INFO

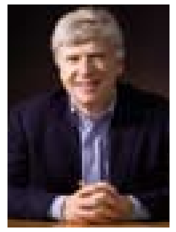
FRENCH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN GREAT BRITAIN WWW.CCFGB.CO.UK JANUARY / FEBRUARY 10

CLIMATE CHANGE

Global Threat: Business Challenge

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial



Arnaud Vaissié
President,
French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain,
and Chairman & CEO, International SOS

The intelligent route through tough times

INFO wishes all its readers a good New Year 2010, even as the cold winds and snow continue to batter the UK, both literally and metaphorically! The economic outlook for the coming year is no better than that of 2009, widely regarded as an *annus horribilis*. The UK, as for much of Europe, is preparing for rising unemployment, cuts in public spending and fears over the horizon of deflation and pressures on corporate profits.

There may not be any easy route through this recession, and few would have expected it otherwise. So let us look at some of the ways at which the Chamber can assist in preparing ourselves to be resilient, to withstand the harsher elements of the difficult environment.

Each member will feel the impact of the economic environment in his or her own way and he will have his or her own strategies for dealing with it. But every strategy is likely to have at least two components. These may be found in the complex meaning of the word 'intelligence'. Intelligence means an understanding of the facts you can see immediately, on the one hand, and advance knowledge of what might occur on the other.

The Chamber provides members with both forms of meaning. Through the Chamber's mix of Forums and members' meetings, and indeed through its publications, members receive willing and open access to many colleagues' experiences. The launches in the last year of the Chamber's Corporate Social Responsibility and Cross-Cultural Relations Forums provide ways of networking with others who have an understanding of very large parts of the international business and commerce scene.

Here speakers provide members with advance knowledge and intelligence about likely developments in their sectors of operation. But members also have the opportunity to share their experiences of existing markets, with colleagues. They do this through extensive networking with others, perhaps in different industries.

The range of information available to members has greatly expanded over the last year as the Chamber has widened its range of partners. For example, members may know that the Chamber has linked with the Financial Times which has become the media partner of the Franco-British Business Awards, with the Franco-British Chamber of Commerce, the Franco-British Council or the French Institute, organisations with which we have co-hosted meetings. These are only a few of the link-ups formed by the Chamber. We will see more of these in the New Year.

On a more convivial note, *INFO* would like to introduce a new columnist, Thibault Lavergne, who is a wine expert. Thibault organises our wine tasting events and will write about the wine industry. You may find his first column on page 68.

Finally, the Chamber will soon conduct a survey, in partnership with Ipsos MORI, one of our members, to help us to identify our members' needs and expectations. We hope this will enable us to provide them with useful and relevant services. Every business recognises the importance of building links for our mutual protection and for mutual benefit. As we huddle together for protection in these cold times, the advantages of solidarity and intelligence shine through. ■

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5 MINUTES WITH

Stephen Burgin

STEPHEN BURGIN WORKED FOR ALSTOM IN FRANCE BEFORE BECOMING UK PRESIDENT FOR THE CONGLOMERATE, A PATRON MEMBER OF THE CHAMBER, TWO YEARS AGO. HERE HE TALKS TO *INFO* ABOUT ALSTOM'S REMARKABLE ACTIVITIES IN ITS TWO VITAL SECTORS - ENERGY AND TRANSPORT - AND HOW THE UK BENEFITS FROM FRENCH NUCLEAR KNOW-HOW.

Could you start by describing the scale of Alstom and the nature of your role in it?
Alstom has 81,500 employees in over 70 countries. In the UK, we have about 5,500 employees. The order book in the UK is four billion euros.

I'm responsible for Alstom in the UK. Besides being country president, I also have specific responsibilities as Head of Power, so the power side of the business is my speciality. If I was on Mastermind, my general knowledge subject would be the whole of Alstom in the UK and my specialist subject would be energy.

Stephen Burgin

With that in mind, how big an issue is energy in the UK?
We are going to be getting closer to the wire around 2016 if we continue the rate of running down and decommissioning our nuclear and coal fleets. Coal power stations have to meet certain EU regulations for particulate emissions due to the Large Combustion Plant Directive (LCPD), meaning some will close before 2016.

The nuclear fleet, meanwhile, is reaching the end of its life, with only Sizewell due to remain over the longer term. What this means is that we're left with an 'energy gap' of needing more energy than we produce as a country by 2016.

What changes do you see occurring to the UK's energy mix in the coming decades?
The only new power plants currently being built, if we put the renewables to one side, are combined cycle gas turbine plants. The fuel is gas and we burn that to turn the turbines - but that's just one element of a complex picture.

The key is to have diversity in our energy mix. In the UK currently we have coal, gas, nuclear and some renewable power plants. In the medium term, any new coal plants that we build should be with carbon capture technology installed. It's also very important we replace the existing nuclear capacity, if not build more nuclear plants, because nuclear is a clean energy source.

In terms of wind power, we've built a wind farm in Scotland and we've just won an order for a second one in Wales. We would hope at some time in the future to move into offshore wind turbines.

How sophisticated is carbon capture technology and what does it involve?
Coal is not a renewable source but you can clean its emissions and you can take out more than 90 per cent of the carbon dioxide if you fit the abatement equipment, which is under development. There is no fully industrialised solution yet. Certainly within the next five years there will be fully industrialised carbon capture technology and Alstom will have that technology developed and available.

So Alstom is involved in developing it?
Yes. Currently we have ten pilot projects in that field. We're probably one of the world leaders in carbon capture.

In parallel with this, we will be continuing to develop renewable technologies in the UK and will be working hard to responsibly manage our own energy consumption as a business.

Moving on to Alstom Transport, I understand you have recently won an order to extend the Virgin Pendolino fleet.
We received an order last year to make those trains two cars longer, which is quite a big job. We are building 106 new cars. There will be four additional trains and then the balance of the cars will be used to make the existing trains longer.

Because of all the work that's been done to upgrade the West Coast Mainline and the signalling systems, the reliability and the utilisation of the line keeps peaking year after year, so there's a need for increased capacity.

And you have also supplied trains for the London Underground network.
On the Underground, 70 per cent of the trains were supplied by Alstom or its predecessors. More specifically, we do all the maintenance on the Northern and Jubilee lines.

How has Alstom worked with Tube Lines to improve the Northern Line?
In partnership with Tube Lines we've moved the Northern Line's performance to being the best of the whole Underground. It used to be known as the Misery Line. Now, in my opinion, it's the Magnificent Line.

Has the perception of engineering as a career improved in the UK in recent years?
I'm a really passionate engineer. You won't talk to anybody who could be more enthusiastic about engineers and the engineering profession. Yes, engineering went out of vogue at some point. Kids leaving school going into universities saw other more exciting things to do than going into engineering.

Those who did go into engineering also quite often got sucked into the banking and finance world. But now the UK has made the decision to invest, because of need, in key engineering activities, and now we see the tide is turning.

But isn't it true that in France, engineering has traditionally been better respected than in the UK?
Engineers and engineering are held in higher regard in France. France has probably steamed ahead in terms of keeping a high level of top people coming through the engineering profession. But a French engineer's no better than a British engineer.

I've worked in Britain and I've worked in France, and I can say it's not about the quality of engineering, but it might well be about having the engineers and giving the priority of the engineering projects and the engineering profession.

In terms of the global picture, where is there the biggest demand for energy?
The biggest demand for energy is in China and India, as you might guess. There is a steady demand in Europe, based on replacement of ageing infrastructures and moderate increases in population.

The UK has very specific short-medium term needs because of adherence to EU directives and its ageing nuclear fleet.

Companies like ours are global players and therefore it's very important that the UK itself is an attractive market.

In terms of nuclear power plants, these are far better thought of by the public these days than they once were. Why do you think that is?
There are a few reasons why nuclear is viewed as more acceptable than it was. One is the absence of events such as Chernobyl. There's been a long period of stable, well managed nuclear power. The second reason is there is a recognition that we have got an issue on energy and we need a solution. And the third element is that there's been a lot of recognition in Britain of how well the French have managed their nuclear power.

In France, 80 per cent of electrical energy is provided by nuclear. They've got 58 reactors. They have managed very well for many years and that speaks volumes.

Here in the UK, we have the benefit of EDF, who are running one of the most efficient, well managed fleets in the world, wanting to invest here.

Finally, what is the most significant project the Alstom conglomerate is involved in?
Each business will consider its own business activities to be the most important and exciting. Steve Burgin, sitting here, looking across the lot, in a way is a bit like a young boy in a sweet shop. There are all these delicious sweets on the shelves and I'm spoilt for choice. We are deeply involved in, and committed to, supporting the critical needs of the UK for transport and energy infrastructures both now and well into the future. It's a great place to be ! ■ ***Interview by Josh Loeb***

by Nicolas Kochan

NEWS IN THE CITY

UK tax means some of its stars move to Switzerland

The tough taxation and bonus penalty policies of the British government are upsetting businesses to such an extent, that a number have reportedly moved their headquarters to less penal climes. Switzerland in particular has been selected for hedge funds and bankers who have the means to make the move and the global technology and client list to make sure it doesn't affect their business.

The Swiss authorities are of course aware of the concern in the UK and some are reported to have approached chief executives of large companies and other wealthy individuals with tax-saving deals. It is reported that one chief executive was offered a flat tax rate of 10 per cent on his personal income if he relocated the company to Geneva and lived there, as long as he provided a forecast of earnings for the next ten years. One may assume that the Swiss will want their share of the taxes, even if it is not as much as the UK. The business publishers Informa are one such company and they have moved their tax domicile to Switzerland.

