

**Summary of intervention by João Joanaz de Melo (Portuguese CNADS)**

Two fundamental ideas must frame the discussion on sustainability, particularly regarding climate and energy policy:

- We are already hitting multiple planetary limits: climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, toxic pollution. Effective solutions must include a profound rethinking of our lifestyle, which is the main driver of environmental degradation. Borrowing the words of Pope Francis, we need an "ecological conversion";
- We are all energy users, therefore we are all part of the problem and of the solution: everybody has a role, from the secretary-general of the UN through national, regional and local governments, down to each family and each business in all sectors.

Those ideas point in the direction of two key priorities for climate and energy policy: (i) the promotion of energy efficiency and (ii) the transition to low impact, decentralized renewable energy. Besides information and regulation, an essential tool to implement those priorities is an environmental tax reform, where revenue from ecotaxes is applied in the promotion of energy efficiency and transition. This reform aims for the "triple dividend": better environmental resource management, better social equity with lower labour cost, and better economy through innovation.

Such necessary and ambitious policies require partnerships among a wide range of stakeholders. Three examples of working partnerships for the energy transition:

1) In 1997 the Environmental Engineering program at NOVA University Lisbon started a mandatory project course where MSc students do real work with external partners: business, public institutions, NGO. Similar partnerships are also commonly set up for Masters and Doctoral thesis. This approach has been a huge success, promoting training on-the-job and knowledge transfer on innovative technologies and methods. Over 200 partnerships were conducted since, involving about 600 students, many projects being related to energy and climate issues. Recent examples included an energy audit to a sports complex, a survey of the energy matrix and savings potential at a rural town council, and a series of energy audits to small business in a city neighbourhood.

2) The project "Reviving Douro Basin" was set up by a platform of Universities, environmental NGO and business to promote more sustainable policies for water resources management, with the Douro as the main case-study. A key issue is the energy-water nexus: one of the lines of research of the project is to develop an alternative energy strategy to ensure the energy transition in the wider framework of sustainability. The overall project relies systematically on dialogue with stakeholders; the alternative energy strategy component alone interacted with over 20 major stakeholders.

3) Last but not least, the Portuguese Council for Environment and Sustainable Development (CNADS) is a good example of a wide-ranging partnership. Set up in 1998, it currently counts 33 members, mostly nominated by national stakeholder's organizations: local institutions, business, labour, scientific community, NGO. The Council works as a consultative body to the Government. Although discussions can get fierce, so far, all CNADS' formal positions have been approved by consensus — not just for the sake of compromise, but often based on creative solutions reached by mutual and improved understanding of complex problems. Sometimes (not as often as we would like) the Government even pays attention to CNADS opinions... One of the most successful of recent CNADS' work was a position paper on the National Energy and Climate Plan, of which much was incorporated from the preliminary version to the public consultation version.