5: ***Policy Options for Renewable Energy Development in the EU***

"Different Transition Paths to Low Carbon Power: Germany, the UK, the EU," by **Volkmar Lauber**

This presentation compares the evolution of the power mixes in Germany with the UK, with an emphasis on the politics, policies, and impacts of respective energy transitions since 2000. It examines the positions of Germany and the UK within the European Union's politics and policies on renewable power.

"Are the Interactions between the EU's Renewable Energy Support and Emissions Trading System (ETS) Really So Negative?" by **Pablo del Río González**

The European Climate and Energy mix of targets and policies has been criticized by many economists. In particular, it is often argued that the renewable energy targets do not make economic sense, because they represent an expensive option to reduce CO_2 emissions within a cap-and-trade scheme such as the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). In addition, it has been claimed that support for renewable electricity deployment negatively interacts with the ETS, having a dampening effect on the CO_2 price, which favours the dirtiest technologies and is detrimental to the greener ones. This presentation argues that this mainstream economic view is flawed on economic terms alone and that a multidisciplinary economic analysis of the climate and energy policy mix is required.

"The New Energy Union: Priorities and Conflicting Policy Objectives," by **Stephan Schott**

This presentation examines the priorities of the recently proclaimed European Energy Union, which creates a new policy framework and energy strategy vision for the EU. It will critically assess each of the priority areas and discuss conflicting policy objectives for reaching climate and energy targets that were specified in the EU framework for climate and energy policies that was released on October 23, 2014. It will explore deviations from the energy roadmap for 2050 and potential implications for new renewable and fossil fuel energy directions in Europe.

Panel 6: ***Policy Options for Renewable Energy Development in Ontario and Canada***

"Lessons Learned from a Decade of Promoting Renewable Energy in Ontario," by **Nic Rivers**

Ontario has undergone a number of major changes in the management of its electricity sector, including the development of significant nuclear generating capacity in the 1960s through the 1980s, and its experiment with deregulation in the late 1990s. From around 2004-2007, it began another such experiment, with the development of a new Integrated Power System Plan (IPSP), a 20-year plan to refurbish existing generating assets, invest in new assets, overhaul governance, and modernize the grid. Of particular note was the plan to dramatically increase the contribution of renewable energy sources to electric supply in the province. By 2025, the IPSP aimed to have about one-third of total capacity, or roughly 15,700 MW, met by renewables. This commitment was augmented in the 2013 Long Term Energy Plan (LTEP), which aims to have 20,000 MW of renewable generation capacity on-line by 2025, including over 10,000 MW from non-hydro sources (primarily wind and solar, or "new renewables"). This presentation reflects on what can be learned from Ontario's decade-long experience with aggressively promoting renewable energy.

"Choices, Pathways, and Emerging Renewables: Exploring the Role of New Renewable Electricity Technologies within Illustrative Pathways for Ontario's Electricity System," by **Daniel Rosenbloom**

Ontario is at a critical juncture in its journey towards a decarbonized electricity system. Over the past several years, emerging renewable energy innovations such as wind and solar have experienced considerable growth, but appear to be losing momentum as political commitments weaken. At the same time, Ontario's nuclear generators require renewed political and financial commitments in order to maintain their position. Due to the long lead times and sunk costs associated with energy investments, the choices made now about energy options will shape the future trajectory of Ontario's electricity system. In this fashion, the current juncture presents an opportunity to reinvigorate established paths or begin to break away from these continuities. This presentation will interrogate a number of critical choices that face Ontario's electricity sector and argue that, while commitments to new renewables are central to their prospects, the potential place of these sources also hinges on the decisions made about other energy options. But more importantly, there are dangers that attending too closely to new renewables might lead Ontario's electricity system farther from low-carbon objectives. Correspondingly, choices about electricity options should not be considered in isolation from their fit with broader decarbonization pathways for the electricity system.

"Vulnerable Households and Distributed Renewable Electricity in Ontario: Emerging Challenges and Opportunities," by **Ian Rowlands**

Approximately 2 million Ontarians live in low-income households, many allocating a significant portion of their finances to powering their homes. Meanwhile, electricity systems are undergoing unprecedented degrees of change, moving from relatively static, centralized transmission channels to integrated, intercommunicating networks of distributed power resources, producing and consuming electricity dynamically in response to shifts in demand and supply. Renewable resources are increasingly a central part of this transformation. The purpose of this presentation is to begin to bridge these two sets of issues through a consideration of how each relates to the other in Ontario. It will do so by highlighting the impact of advanced metering technologies and the importance of

electricity engagement, as well as offering a longer-term view focused upon energy producer-consumers and the emerging sharing economy.

"The Politics of Renewable Energy and Ambitious Policies: Comparing Ontario, California, and Texas," by **Leah C. Stokes**

Transitioning the electricity system away from fossil fuels towards renewable energy sources is a politically contested process. To date, renewable portfolio standards (RPS), feed-in tariffs (FIT) and net energy metering (NEM) are the most widely-used policy instruments to deploy renewable energy technology around the world. This paper presents qualitative evidence from sub-national RPS, FIT, and NEM policies implemented in California, Texas, and Ontario, three of the most ambitious attempts to decarbonize electricity systems in North America. It examines the politics surrounding enactment and implementation in each case. While consumer and environmental advocates have successfully advocated for energy policies over the past decade, implementation has proven challenging. Opposition from utilities, politicians, and citizens has grown; these groups use policy narratives that highlight the cost of renewables and their local impacts. In some cases, these policies have created new industries and groups who attempt to expand policies and defend them against attacks. Understanding how renewable energy politics change from enactment to implementation is critical for addressing barriers to deploying renewable energy fast enough to decarbonize the electricity system and effectively address climate change.