© Rdiggle

City tax advisers say they have never been so busy consulting with professionals on how to leave the UK. From this coming April, people paid more than £150,000 a year will pay tax at 50%. But the loss of allowances in reality takes that top tax rate to more than 60% for some. It makes Britain the highest taxing nation in Europe after the traditionally big income takers of Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands. ■

Governments clamp down on tax

Staying on the subject of tax, Switzerland and France have ratified a treaty for exchanging details of each other's tax regimes. This is particularly valuable to France as it enables the country to go after people who hope to benefit from Swiss secrecy. Switzerland has come under increasing pressure of course to disclose details as countries all over the world try and rein in tax money that they need to finance hard-pressed public services.

The British government is no different in reportedly starting to investigate the many professionals, in particular dentists and doctors who hope to benefit from secrecy in British dependencies like Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey. Many would say such a process is rather overdue, considering the pressures on the British budget. ■

Who is George Osborne?

George Osborne MP

Given that the Conservatives are widely viewed as the political party likely to replace the Labour party as the Government after the coming election, I thought I would do some research into the origins of George Osborne, the Conservative shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer. He may not be especially well known now, but we will be hearing a lot more of him if he does acquire the reins of power.

So here is a preliminary piece of information. His full name is George Gideon Oliver Osborne and he was born on 23 May 1971. He is heir to the Osborne baronetcy of Ballentaylor, County Tipperary in Ireland. This makes him one of what is known in Ireland as *the Ascendancy*, the old Anglo-Irish aristocracy. His father founded Osborne and Little, the upmarket wallpaper manufacturers.

Mr Osborne went to St Paul's School and Magdalen College, Oxford. ■

Green bite from billiards

Environmental issues reach every aspect of our lives, as we see from our Focus later in this issue. But billiards? Well yes! We learn that Chevillotte of France has just launched *HEIMO* — the first *eco-design* billiard table, which is made of solid PEFC wood. '*HEIMO* is an elegant, contemporary dining table, which doubles up as a billiard (or pool) table complying with the standards of the sport at the highest level.' Chevillotte has apparently developed an 'innovative concept, which combines essential environmental concerns with aesthetic requirements, without neglecting product performance.' Well, let's hope that its environmental credentials help it improve the game of even the weaker billiard players among us. ■

Women stir up British boards?

British City firms are reported to be horrified at the bill now being considered in the French parliament for implementation by 2015, to require larger French companies to have no less than 50% of their board members as women. It is understood no more than 10.5% of the boards of CAC 40 companies are female at the moment, so the shift will be dramatic.

As readers of *INFO* will observe from our previous issue, Helen Alexander is among a rather few female members of top British company boards. Helen complained at the British male domination. If the Brits were to replicate this piece of proposed French legislation, the shockwaves would be dramatic. ■

France Telecom to ring changes in UK

France Telecom and Deutsche Telekom have asked the European Union to approve the proposed merger of their UK mobile operations, which will reduce the number of operators in the market to four from five. The two carriers could instead have referred the matter to the Office of Fair Trading. Some observers believe the European executive may take a more lenient view of the merger, though the EU could still refer it back to domestic authorities. ■

| Profile

Angela Knight fights discrimination against the bankers

Politicians and critics quake when they are challenged by Angela Knight, the chief executive of the British Bankers' Association. She has a confidence and knowledge that impresses all who meet her.

The banking industry could not have bought itself a more high profile, combative or powerful advocate. Angela Knight, the chief executive of the British Bankers' Association, is a politician to her fingertips.

She does not welcome the comparison with Margaret Thatcher, but it is unmistakeable. Like Baroness Thatcher, she has a chemistry degree, she sat in parliament for the Conservatives and held political office. She is a woman, of course. But most importantly, she lays into her adversaries with ferocity.

She makes no bones about her thick skin. 'You need a thick skin if the banking members of your association are not popular.' In today's febrile banking environment, she has her work cut out. Speaking to *INFO* magazine, she got particularly riled by the British government's tax on bonuses. 'This does not send the right signal to international banks based in London. We are already losing people from the UK. Firms are now making their strategic decisions. We will have to see the consequences of this. But it is imperative that the Government makes a statement that this is a one-off tax, and one-off only.'

Mrs Knight says that the British tax has a much wider reach than the French tax. The UK tax is being levied on performance-related pay schemes as well as bonuses, whereas the French tax only hits bonuses. 'This is a tax on the corporate and not on the individual. The government wants banks to pay individuals differently, depending on where they work. It is intended to discriminate against British bankers'. Mrs Knight says that international banks have had to top up their bonus pots as they are not

Angela Knight

prepared to pay bankers from different countries different amounts. She is concerned that banks will walk away from the UK, unless the British government gives an unequivocal statement that the tax will not be repeated.

It is particularly invidious that the Government has targeted long-term performance pay schemes, says Mrs Knight as the schemes were introduced in the UK as a direct result of the G20 meeting of 2009, to combat short-termism in remuneration. 'We need to stop the discrimination of the industry,' she says.

She also takes issue with a director of the Bank of England, Andy Haldane, who recently said that if some banks left the UK because of government policy, 'so be it'. Mrs Knight's reposte is unmistakeable, 'who's going to pay the taxes. They will not be saying this when the first hospital closes as a result of shortage of money.'

Banking jobs are also at stake if firms leave the City, she says. "There are literally tens, if not hundreds of thousands of British jobs directly and indirectly related to banking - bringing billions of pounds in tax income. Some of this is now at risk and, although many are well aware of it, decision makers increasingly either wish to ignore it or - even more dangerously - choose not to believe it."

Other financial sectors are "waiting ready to pick up the business from the wreckage we will leave if we are stupid enough to discard a banking model which has served us well," she added, warning that politicians risk sending British banking to the same fate as British shipbuilding.

The task of arguing the bankers' case at a time when they are not the country's (or indeed Europe's) most popular citizens does not concern Angela. She is a fighter and has broad shoulders. Mrs Knight has shown her staying power in a number of professions before entering the area of lobbying. For example, she worked in heavy industry -- repeating the word 'heavy' for emphasis -- and ultimately owned an industrial company. The experience has taught her to deal with men, their foibles, their sexism. 'There is very little that shocks me. I know when to turn a blind eye to what it is a good idea not to hear. I know to see what I shouldn't. That is quite useful.'

Mrs Knight went from Westminster to the City of London, and today ranks as the doyenne representative for London's banks. She was chairman of the Association of Private Client Investment Managers, APCIMs before moving over to the British Bankers Association as its chairman.

She is concerned that the British Treasury's 2009 White Paper on banking reform – which was seen in some political circles as giving too much ground to the banks -- threatens to undermine the competitiveness of British banks. She dismissed claims that the White Paper was a sop to the banking sector. 'There are going to be significant changes in terms of capital and liquidity: the two big costs, if you like, for a bank or large financial institution of being in business,' she said. 'To call that "champagne corks popping" [as some politicians have done] is highly wrong.

'Our real concern is that much of what is in the White Paper needs to be applied to our European partners also, and indeed to the other major financial centres around the world. Others will see that White Paper as giving them a competitive advantage as the costs rise for banks that are quartered here in this country.'

Banks' capital levels are already much higher than before the crisis and higher than the levels recommended by the Basel II Accord, she points out.

Angela Knight also has some strong opinions about the EU's Markets in Financial Instruments Directive. This is the European Union law that provides harmonised regulation for investment services across the 30 member states of the European Economic Area. She attacks the British tendency to put into British law and regulation every last stricture and clause of European legislation, even when there are good reasons why the Directive may be interpreted more liberally and when other countries take a more flexible stance. British politicians are imbued with such caution that they are prepared to put at risk the British banking industry.

Mrs Knight says, 'We still put European legislation into UK law in a way that can have the impact of being disadvantageous to the industry when it is compared with how other countries do it. There are rights and wrongs in this area, but there is a lot of grey in between. Options are given in directives, and often there are principles. Now if we take the most onerous option and we take the principle and we put it into legal language which provides the least flexibility for the industry, then in all probability we have constrained ourselves, whether in terms of actions or in terms of cost compared with the competitive market.'

The value of such a directive, when its goals and structures were so little analysed, is highly questionable, she says. 'Any sort of directive has to be the last resort, not the first. Often competition issues or anti-competitive issues cause barriers. So competition barriers should be looked at first. Legislative ones should be looked at last, with codes of practice somewhere in between. MiFID (Markets in Financial Instruments Directive) did none of those things. It was the last of the old type directive. The Commission did the directive and then looked at the rules and then looked at the consequences.' The EU could still produce a repeat of the MiFID fiasco at some later point, she admits. ■ ***N.K.***

NEWS

Compiled by **Hannah Meloul**

Club Med Celebrates 60 Years of Success

From 200 tents in Mallorca (see picture), to an international and iconic luxury brand with more than 80 resorts worldwide.

Club Med is celebrating this year its 60th anniversary whilst looking forward to a programme of expansion and renovations with new destinations including China being added to the worldwide portfolio of resorts.

Since launching in 1950, Club Med has expanded to offer more than 80 resorts in far-flung destinations, including world-class resorts in the Maldives, Mauritius, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Thailand, Malaysia and Bali.

