

***Most people now recognize the urgent need to take action to meet the challenge of the climate emergency: 64% of those taking part in the largest ever survey of public opinion on the climate emergency (50 countries, 1.2 million responses) believe climate change is an emergency.<sup>1</sup>***

Despite this, many people still know little about the complexities of global warming. In France, 46% of young people stated that they do not properly understand the meaning of the term greenhouse gas.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, the emergence of environmental considerations and the challenges of transition are by no means new. This is part of a process with roots reaching back to the 19th century, a period that saw the emergence of differences of opinion that remain with us today. As philosopher **Dominique Bourg** points out, relationships to ecology are by nature divisive, offering competing views of modernity.

Aside from a lack of consensus about what ecological transformation should look like, climate-related issues also have to overcome conflicts between and within states, both geopolitical and social. Because it is synonymous with strategic decisions on trade, commerce and regulation, the battle against the climate emergency is, as **Sébastien Treyer** reminds us, a key geopolitical consideration that may lead to the emergence of new opportunities – or renewed tensions. The recent Russian invasion of Ukraine has provided us with a tragic reminder of this reality.

Climate-related issues also underscore ongoing, if not worsening, divisions between countries of the North and South, as well as within national boundaries. This highlights the urgent need for climate justice to emerge: between states as well as within them, the climate question is now firmly entwined with the issue of inequalities. In an attempt to reconcile these goals, the paradigm of a “just transition” has entered public debate. **Patrick Schroeder** and **Jack Barrie** apply it to the concept of circular economy and waste management in emerging countries. The question of the social acceptability of transition also arises in developed economies. Fair Energy Transition for All, an initiative presented by **Pascale Taminiaux**, gives a voice to vulnerable households in Europe, for whom transition often equates to higher costs than for wealthier households. These conflicting realities were recently illustrated by the symbolic opposition “*end of the month versus end of the world*”.

As well as the social, environmental and geopolitical challenges, ecological transformation also involves technological challenges and raises major questions about our relationship to innovation. **Sara Trærup** highlights the key role that climate technologies could play in accelerating transformation while maintaining access to essential services such as water, energy and waste, particularly in developing economies.

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<sup>1</sup> Peoples' Climate Vote, UNDP, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Les jeunes et la science [Young People and Science], Ipsos, 2021.

