

# Report from the Bolin Centre Climate Arena 8<sup>th</sup> Workshop “Institutional barriers and enablers to achieving climate neutrality”

September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The Bolin Centre Climate Arena is a meeting place for researchers, companies, the public sector, and other organisations which aims to facilitate collaboration and an exchange of knowledge, experience, and creative ideas, so that we can together increase our society's resilience to climate change. By gathering organisations with different needs and a wide range of expertise, the arena can lay the foundation for joint efforts and sustainable societal change. The Climate Arena was founded in May 2018 at Stockholm University.

The Bolin Centre for Climate Research is an umbrella organisation with more than 400 people who conduct research in areas related to the Earth's climate. The centre was established by Stockholm University, KTH and SMHI, and is named after Professor Bert Bolin, a pioneer in climate research and founder of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The Climate Arena is an initiative for thematic collaboration in arena format. It has been established within the framework of the project Methodology for the Development of Collaboration Arenas (Metodik för Utveckling av Samverkansarenor, MUSA).

For further information:

[www.bolin.su.se](http://www.bolin.su.se)

[www.bolin.su.se/bolin-centre-climate-arena](http://www.bolin.su.se/bolin-centre-climate-arena)

[www.su.se/k3-projekten/musa](http://www.su.se/k3-projekten/musa)

On September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the Climate Arena at Stockholm University conducted a hybrid workshop on Institutional barriers and enablers to achieving climate neutrality. In total, 19 participants from 12 different organisations joined the meeting (see Annex A for an overview of participating organisations).

Three presentations were given during the first part of the workshop:

- **Kevin Noone, Stockholm University** - *Wicked problems, barriers and enablers*
- **Paul Glantz, Stockholm University** - *Stockholm University's efforts towards carbon neutrality 2040, and some battles on the way*
- **Gofi Aldstam, Stockholm Vatten och Avfall** - *Experiences outside academia*

Please see Annex B, workshop program, for an overview. The presentations are available on request.

This was the 8<sup>th</sup> workshop in the Bolin Centre Climate Arena since the initiative was established in March 2018. Previous workshops have treated the transition to a carbon neutral society in a broad perspective, as well as certain specific topics, such as calculations of organisations' carbon footprint. In this workshop we aimed to obtain a picture of the main barriers and enablers faced by the Climate Arena participants trying to achieve climate neutrality.

Following the presentations, group discussions were carried out one main question:

- What enablers and barriers have you found trying to achieve climate neutrality?

Below is a summary of some of the main points that were highlighted during the discussion.

### Summary of group discussion

#### ***What enablers and barriers have you found trying to achieve climate neutrality?***

The participants agree on lack of clarity of goals and means as some of the main barriers. As there is not one but multiple systems used to approach climate neutrality, it can be challenging to find common ground between different organizations. The different terms and concepts used sometimes lead to misunderstandings. There is a need to find a collective approach to solve communication problems.

Another concern the participants raised was that the directives under which they are supposed to operate are somewhat vague. Different public governance structures have different climate goals depending on the country and/or region. Climate change is a global issue and should therefore have a collective approach.

In the same terms, another barrier discussed was how targets are set. The targets must be realistic and sufficient. Setting a target may stop some industries from reducing their emissions even more once they reach the objective set. Concentrating on the emissions and what you can do to reduce them as much as possible may be a better path to follow. Furthermore, there is lack of proper risk analysis. The current ones are incomplete and there is a need to have a more complete analysis that includes the three different scopes in the Greenhouse Gas Protocol.

The final barrier discussed was the public awareness being quite low in some places, and how this influences the ability for organizations to change their operations to reach carbon neutrality goals.

On a more positive note, there was a general understanding on cooperation and collaboration being the major enablers to achieve climate neutrality. Exchanging knowledge, information and results are extremely important in this regard. Having a forum

at which to share the victories and defeats the stakeholders from all sectors have dealt with was also considered to be an enabler.

Finding effective leverage points was also an enabler mentioned. These leverage points are crucial as they are supposed to be easy (or at least possible) to manipulate. This will generate a strategic goal. Categorizing the barriers will also create a clearer path to solve them.

Another enabler discussed was the EU taxonomy, where a first try to connect the finance and sustainability has been made. Continued attention should be paid to the evolution of this taxonomy.

The last enabler discussed during the workshop was the driving force that thinking about a brighter future generates. Creating narratives that give people a shared objective to work towards together was seen as very important.

## Annex A – Participating organizations

City of Stockholm  
Future Earth  
Klimatriksdagen  
Linköping University  
Perpetuum Energi & Miljö  
SEI  
Stockholm University  
Stockholm Vatten och Avfall  
Swedavia Airports  
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid  
Université Libre de Bruxelles  
University of Glasgow

Annex B – Workshop program

## **Bolin Centre Climate Arena 8th Workshop**

### **“Institutional barriers and enablers to achieving climate neutrality”**

#### **Agenda**

- 12:30-13:00** Lunch
- 13:00-13:10** Welcome and purpose of the workshop, boundary conditions (Kevin Noone)
- 13:10-13:20** Setting the stage (Kevin Noone)
- 13:20-13:35** SU towards carbon neutrality 2040, some battles on the way (Paul Glantz)
- 13:35-14:00** Experiences outside academia (Gofi Aldstam)
- 14:00-14:45** Group Discussions
- 14:45-15:30** Reports from groups, discussion; Wrap up and next steps
- 15:30-16:00** Coffee/tea