Club Med was founded in 1950 by Gérard Blitz, the son of an Antwerp diamond merchant and water polo champion who came up with the concept of a holiday for people 'developing a taste for living outdoors and physical training'. Blitz bought 200 tents and opened his first resort in Alcudia in Mallorca. During that first summer season, Club Med welcomed 2,300 guests, but had to turn down an additional 10,000 interested customers.

In 1956, the first ski property was opened in Leys in Switzerland and in 1957, Club Med introduced the iconic bar beads as currency at their resorts around the world, inspired by a child's necklace. In 1965 the first permanent village was opened in Morocco in Agadir and the year round package was offered. In the 1980s the group went on an ambitious expansion plan opening properties in Bora Bora, Malaysia, Brazil, Mexico, the Bahamas, the Maldives and Saudi Arabia.

Today Club Med looks rather different from the tents of its humble beginnings, with luxury resorts with private pools and personal butlers, but the concept remains that of a cosmopolitan, convivial inclusive resort.

2010 brings further developments for the brand with the launch of 40 luxury villas in Mauritius alongside one of its flagship five trident resorts, La Plantation d'Albion Club Med. This new property development is designed to meet the demands of the island's growing market of British travellers who seek a long-haul destination for more than just their annual holiday.

© Club Med

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Henri Giscard d'Estaing said: "I am delighted to be celebrating 60 years of Club Med and unveiling the beginning of a brand new expansion programme. We have experienced great success with our move upmarket and we are very pleased to be bringing Club Med to a new audience."

Club Med Business

Club Med Business has been organising all kinds of events, from conferences to incentive rewards and pleasure trips for more than 30 years. The Club Med Business teams handle more than 1500 projects annually and have gained the loyalty of more than 900 brands including, Wella, Nike, Deloitte, Renault and Lancôme.

33 Club Med Sun Resorts are ideally suited to conferences with destinations including, France, Italy, Portugal, Greece, Turkey and North Africa or further a field to South America, Asia and Australia. 14 Club Med Ski Resorts offer exceptional conference facilities, situated throughout the French, Swiss and Italian Alps. ■

To arrange your Conference or Incentive Travel, contact The Club Med Business Team in London on 0208 780 8616 or e-mail cmbuk@clubmed.com

Eurotunnel completes first external expansion in its history with the acquisition of the French businesses of Veolia Cargo

©Eurotunnel

Eurotunnel has completed the acquisition, initiated on 2 September 2009, of the French businesses of Veolia Cargo. With this purchase, Eurotunnel takes on a leading role in the French rail freight market which is currently receiving strong government support.

Jacques Gounon, Chairman and Chief Executive of Eurotunnel, stated: "This investment is in line with Groupe Eurotunnel's development strategy, based on infrastructure and railway management. Always conscious of the environment, we want to strengthen our position in markets with potential".

The companies concerned, Veolia Cargo France, Veolia Cargo Link, CFTA Cargo and Socorail will be placed under the management of Europorte, the group's rail subsidiary. As a result of its strong brand recognition, Socorail will not change name. The other entities will be renamed respectively as: Europorte France, Europorte Link and Europorte Proximity. Cross-Channel activities of Europorte 2, which started in 2007, and which has now handled its 5,000th train, will henceforth be known as Europorte Channel.

The acquired businesses constitute a wide range of integrated rail freight services: the haulage of rail freight at both national and international level, local freight services on secondary lines and industrial services. Europorte will now have a more significant foothold in France that will enable the group to expand its service proposition. The group will also be better able to provide for the increasing customer demand for efficient and environmentally sustainable solutions.Within the framework of sustainable development, this investment is an acceleration of one of the group's core activities. ■

Eversheds advises on £500M Thames Gateway regeneration scheme

International law firm Eversheds is advising Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation on a £500M proposal for a regeneration scheme to transform the heart of Purfleet in the Thames Gateway which has received the "green light" from the Department of Communities and Local Government. Funded through a joint public/private partnership, the scheme would see the development of a new town centre along with up to 3,500 new homes and more than a thousand new jobs created in the area.

Leading the Eversheds team, Regeneration and Development partner Paul Hothi adds: "The Eversheds' team has built up market leading knowledge in the regeneration sector over the last decade and in these difficult times for the real estate industry clients are looking for teams which will not be learning on their time and can hit the ground running."

The planned redevelopment of the Essex town is the latest part of the Government's Thames Gateway programme and would also provide a new school health centre, a new employment area, improved station and transport links and better access to the river front. ■

Environment Agency partners with Capgemini for a green IT contract

The Environment Agency has chosen Capgemini to provide the partial outsourcing of IT services under a new seven year IT service contract which aims to be the greenest in government. It should see the Environment Agency reduce IT carbon emissions by around 50 percent within the next few years.

Environmental considerations have been the core of the design of the service – from the production and transportation of hardware, to energy savings for each end-user. Further green measures will include reduction, reuse and recycling of hardware, while all disposals will be done under strict Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) regulations. It is the first time that such a comprehensive set of green measures has been formally set within a U.K. IT contract. It is widely accepted that IT usage globally contributes to two percent of the total carbon dioxide emissions, equivalent to that usually attributed to aviation. For these reasons, the Environment Agency has contracted with Capgemini to ensure that this service can be reused by Government and other public sector organisations.

Christine Hodgson, Vice President and member of the Capgemini Group Executive Committee, said: "We are proud to have won this important contract on the strength of the value of our proposition to the Environment Agency and our commitment to sustainable IT. We believe this contract should become a benchmark that will shape and influence how other organizations in the public and private sectors adopt sustainable IT as a business benefit, and that where the Environment Agency has led, others will inevitably follow."

With much of the Environment Agency's existing IT provision reaching the end of its useful lifecycle, this contract means that the organization will be more efficient and flexible in meeting its future challenges. This will underpin the delivery of the Environment Agency's ambitious new Corporate Strategy 2010-2015, which was unveiled on 10 November 2009. ■

Saint-Gobain named as one of Britain's most admired companies

Peter Hindle MBE

Providing a peer review of corporate reputation, the awards ask leading professionals at Britain's top companies to assess and nominate their most admired rivals. Company performances were judged against a set of benchmarks which included financial soundness, community and environmental responsibility, quality of management and capacity to innovate. Saint-Gobain was runner-up in the Building Materials and Merchants category and joined other nominated businesses at an award ceremony in December at Claridges in London.

Peter Hindle MBE, general delegate of Saint-Gobain in the UK, Ireland and South Africa, comments: "To be named as one of Britain's most admired companies is an achievement that we are extremely proud of. Saint-Gobain is one of just over 50 nominated businesses and the fact that this list is based on the views of professionals in relevant sectors clearly demonstrates the respect with which Saint-Gobain is regarded in the construction industry."

With an annual R&D budget of more than £350 million, Saint-Gobain leads the world in the design, production and distribution of materials for the construction industry. Saint-Gobain's UK businesses, which include Jewson, Graham, British Gypsum, Saint-Gobain Glass, Isover and Weber, have worked together on many landmark projects including 30 St Mary Axe ("the Gherkin"), the St Pancras international rail terminal and the O2 arena. ■

L'Oréal celebrates 100 years with 'beauty book'

In honor of L'Oréal's 100th anniversary, the L'Oréal Corporate Foundation in France commissioned a large-scale, in depth research project into humankind's quest for beauty. Incorporating contributions from 300 writers of 35 different nationalities and 20 different disciplines, the 5 volume book set called "100,000 Years of Beauty" explores beauty through the ages -- from prehistoric people to the modern age, and even a look into the future -- in a uniquely comprehensive way.

Beauty has had a profound impact on civilization -- from Cleopatra's legendary beauty, to the excessive wigs of Marie Antoinette's day -- but scholars found that prehistoric humans cared just as passionately about beauty as we do today.

For a whole century, L'Oréal has been committed to the adventure of beauty. The small, single brand company, started by a visionary chemist, Eugène Schueller, in Paris, France in 1909, has grown to become the world's leading beauty company, thanks to its rigorous scientific approach, its hunger for conquering international markets and its ongoing quest for innovation and quality.

Commenting on this important milestone for the group, L'Oréal CEO, Jean-Paul Agon said: "Our centenary is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to our vision and our values: a robust scientific approach, a constant quest for innovation; a taste for real challenge; respect for diversity. And of a deep rooted belief in the valuable role that beauty plays in society".

100 years of exploration and innovation

Revolutionary in their time, it is hard to imagine the beauty industry today without some of L'Oréal's past innovations. Today, the group's R&D function - with a budget of almost 600 million Euros and more than 3,000 scientists working in 18 research centres and 15 evaluation centres throughout the world - develops new molecules and formulas in the field of hair and skin. L'Oréal is unfailing in its commitment to high standards of quality, whilst the company manufactures more than 4.5 billion products every year and in 2008 it registered more than 600 patents.

The book is available on amazon.com for $295. ■

Thales' ultra-secure phone "Teorem"

Nicolas Sarkozy tests Thales' Teorem

As the world experiences the globalisation of electronic networks, spying is becoming a serious matter for all governments. In France, the Direction Générale de l'Armement (DGA) intends to put an end to leaks and has ordered an ultra-secure phone from Thales named "Teorem". The phone was tested by Nicolas Sarkozy for the first time on Wednesday, 6 January when he visited Thales' plant in Cholet (France).

According to Thales, Teorem allows "secret defence" conversations and is "designed for ministries and armies". Over 14,000 secure phones have been ordered by the DGA and will be delivered this year. The price remains confidential, and only the French government will be allowed to take orders; the device won't be sold to other companies. ■

Hats off to...

