



## Side Event

### **Beyond MWs: The wider dimensions of the energy transition**

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#### **Timing**

Date: 7 July 2021

Time: 15.30-16.30 Vienna Time

Mode: Virtual

#### **Background**

The technologies for a global energy transformation exist today. Amid the ongoing pandemic, renewables have shown great resilience. Renewables now are the first-choice option for expanding, upgrading and modernising power systems around the world, and are playing a fundamental role in the world's ongoing energy transformation. Countries are increasingly committing to net-zero targets where renewables are certain to play a dominant role.

The ongoing energy transition, however, cannot be considered in isolation, separate from the socio-economic system in which it is deployed. The 2021 edition of [\*World Energy Transition Outlook: 1.5 degree pathway\*](#) emphasises that reaching the net zero target will not only reduce carbon emissions, it will improve lives, create jobs, achieve development goals, and ensure a cleaner and more prosperous future. IRENA's [\*Leveraging Local Capacity\*](#) series shows how renewables can create jobs with diverse occupations and skills along the value chain. Understanding the socio-economic impacts of the energy transition is essential to optimise the outcome and reap benefits. If well understood and planned, structural socio-economic changes will improve the outcome of the transition and further accelerate the transition.

This session will discuss a set of holistic measures that can inform energy system planning, economic policy making and other policies necessary to maximise the benefits and ensure a just and inclusive energy transition at global, regional and national levels. The session will also present IRENA's findings on the topic, including an updated analysis on social welfare.



### Moderator



**Dr. Ulrike Lehr** studied physics at the University of Essen (Diploma in 1990) and economics at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, State University, Blacksburg, VA USA (M.Sc. 1992). She received her PhD for a thesis on environmental valuation in 2005 from the University of Hohenheim. She worked as a researcher at the department of System Analysis and Technology Assessment of the German Aerospace Center (2005-2008) at the Rhine-Westphalia Institute of Economics Research, RWI e.V., Essen; Department of energy policy studies and research (1993-1999). She works with GWS as a Senior Expert since 2008 and became partner in 2011. As of January 2021, Dr. Lehr became the Head of the Policy (Socioeconomics) Division at the International Renewable Energy Agency, IRENA.

### Panellists



**Marcin Ścigan**, is a director of the Department of Renewable Energy Sources in the Polish Ministry of Climate and Environment. Before joining the Ministry in August 2020, he worked in Forum Energii as Head of Renewables (2019-2020) and at the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA, 2015 – 2019). At IRENA he was a Regional Programme Officer, where he led IRENA's engagement with Southeast Europe and was involved in the work of the Global Commission on the Geopolitics of Energy Transformation in 2018. Earlier, he worked as an expert on European and International affairs in the field of renewable energy at the Polish Ministry of Economy.



**Tobias Viere** is professor for energy and material flow analyses at the Institute for Industrial Ecology at Pforzheim University. He studied environmental sciences and holds a doctoral degree in business studies. After working in international capacity building programs on cleaner production and environmental accounting in South-East Asia and heading the research and consulting team of a software company offering solutions in the field of life cycle assessment and corporate sustainability, he joined Pforzheim University in 2013. His teaching, publications, and research and industry projects include carbon footprints and life cycle assessments, circular economy, energy and resource efficiency, and sustainability accounting.



**Hector Pollitt** is a director and the Chief Economist at Cambridge Econometrics. He is also a research fellow at the C-EENRG centre at the Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge. His current research interests include improving the treatment of finance and technology development within standard macroeconomic frameworks.

Hector is a post-Keynesian economist and has worked with Cambridge Econometrics' global E3ME macro-econometric model for more than 18 years. In that time he has used the model to contribute to numerous official policy assessments, particularly relating to energy, climate and labour markets. Recent examples include inputs to the assessments of the EU's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for 2030 and 2050. He has worked in collaboration with IRENA for the past seven years, providing economic assessments of decarbonisation pathways consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement.



**Sarah Alexander** is a Sr. Advisor with SELCO, an organization that seeks to alleviate poverty and create assets for the poor via last mile energy access solutions. Sarah leads the organization's inclusive investment advocacy program and global replication of an ecosystems approach to energy access. With close to 13 years of experience in the energy access sector, Sarah has worked on multiple programs at the confluence of energy access, sustainable development and poverty. She has previously presented

at various national and international programs to propagate the concept of an energy access ecosystem.

Sarah holds an MSc in Conservation Biology from State University of New York (SUNY), College of Environmental Sciences and Forestry.