"Francais of the Year"

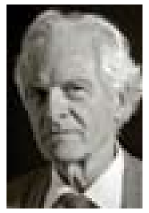
The winners of the third edition of the "Français of the Year"" awards were announced on the 17th of December at an exclusive award ceremony at the Maison du Languedoc Roussillon in Marylebone.
This year, more than 4,000 people voted online to elect the leading lights of the UK's French community from the worlds of gastronomy, business, sports and the Arts.
Footballer Nicolas Anelka (Chelsea FC), Fashion Designer Roland Mouret, Chef Raymond Blanc and Geoffroy de la Bourdonnaye (Liberty) have been given an award by Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, the French Ambassador. ■

Raymond Blanc, Geoffroy de la Bourdonnaye, Nicolas Anelka and Roland Mouret

Baroness Quin

Baroness Quin awarded the 'Legion D'Honneur'

The Chair of the Franco British Council, Baroness Quin, has been awarded the 'Legion D'Honneur' by the French Ambassador, Maurice Gourdault-Montagne.
As a member of the European Parliament Baroness Quin was a member of Jacques Delors' "Amigo" group of French-speaking MEPs and in all the departments of British government in which she worked as a minister (Home Office; FCO and Maff) she had responsibility for European issues, including relations with France. From 2001-2005 Baroness Quin was the Chair of the All-Party Group for Relations with France in Parliament. ■



Pierre Paulin

Pierre Paulin is awarded a posthumous RDI award

The Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce has announced that Pierre Paulin will be given an honorary posthumous Royal Designer for Industry (RDI) award, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to design. The RDI award today remains the highest accolade for designer in the UK.
Born in 1927, Paulin evolved as one of the most distinctive furniture designers of the 1960s, whose highly imaginative Ribbon and Tongue chairs to decorate President Georges Pompidou's private quarter at the Palais de l'Elysee, and the public seating for the Louvre. The collaboration between Ligne Roset and Pierre Paulin began in 2008, when for the first time the Pumpkin design was brought to the retail market by Ligne Roset. ■

Hello, Goodbye...

The Chamber would like to say farewell to those of its members who are leaving their companies and thank them for their support. We would also like to welcome new members and look forward to working with them.

Bureau Veritas

Paul Barry

Paul Barry appointed Chief Executive Officer for Bureau Veritas

Bureau Veritas has announced the appointment of Paul Barry as Chief Executive Officer for Bureau Veritas UK & Ireland. Paul Barry joined Bureau Veritas in June 2009 as Vice President and member of the UK Executive Committee.
Paul Barry comments on his new appointment: "As a global business, Bureau Veritas has reported continuous double digit growth over the past decade. As Chief Executive, I look forward to shaping how we will continue to contribute to the Group's ongoing success." ■

Legal

The UK gets tougher than France on combating bribery

French commercial organisations doing business with the UK will be severely affected by the UK government's anti-bribery bill, currently being heard before the upper chamber of parliament, the House of Lords. The Bill is expected to come into force before the general election in 2010.

Even though the UK Anti-Bribery Bill was inspired by the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials which was also ratified by France, the UK legislation will go a step further in combating corruption than its French equivalent.

One of the main striking features of the UK Bill is to impose a strict liability on commercial organisations for failing to prevent bribery. By providing a defence to this offence, where it can be shown that commercial organisations have put adequate anti-bribery procedures in place, the Bill imposes *ipso facto* a requirement on these organisations to implement anti-corruption procedures.

Such requirements do not currently exist under French law and if French commercial organisations which currently carry out business in the UK want to rely on this defence, they will have to act now to ensure that adequate anti-corruption measures are put in place before the UK bill comes into force. These procedures will have to comply with both UK and French legislation. By way of example, "whistle blowing procedures" (*alerte éthique*) which had been put in place by Dassault Systèmes SA were recently held to be partly illegal by the French Supreme Court, on the grounds that they had not been approved by the CNIL[1] prior to being implemented within the Company.

Although anti-corruption procedures have already been implemented on a voluntary basis by large French companies which conduct business through US companies or subsidiaries in the US in order to comply with US legislation[2], these procedures will nevertheless have to be reviewed by external service providers to ensure that they also comply with the new requirements imposed by the UK bill. It goes without saying that French companies which have yet to implement any anti-corruption procedures will have to work on these compliance issues as a matter of urgency. Compliance in France, Britain (and the United States), whilst broadly similar, also have several distinct differences which international companies will have to take on board.

Both the UK Bill and the French anti-corruption legislation have created offences of "bribing another person", "being bribed" and the related "bribery of foreign public official". Therefore criminal courts in the UK and in France could have concurrent jurisdictions in the circumstances where one element of the offence at issue has been committed in both jurisdictions.

As there are no international obligations imposing on criminal courts to stay criminal proceedings in favour of another court, a French national resident in England could be sentenced by both courts for similar offences. Further, because there are no limitation periods in common law concerning bribery offences in the UK, an offender could still be prosecuted and sentenced in the UK, when criminal proceedings would be time barred in France after three years.

France was criticised by Transparency International[3] for this short limitation period of three years and for its Parliamentary proposal to dispense with investigative judges. ■

Mathieu Doublet, Senior Associate at McGuireWoods and Emmanuel Daoud, Partner at Vigo Associés (Paris)

1 - The CNIL (Commission nationale de l'informatique et des libertés) is the equivalent of the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office).
2 - The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act 1977 and the Sarbanes Oxley Act 2002.
3 - Progress Report 2009 on the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention.

| Property

Use it or lose it! Your rights to appeal against your business rates

THE BALL IS IN YOUR COURT WHEN IT COMES TO MAKING SAVINGS, SAYS SARAH DAVEY.

I am often reminded how many occupiers treat business rates as an unavoidable cost against the balance sheet. As draft rating valuation figures for the 2010 rating list have been hitting desks over recent weeks the issue of the increasing cost of business rates is certainly very topical, but not quite as cut and dried as many think.

Whilst all businesses in the UK are obliged to pay rates much can be done to lessen liability and influence the bottom line.

Business rates are effectively the commercial equivalent of Council Tax, paid by the occupiers of commercial business premises. Unlike Council Tax however, which is calculated according to a property's capital value, business rates are based on the rental value of the property, or 'rateable value.'

The liability is calculated using the rateable value of the property (determined by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA)) and a national multiplier, set by the Government. Business rates are reviewed every five years. As the VOA has completed the rating assessments for the next rating list which comes into effect on 1 April next year, those businesses who have not yet made an appeal on the last list (2005) only have until 31 March 2010 to challenge any anomalies.

There are legitimate ways to lessen and avoid rates and all occupiers have a right of appeal and successful applications can be backdated as far as 1 April 2005. There may be other opportunities to appeal. These arise from physical changes to the immediate vicinity which might reduce an occupier's quality of use and enjoyment, such as building works giving rise to nuisance from noise, dirt, dust or perhaps access difficulties. Short-term periods of relief may be available if property becomes temporarily vacant, even in part.

As with any matter of taxation, there are many ways to reduce liability. For best results, advice should be sought from qualified rating surveyors, regulated either by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), or the Institute of Rating Revenues and Valuation (IRRV). Such practitioners can advise on the merits of an appeal. They should not ask for any up-front fees. Many will typically work on a no win, no fee basis, only taking a fee when real savings have been made.

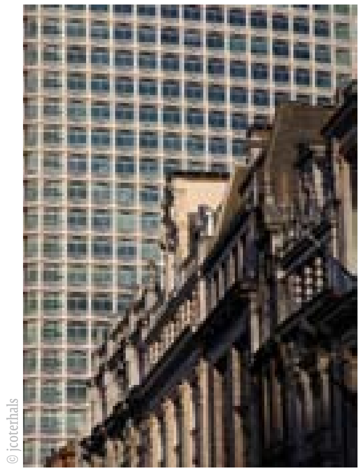
It has probably never been more important than now to ensure that a property is not overrated. Significant rate bill increases are ahead for many ratepayers, particularly in the South East, with the introduction of a new rating list and is designed to restore the balance between rateable and rental values.

So, if you have any doubt that your assessment is accurate you should be seeking advice. Firstly, to determine whether your current rateable value is as low as possible as time is running out to lodge any potential appeals. Secondly, you should prepare for the forthcoming 2010 valuations using the draft figures just published. By using this data, rating experts can give guidance as to best options to lessen future liability.

But the first move rests with you. Remember, use your right of appeal or be prepared to lose it, and all possible savings that might go with it. ■

Sarah Davey is Head of Ruddle Merz, London Business Rates Specialists.

London's West End regains title of world's most expensive office market



London's West End has again been named the world's most expensive office market, according to the latest research from CB Richard Ellis (CBRE).

The semi-annual survey of global office rents shows the West End again leading Tokyo's Inner Central District which slipped to second place, followed by that city's Outer Central District market in third. Hong Kong's Central Business District (CBD) and Moscow are fourth and fifth respectively in the report, which tracks office occupancy costs in nearly 180 cities around the globe.

Many of the world's bell-weather financial centers have seen unprecedented declines and are at the top of the list of fastest changing markets, including Hong Kong Central CBD (-40.7%) and New York, Midtown (-29.7%), along with emerging markets such as Ho Chi Minh City (-45.4%) and Abu Dhabi (-38.6%). Kiev, Ukraine, led the world with the largest year-over-year decrease in office occupancy costs, falling 64.6% from year-ago levels.

"While there are signs that commercial real estate values are stabilising in some markets in Asia and parts of London, underlying property fundamentals are still weak," said Dr. Raymond Torto, CBRE's Global Chief Economist.

Stewart Smith, Executive Director in CBRE's Central London team, said: "At the peak of the market in 2008, West End rents were around £120 per sq ft and they are now down to around £80, however deals are being done at higher levels for premium addresses. At the end of the Summer we saw a sharp rise in activity in the West End, with take-up reaching 846,000 sq ft in the last quarter - the strongest this year. Demand remains concentrated, with banking, finance and business services accounting for two-thirds of activity."

"The projected three-year average completion rate will drop well below 2 million sq ft per annum in 2012-13 which, on past form, would see office rents rising again by the time London hosts the Olympics." ■

| schools

Sciences Po's reformer has a radical message for French higher education

French schools consistently underperform their European and global rivals in league tables, while at the same time producing excellent cadres of students. **Richard Descoings** tells *INFO* how he is driving through reforms that will put the French schools where they belong.

Richard Descoings, the Director of France's leading economics school, the Paris Institute of Political Studies or Sciences Po, has set himself the mission of lifting the standards and raising the international ranking of French universities. He is backing radical proposals to reorder the French university system and boost the profile of French schools internationally.

French universities are in danger of becoming "merely local universities", he says. They risk stagnating and "missing out on the best faculty and the best students". He is using Sciences Po's "greatest friend and rival", the London School of Economics, as a model for change and hopes Sciences Po will soon be neck-and-neck with the LSE in *The Times* Higher Education Supplement*'s* annual league table of business schools.

Sciences Po already has numerous links with the LSE, including student and faculty exchange programmes and degrees run jointly between the two institutions, allowing students to divide their time between Paris and London.

The British and French schools fund themselves in quite different ways. As Sir Howard Davies, Head of LSE and the former head of the British Financial Services Authority, told *INFO* magazine last year: "Sciences Po is the thing that is most like us. The difference is that they're much closer to the government than we are - their finances look very different from ours as the proportion of the Sciences Po budget that comes from the state is probably between 60 to 70 per cent. Just 15.6 per cent of LSE's budget comes from the UK's government."

Mr Descoings argues Sciences Po's funding set-up brings advantages. While the recession is causing some companies to cut back on funding of business schools, the support Sciences Po receives from the French government is secure. In fact, both public and private funding of the school looks set to increase over the next three years.

Richard Descoings

Mr Descoings is thankful for the financial support the current French administration has given Sciences Po but laments what he regards as historical over-involvement by the state in the finances of French universities. Sciences Po itself is excluded from this intervention, due to a special status conferred on it since its creation in 1871 as a private foundation. "Historically, there has been too much involvement by the state in French universities," he says.

A break with the past was, however, taken on August 1, 2007, when the French Parliament adopted a law that has enabled French universities to gain greater freedom to make budgetary decisions free from state interference. Mr Descoings describes this law as "a major advancement" and says it will help French universities compete with Ivy League and Oxbridge-level business schools. "Before the law was passed, public funding for education was strictly dedicated by the state for use for certain activities. For instance, the Ministry of Education decided that a certain amount of money should be awarded to one research team or another. Autonomy means the president and board of directors [of a university] can decide how to use public funds - not the state."

The law has not been without its opponents however. "Some of our academics oppose the idea of any kind of autonomy for universities," says Mr Descoings. "They want the state to give to every university the same kind of grants in order to make sure that, in every part of the Republic, every student is given the same kind of education. But a large majority of our universities accept the idea of autonomy and consider it an opportunity to do better."

Until the law was passed, says Mr Descoings, the French state was in charge of building management and renovation of campus buildings; now individual universities can take responsibility. "Another example is the process used to recruit new faculty members: because of the new law, our universities are more free to recruit who they want. Before, the state was extremely present in the process of recruiting faculty members."

Compilers of international higher education league tables place "immense importance" on research, and Mr Descoings therefore believes that - with their new found freedoms in mind - it is vital French universities, including Sciences Po, strengthen their research teams. "At Sciences Po, we have a strategic plan to recruit faculty members of international standing and our model is the LSE. Our target is to be much better than we are today."

But how are the stars of international academia to be enticed to France? Mr Descoigns has some suggestions. "In many cities - in Lyon, Bordeaux, Grenoble, Nancy, Strasbourg - universities have joined together to create a unified university for each city. Even in Paris, where the situation is very difficult, there's a group of universities that have decided to work together in order to refresh their strategies."

He advocated greater agglomeration and more pooling of budgets as well as greater links with industry. "If we want to recruit faculty members on the international job market, we have to pay a lot. In France, our faculty members are not very well paid. If we want to recruit on the international job market, sometimes we may have to join our budgets together in order to get the capacity to pay salaries on an international level."

But there are other obstacles for French universities chasing glory in the international league tables: what Mr Descoings calls France's "divided system". "In France we have a strange system in which research is separated from education. There are lots of research teams being managed outside of the universities. Research is not done within universities but within separate institutions.

"It is as if, in an institution like Cambridge University, research would not be a part of the life of the university. To my mind, it's quite insane."

A "three tier system" exists in France, says Descoings, consisting of research institutions, middle-level educational establishments and the highest regarded institutions, the *grandes ecoles*, through which members of the country's elite pass. "We need to regroup, to reshape the organisation of our system in order to have, within the same institution, research, education, the best faculties and the best students."

League table criteria understate the achievements of Sciences Po and other French schools. But Mr Descoigns says he is now seeking to restructure its academic body to lift its performance. "The rankings attach immense importance to research. As Sciences Po is dedicated to the humanities and social sciences, the only university discipline of ours taken into consideration in the league tables is Business and Economics. We are not ranked on our history department. We are not ranked on our political science department."

He continues, "We are in the process of recruiting many professors of economics in the years to come; the LSE is extremely well ranked because of the excellency of its Department of Economics and we are modelling ourselves on them. The only solution is to recruit new professors, new researchers with a highly competitive profile, and they are extraordinarily expensive."

However, with a bright future promised by rising public and private funding to Sciences Po, Mr Descoings may yet match his university's "greatest friend and rival". ■ ***N.K.***

| Regions

Companies snap up Welsh contracts

International Business Wales, part of the Welsh Assembly Government, helps businesses from all over the world access the major opportunities available in Wales. In the past five years there have been over 35 projects from French companies, creating over 2,000 new jobs and safeguarding a further 600. More and more companies are arriving to take advantage of public sector contracts in Wales: Cap Gemini, Sodexo and Vinci have won major contracts with local regional and national government while Sodexo, GDF Suez and Vinci have all undertaken Public Private Partnership contracts in Wales. French companies have also been particularly active in acquisitions. In the last couple of years, companies such as Veolia, Arcelor, Risc, Cokin, Eurofins and Vinci have acquired companies in Wales. Fareva has taken over the L'Oreal facility safeguarding 67 jobs and now creating 200 new jobs, and Thales, one of the top technology-based companies in the world, has proved again its commitment to Wales, choosing it as the location for a key project at the end of 2009. It is the skill base and infrastructure and the quality of life Wales can offer internationally mobile managers and engineers that is the key to winning such projects. ■

Governor Schwarzenegger tells Wales: Keep up the good work!

Climate change work by the Welsh Assembly Government was complimented by the Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger when he met Wales' Environment Minister Jane Davidson in Copenhagen last month.

Ms Davidson said: "Fresh from receiving an award to recognise California's leadership on climate, I was very pleased that Governor Schwarzenegger complimented Wales on the work we are undertaking on this agenda saying we are all in this together.

"It is clear from the commitments that regional governments across the world have already made that we are setting the pace on this agenda."

Governor Schwarzenegger also met Assembly Government officials. He told them: "Keep up the good work in your efforts to fight climate change."

Arnold Schwarzenegger with Jane Davidson

Ms Davidson is attending the event in her role as Chair of the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development and as the Assembly Government Minister responsible for Climate Change in Wales which has taken a leading role in demonstrating what sub national government can do.

There, she addressed political leaders from around the world about the central role that regions and small nations such as Wales had in averting runaway climate change. Regional leaders were joined by key environmental officials from President Obama's administration. ■

SUCCESS STORY

Cinémoi: Film promoters with star quality

Cinémoi is bringing French films to the wider public. Its CEO and founder, Oliver Bengough, tells *INFO* how he spotted a gap in the market. Since its launch, Cinémoi has gone from strengh to strengh.

French films are loved and respected around the world. Their stars are easily as great and popular as those from Hollywood. But whereas American films are widely viewed on television and have numerous TV channels dedicated to showing them, the French film is barely visible. This gap was spotted by Oliver Bengough, a London businessman, and he has set about correcting it.

The result has been the launch of the Cinémoi television channel on Sky to great acclaim. Cinémoi is dedicated to showing exclusively French films and news about the French film market. The success of the launch of the channel has been recognised by the French Chamber of Commerce, which awarded Cinémoi its Annual Intercultural Trophy at its Gala dinner (see picture).

The channel's early authority was assured by the appointment of one of the world's connoisseurs of French cinema as its director and artistic supremo. Julien Planté, who's 31, has been instrumental in selecting films for display on Cinémoi, and for making contacts with the industry's key powerhouses in Paris, Cannes, Geneva and California.

Julien was a well-respected programmer for the French Institute and had attained a leading position in the British foreign film community. He explains how he made progress at the Institute. 'My job there was to choose all the themes, organise all the events and festivals. I transformed this cinema and made it one of the main art house cinemas in London, with a programme of not just French films but European cinema. I welcomed famous directors and actors including Jude Law and the director Abbas Kiarostami (the Iranian director of a Taste of Cherry and other films). At some point in mid July 2008 I met Olly (Oliver Bengough's universal nickname) and one month later I was part of his team.'

Julien Planté and Oliver Bengough at the French Chamber's Gala Dinner

Olly, who's 34, remembers when Julien brought him the idea. 'Julien had this amazing vision of how to bring back French film. He came to me and said, "Olly, I want to buy these 250 films. And these are the reasons why I want to buy them. I want to do this type of films, involving such and such an actor.'

The idea landed on fertile ground as Olly was also a lover of French film. Just as importantly, Olly had a commercial vision. He had built up a very successful group of bars and music venues in London. The latest addition to his company, called Mint Group, was Koko, a Camden-based venue which has attracted some leading music stars including Madonna and Coldplay. Upmarket customers have been attracted to the venue by some sophisticated branding and marketing. These skills would be lavished on Cinémoi when it was launched in 2009.

In fact branding and media were at the core of Olly's decision to approach Sky with the proposal to launch a French film channel. He says, 'Culturally the French are all across the world, as with Anglo-Saxon culture, so you have a huge French audience. But I looked online and discovered there was no brand representing French film and no TV channel. I thought, there's got to be a home for French film globally. The best way to do that was through a TV channel. We would launch it in the UK and play to our strengths because our company is based in the UK.'

The channel was branded with the help of Stefan Boublil, the French owner of The Apartment, a New York marketing agency. Olly recalls, "We talked to Stefan about the channel. We emphasised one key word - accessibility. We said we didn't want an elitist channel but something accessible that everyone could take part in. We needed to find a name and he came up with three names – Lux, Luminere and Cinémoi. We said we loved Cinémoi and he said 'that's great because that's the one we love too'." Boublil also proposed using different colours for different genres, so yellow would be used for family films and purple for thrillers.

With the brand identified and the team on board, Oliver and Julien approached Sky TV. The company had closed its timetable to new proposals, but was so impressed by the Cinémoi proposition that it admitted it to its list. Olly describes the early days, 'We launched in February 2009 for a period of three months free to air. We had two or three films every night. We became a subscription channel on May 10 2009, and we started showing 12 hours of programming every day, from 3pm-3am. Since that day we have showed nearly 140 films. That makes roughly 20/25 films a month. All are with English subtitles. I like to think we made a bit of British history - we showed we could make major programming with a small team.'

The launch was not all smooth-sailing. Cinémoi's insistence came up against a Sky rule that programmes carrying subtitles could only be included in the International section of its programme rolecall. Olly and Julien refused on the grounds of artistic integrity to have their films dubbed. Julien says, 'we took quite a leap of faith and we were protecting the integrity of what we were doing.' Sky relented, after Cinémoi consulted lawyers, and three months later allowed Cinémoi to move from the International programmes section to the Movies.

As a result the number of subscriptions quickly increased from around a thousand to 3,500. Olly says some 6,000 subscriptions had been sold by the end of 2009 and he expects some 10,000 to have been sold by the end of 2010.

The significance of the move to the Movie section cannot be over-estimated, says Olly. 'Our single, biggest hurdle was to be recognized as a Movie channel, not as a foreign entertainment channel', he says. 'This has great significance outside the UK. We were the first ever foreign entertainment channel to be recognized in the Premium Movie section. Foreign films have never been presented to a mainstream audience. So we achieved our goal of this accessible mainstream entertainment channel. This is massive.'

Planté has made great efforts to differentiate Cinémoi films from those presented on other Sky channels. Olly says, 'The audience is realising, this isn't like Sky Movies, where you slap on a film like in a multiplex. On Cinémoi you are taken on a journey, there's a thinking behind it. It's not as simple as just turning on a channel and watching films. You're watching films like general entertainment like everyone else, but also, at the same time you're receiving an education.'

Olly Bengough has some ambitious plans for his groundbreaking channel. These include an expansion into US cable and a widening of the Cinémoi franchise to include Virgin. The company expects the inclusion of Virgin to increase subscriptions to 25,000. Cinémoi also plans to expand its live programme-making capacity. Its coverage of the Cannes film Festival played well with Cinémoi viewers and Planté says the range of films festivals it attends and covers on the channel will be widened. 'We created seven half-hour programmes every day from the Cannes festival. We pulled the film out of the competitions and showed clips from them so people in the UK could, for the first time, sit at home and see the films in the competition. We interviewed the directors, actors and showed the films. We had our position on the red carpet as a media company.'

He continues, 'Because we were a French film company in the UK, we could get access. We had a bit of a unique position. We also created seven web TV shows of the main show. So we had people in America watching Cannes on our website. That meant you could follow Cannes every day without having to be at Cannes, without having Virgin. We can represent Cannes as no one has ever done before. We want to expand it to Berlin, Venice and Sundance.'

The two men are an impressive partnership with an idea that has both cultural and commercial prospects. As you might say, 'watch this channel! ■ ***N.K***

FOCUS
climate change

Introduction

Copenhagen: Time to hold politicians to account

In every respect Climate Change is awesome in the true meaning of that word. That is to say frightening to a great degree. It is terrifying because of the consequences it has for the way of life of some countries in our generation and many more countries in later generations. It is also frightening because its consequences and remedies still remain unknown, to a large degree.

The remedies to mitigate the impact of climate change or indeed prevent its occurrence altogether are no less frightening that its effects on our environment. The global spend on clean technology investment of some $25 billion per quarter (according to New Energy Finance) is already vast. But it is a fraction of what is needed. Estimates suggest that countries need to spend several percent of their annual gross domestic product on environmental technology and products to reach the conservative 2 degree reduction in temperature increase by 2050.

And what of the response? Well the outcome of Copenhagen was deeply disappointing. While we must admit that the hyperbole in advance of the Summit placed excessive pressure on global leaders, what was ultimately agreed confirmed the view of the sceptics. Discussions mirrored negotiations based on narrow power politics. Wrangles between the developing world (in particular China) and the West on environmental expenditure consumed the negotiators. They could have been haggling over trade subsidies or a claim on a disputed territory.

And yet, Copenhagen did have some positive results, as we see outlined in the article in our Focus by Professor Paul Ekins. So, let us perhaps forget our disappointment over the technical outcome of Copenhagen. Sure, the nitpicking diplomats and negotiators stalled and vacillated. But Copenhagen inspired some idealists, it brought the topic to the fore for the wider public. They are now better informed to hold their politicians round the world to account.

The Focus ahead of you gives an indication of the scale of the topic. We begin with an analysis of the larger policy and economic consequences as perceived by Governments and academics. We proceed to indicate the challenges and threats to the business community posed by Climate Change. We conclude by looking at the implications of environmental disorder for the individual. Here too, we look at individual responsibilities and solutions.

This is a fitting place to conclude, as climate change poses the moral challenge of our age. ■ ***N.K.***

Focus contents

Part one: Big picture post Copenhagen

Copenhagen summit: little progress, but much to play for in 2010

WHAT WERE THE MAIN ASPIRATIONS OF NEGOTIATORS AT COPENHAGEN AND WHAT DID THEY COME UP WITH? **PROFESSOR PAUL EKINS** EXPLAINS.

The risk of climate change

While it is clear that societies need both to mitigate and to adapt to climate change, climate science is clear that the greatest risk is from runaway climate change. It also suggests that the costs and the risks of climate change are greatly increased if global average temperatures rise by much more than 2oC above pre-industrial levels. The current carbon trajectory seems set to deliver a 6oC increase. There is therefore an urgent need to mitigate climate change, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), as far as possible, and then adapt to what remains. That was probably the most important issue before the Copenhagen meeting.

© Mark Garten

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon speaks to a session of the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen

The framework of climate policy

Climate change is a global issue, and therefore requires a policy response at a number of different levels, including the global level. The global framework is provided by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was negotiated in 1992 as one of the outputs of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The Kyoto Protocol, a development from UNFCCC, was agreed in 1997, and runs until 2010.

Objective of the Copenhagen negotiations

The Copenhagen negotiations were intended to provide a replacement agreement to follow on from the Kyoto Protocol. The Copenhagen meeting formally consisted of parallel meetings of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP [Conference of the Parties]15) and of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP5), because not all UNFCCC signatories (e.g. the US) had signed the Kyoto Protocol. It was hoped that one of the outcomes of Copenhagen would be a unified agreement on future emissions reductions that would bring these strands together again, but in the event this did not happen. Beyond this, the purpose of the negotiations was to address all the core issues involved in a comprehensive international response to climate change: whose long-term goal is the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and how they should be monitored, measured and reported; assistance with adaptation to such climate change as takes place, and with technology development and transfer; and agreements on forestry and finance for all of the above.

Outcomes of the Copenhagen negotiations

It had been clear for some time beforehand that the Copenhagen negotiations would not come up with the detailed, legally binding follow-on agreement that is required, that was intended when the negotiations began two years ago, and that some hoped for. In fact, this was always a very optimistic hope, given that only 12 months before Copenhagen the United States had a President who denied the existence of man-made climate change, and President Obama had many other things to deal with in the first eleven months of his presidency so far.

The Pew Centre on Climate Change, based in Washington DC, has come up with the following Summary of what was actually agreed at Copenhagen: "an aspirational goal of limiting global temperature increase to 2 degrees Celsius"; a process for countries to enter their specific mitigation pledges by January 31, 2010; broad terms for the reporting and verification of countries' actions; a collective commitment by developed countries for $30 billion in "new and additional" resources in 2010-2012 to help developing countries reduce emissions, preserve forests, and adapt to climate change; and a goal of mobilizing $100 billion a year in public and private finance by 2020 to address developing country needs. The accord also calls for the establishment of a Copenhagen Green Climate Fund, a High Level Panel to examine ways of meeting the 2020 finance goal, a new Technology Mechanism, and a "mechanism to channel incentives for reduced deforestation." (see www.pewclimate.org/international/copenhagen-climate-summit-summary).

Evaluation of the Copenhagen outcomes

The outcomes from Copenhagen summarised above were substantially less than most people had hoped for. The best that can be said for it is: that it was not the complete failure that had seemed possible, or even likely, before the intervention of President Obama in the final days; that it brought developing countries into the process of making emission reduction commitments and having them monitored; and that there were commitments on financing.

Before the negotiations it seemed to me that, for the Copenhagen meeting to set the stage for the very large reductions in global GHG emissions that climate science has posited as necessary, six criteria would need to be met:

1. The industrial countries that signed the Kyoto Protocol (i.e. not the US, and probably not Australia, which signed the Kyoto Protocol very late) should put forward stiff, binding targets (e.g. 20-40%

1979

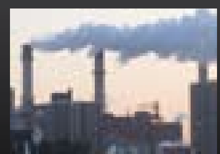
The first World Climate Conference is held in Geneva attended by a range of scientists and leads to the establishment of the World Climate Program

1988

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is set up by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The IPCC will provide reports based on scientific evidence which reflect existing viewpoints within the scientific community.

1990

The IPCC delivers its first assessment on the state of climate change, predicting an increase of 0.3 °C each decade in the 21st century - greater than any rise seen over the previous 10,000 years.



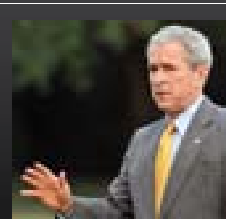
1992

The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro is attended by 172 countries. It is the first unified effort to get to grips with global warming. -Agenda 21

1997

The Kyoto Protocol: Industrialized countries agree to cut their emissions of six key greenhouse gases by an average of 5.2 percent. Under the terms of the agreement each country - except developing countries - commits to a reduction by 2008 - 2012 compared to 1990 levels. Notably, the U.S. Congress vote 95 to 0 against any treaty which doesn't commit developing countries to "meaningful" cuts in emissions

2001



Newly elected U.S. President George W. Bush renounces the Kyoto Protocol stating that it will damage the U.S. economy

2002

Johannesburg Summit: The World Summit on Sustainable development. WSSD gathered a number of leaders from business and non-governmental organizations, 10 years after the first Earth Summit below 1990 levels by 2020) for GHG reduction for the years ahead. The prospects were good on this before Copenhagen, but then the targets failed to materialise. The European Union (EU) did not advance beyond the unilateral 20% cut by 2020 it had already promised, to the 30% reduction it had offered in the event of an agreement, which leaves Japan, already very energy efficient, the climate leader with its 25% reduction commitment. It remains to be seen if more ambitious commitments are table by the January 31st deadline mentioned above.

2. The US should be fully engaged and taking a leadership position, with its climate legislation either through, or well on its way through Congress. Obama's intervention was crucial in bringing the big developing countries into an agreement and, indeed, in getting an agreement at all. However, his climate legislation did not get through the Senate beforehand, and may find progress more difficult given the modest agreement at Copenhagen. The US position remains absolutely critical to meaningful further progress.
3. Other major countries (especially Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa [the BRICS]) should make appropriate commitments (for example, energy intensity targets, to be converted into absolute targets in due course). Unexpectedly, and with the exception of China (see below), this was probably the most important outcome. While the BRICS countries did not make commitments at Copenhagen, they bound themselves into a process that undoubtedly expects them to do so, and agreed to monitoring and verification mechanisms. It remains to be seen what commitments they actually make by the end of January.
4. Given its importance, China should make an extra gesture of commitment to emissions reduction (e.g. by announcing a carbon tax). This was the greatest disappointment of the meeting. Many commentators identified China's role at Copenhagen as particularly obstructive, and without President Obama's personal intervention, it is likely that China's position would have prevented any agreement at all.
5. A substantial financing package for developing countries should be agreed in relation to mitigation/adaptation. Again, one of the positive outcomes from Copenhagen, although the agreed funding is at the lower end of what is likely to be required and there are as yet no details as to how it will be provided.
6. Commitment by the US and China to a joint leadership role to take the process forward following Copenhagen. The omens on this were not good following Copenhagen, given China's position, but hopefully there will be progress through, for example, further meetings of the G20 group of countries, which are responsible for about 80% of global emissions. They need to come up with an agreement that can be put to the UNFCCC in 2010.

The world is still therefore very far from the post-Kyoto deal that it needed from Copenhagen. But it is probably a bit closer to such a deal now than it was before Copenhagen. There is still everything to play for in 2010. ■

Paul Ekins, *Professor of Energy and Environment Policy*
UCL Energy Institute, University College London

2005

16th February: The Kyoto Protocol becomes a legally binding treaty. America and Australia continue their refusal to sign up claiming reducing emissions would damage their economies

2007

IPCC and former U.S. Vice President Al Gore win Nobel Prize for their climate work

2009

COP15 COPENHAGEN

Copenhagen Summit

Can we avoid dangerous climate change?

The range of options for reducing CO2 emissions is wide. Wise decisions from Governments are critical, says Professor Robert Kandel.

Reducing world greenhouse gas emissions.

Since 1900, growing human industrial and agricultural activities have multiplied emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2) and other greenhouse gases by a factor of 15. Total CO_2 in the global atmosphere has increased by more than 30%, reinforcing the greenhouse effect, trapping more infrared (heat) radiation in the lower atmosphere and producing global warming. To avoid dangerously rapid climate change, we must reverse this trend.

But how can we reduce world greenhouse gas emissions, with a growing world population aspiring to live better? Most human-related CO_2 emissions come from burning of coal, petroleum and natural gas. Up to now, producing more wealth has generally required producing more energy and increasing CO_2 emissions. Over past decades, however, scientific and technological advances have strongly improved energy efficiency. Emerging economies can bypass the more wasteful technologies of the 1950s and 1960s. And thanks to improved efficiency in most countries CO_2 emissions have increased much less than overall wealth production.

To reduce world CO_2 emissions, we must move much faster in this direction. Up to now, consumer choice has been driven mostly by reduced costs of more energy-efficient products. Awareness of carbon footprints has only begun to dawn. Present-day emissions abatement possibilities are still not fully exploited, in part because of conflicts between up-front investment and lower running costs in the transport and housing sectors, as for improving comfort with better building insulation. To accelerate the trend to improved efficiency, we need a combination of financing of renovation, emissions regulation, and carbon taxation.

This will not be enough. Scientists and industry can

and must work in the direction of producing energy without CO_2 emission. Nuclear-generated electric power is part of this. More important perhaps, if "carbon capture and storage" (CCS) technology can be implemented on a large scale in the next few decades, it will be possible to continue to burn coal, today a major source of electric power in the U.S., China and India, without releasing CO_2 into the atmosphere. This requires strongly intensified research and development.

What about renewable solar and wind energy? These intermittent and diffusely distributed energies can contribute significantly to electric power production if efficiency is improved and new transmission networks constructed. With better batteries, "zero-carbon" electricity can power road transport. With enough up-front support, scientists and industry can do the work. This should be a priority investment in countries that otherwise must import fossil fuels.

As for "bio-fuels", development of such "renewable" energies still requires careful analysis regarding competition for the finite resources of land and water and what land use strategies are sustainable in terms of soil properties, greenhouse gas emissions, and preservation of biodiversity. And the growing human population must eat. Expansion of agriculture has led to increasing emissions of greenhouse gases methane and nitrous oxide. Demand for locally out-of-season products has led to increased transport-related CO_2 emissions. The human appetite for meat has led to growing numbers of cattle, pigs, and other animals in the world, this dramatically increasing methane emissions. There remain the problems of consumer choice (meat-eaters versus vegetarians?) and indeed whether present world population is sustainable.

What are the key climate change issues?

Growing reinforcement of the greenhouse effect by human activities is now a much stronger climate change "forcing factor" than the weak (0.1%) fluctuations of solar output and the intermittent perturbations by volcanic eruptions. And global warming necessarily affects regional climates, in particular operation of the water cycle, changing both average freshwater availability and its fluctuations. Climate models indicate that much of the semi-arid subtropical zone will become even drier. However, models still need improvement to tell us more about regional temperature and rainfall changes and about changes in the risks of flooding, violent storms, and droughts. Weather prediction tells us about weather up to 10 days in advance, climate models can give us likely weather statistics for, say, the period 2050-2080, but they cannot tell us how weather will change between now and 2012. A cold wave in Europe does not spell the end of global warming.

> "A cold wave in Europe does not spell the end of global warming."

Response of the water cycle to warming is a key issue. We know that total atmospheric humidity increases as the atmosphere warms, and this amplifies CO_2-driven climate change because water vapour is the strongest greenhouse gas. But how cloud cover changes remains uncertain. Clouds act both to cool the surface by blocking some of the incoming solar radiation, and to warm it by sending back down some of the outgoing infrared radiation from the surface. Depending on which effect changes more, the net effect can be to limit climate change – or to amplify it.

Other key uncertainties include the rate of sea-level rise. Does recent increased melting of Greenland ice signal an accelerating trend toward sea-level rise of a meter or more by the year 2100? That would be catastrophic for very large populations inhabiting the delta of the Nile and the coastal plains of South Asia, and it would necessitate major expenditures to protect low-altitude regions of Europe.

Still other uncertainties relate to the risk of our pushing the climate beyond some unknown threshold at which it would change irreversibly and abruptly, a true climate catastrophe.

Lessons from Copenhagen

If there was any positive outcome, it was in the re-affirmation of the pressing need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The leaders of the two biggest CO_2 emitters, China and the U.S., are no longer in denial of the threat of global warming (hell *and* high water) to their countries. Some EU countries have announced ambitious emissions reduction goals. However, many of these are not meeting even the modest *commitments* made in the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. Present commitments of China and India to reduce "carbon intensity", i.e. improve carbon (and energy) efficiency, are simply a matter of self-interest, of producing more wealth with less resources. All countries, in particular the technologically advanced U.S., must also go in this direction. But this is not enough.

Twenty countries account for over 70% of world emissions, and all of them, even Russia, have much to lose from rapid climate change. Of course many people in the poorest countries will suffer much more, and they will need help in adapting to inevitable climate change. Their development certainly requires aid and technology transfer to improve their poor carbon/energy efficiency. But mixing questions of aid and political influence with emissions reductions complicates the issue. To make real progress, it may well be necessary to remove the negotiations from the UN context.

Entrenched habits and fossil-fuel lobbies continue to show fierce resistance to policies in the direction of "carbon-free" growth. It has been suggested that political leaders might abandon quantitative emissions reduction targets in favour of objectives to limit global warming to 2°C, to be translated into action when all agree on the imminence of entry in the danger zone. What foolishness! If "decision-makers" cannot embark on a prudent course for their countries' economic activities, how can they expect to decide for the planet? To take such a path would be to follow in the footsteps of King Canute. ▪

Professor Robert Kandel

'Turning the tide on climate change', Professor Robert S. Kandel. Published with the support of CEFIC.
Read the book on www.cefic.org/files/publications

France and the United Kingdom will be key to re-boosting momentum

WHEN IT COMES TO GREENING INDUSTRY, IT IS "TOO LATE TO BE PESSIMISTIC", SAYS **BENOIT CHEVALIER**.

"The world is watching us". That's how the opening statement of the Presidency of the European Union at the Copenhagen conference began. Since then, there have been so many reports about the outcome of this conference that it seems a little late to write arguments along these lines.

However, for those who followed the preparatory process, the agreement that was finally reached at one of the biggest gatherings of heads of States and Governments in history includes positive steps: we will have commitments from every country, a financing instrument for the developing world has been created (the Copenhagen Green Climate Fund), and the role of forestry is now fully recognized, thanks notably to works that have been carried out for several years in the United Kingdom and to proposals included in the Franco-Brazilian initiative.

The so-called "Copenhagen agreement" may not be legally binding, but as only a small group of countries, including France and the United Kingdom, are currently reaching their targets set in the legally binding Kyoto Protocol, we should admit that a political commitment is sometimes more important than a full legal treaty that was anyway out of reach from the very beginning of the Copenhagen conference, but will hopefully be agreed upon later this year, following a series of experts and political meetings that were confirmed and, when necessary, extended, in Denmark last December.

Thus, a lot of work is still ahead of us. The Conference was never meant to be the end of a process but rather a milestone in a long term issue. Which by no means implies that we have time to deal with it: as French photographer and filmmaker Yann Arthus-Bertrand said at the end of his movie, Home, "it is too late to be a pessimist".

> "Even if 2010 started for both our countries with a lot of snow, some say it may be the hottest year since 1880."

As you can imagine, neither the French nor the British authorities will be reducing pace. Paris and London are very important trading places of the emerging carbon finance market. Both our countries signed the agreement on Friday the 18th of December, in which M. Nicolas Sarkozy and Mr Gordon Brown were key players. Both countries made commitments to a first financing pot for fighting against deforestation amounting to 3.5 bn$ to be delivered over three years (2010-2012) together with the United States, China, Australia, Japan and Norway.

A lot has been said about which country, or which part of the United Nations process, was responsible for the results of the December Conference being less ambitious than the expectations that had been raised over the past few months. The question really worth asking should be who is now able to take the lead in the next steps, to build on the Copenhagen results and progress towards a better deal? The best guess so far is that the key players could be among the seven countries listed above. First to take the initiative, the French President has already announced, on the 22nd of December, that he will invite to Paris next spring a "*Copenhague +*" summit of the 28 countries that signed the Copenhagen agreement in order to reboost momentum, with the aim to halve world emissions by 2050.

© Crown

Even if 2010 started for both our countries with a lot of snow, some say it may be the hottest year since records begun in 1880, especially if the warm oceanic phase of the "El Niño" southern climate oscillation reaches its 1998 height as scientists are afraid it could, and people from Cumbria know that floods are not just happening in Southern countries, so we will not be able to forget about climate issues. But we are also in a world where biodiversity, protection of water and soils, and reduction of many so-called negative externalities are at stake. There again, France and the United Kingdom have a long history of leadership at the European and global level upon which they can build.

Whatever commitments we make, let us not make them against industry, but with it. We know that businesses need authorities to provide a clear framework for investments. We have to be realistic about the time needed to implement our decisions, and governments and public sectors should be the first ones to take effective measures to reduce their own emissions, such as the refurbishment up to highest environmental standards of all public buildings in France by 2020, part of the "Grenelle de l'environnement" decisions which set our national strategy for the environment, or the carbon budgets adopted for each British ministerial department.

In order to reach ambitious targets, we have to partner with the real estate builders, the transport industry (from cars to aviation and shipping), the energy industry, and generally speaking all the companies that will have to do the job at the end of the day. We have to set realistic targets and to help deliver them, including through public support for research & development and innovation so as to make possible aims that might look unachievable today, and then commit to them. And yes, these aims include how the private sector could offer products and services that help people change the way they use energy, directly or not, before the oil and carbon prices oblige us to adapt in a much more painful way. ■

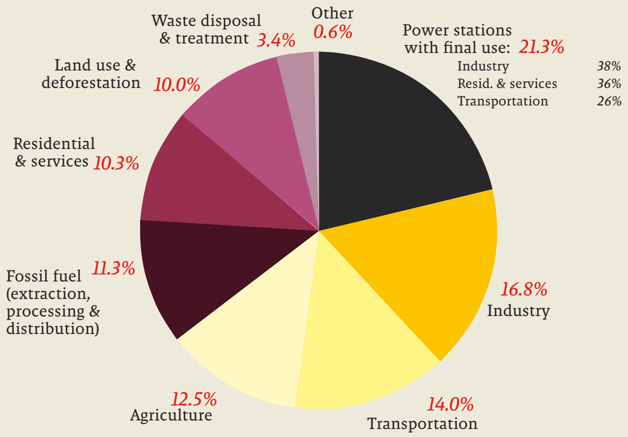
***Benoit Chevalier,** Economic Counsellor of the French Embassy in the United Kingdom*

Greenhouse gas emissions by sector

Power stations account for the greatest percentage of greenhouse gasses emitted by global industry. This explains the rapid expansion of nuclear-fuelled power stations in the UK, France and the United States.

But not far behind power stations comes the industrial and transportation sectors. Here too we observe increased activity in developing technologies to combat CO_2 heavy emissions.

Sectors like agriculture (where methane emissions from cows present major problems) and fossil fuel extraction and processing, are more intractable. In short, it is clear that virtually every sector of global industry is challenged by the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. ■



Source: Emission Database for Global Atmospheric Research.

Oil and water don't mix (or do they?)

HISTORY TEACHES THAT THE TUSSLE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES HAS HAD UNAMBIGUOUSLY POLITICAL RESULTS, WRITES **LAWRENCE JOFFE**.

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Some time in the 1970s Henry Kissinger reportedly asked Zhou Enlai "What do you think were the consequences of the French Revolution?" The veteran Chinese premier paused a while and then slowly replied: "It is too soon to tell".

Much the same could be said about last month's Copenhagen summit on climate change. Unfortunately we don't enjoy the luxury of waiting two hundred years to work out the impact. Global temperatures are rising to dangerous levels and soon we will reach the point of no return; worldwide famine, devastating tsunamis and economic collapse could be the result.

While talk of global warming might seem odd to Londoners shovelling snow over Christmas and into January, most agree that climate change is a reality. Even if the cause is debated, few doubt that something must be done, and quickly.

As to precisely what, well, "there's the rub"! No sooner had world leaders signed the long-awaited yet ultimately non-legally-binding resolution than the recriminations started. Twelve years ago at Kyoto the USA were painted as chief villain. This time China gained that title, by deliberately blocking negotiations, by refusing to countenance meaningful emissions reductions, and by cynically trying to pass the blame onto Western nations for supposedly doing down the Third World.

Wedded to oil?

Yet there is little doubt that a culture wedded to oil has harmed the world's climate. And now that developing countries seek to industrialise, the long-polluting West is wagging its finger. As one UN official observed at Copenhagen, who are we to tell many hundreds of millions of Indians that they cannot switch on the light bulb?

Corporate and political vested interests might explain why the world has not abandoned carbon fuels for renewable energy sources. Conversely the cost of using solar or wind power is still prohibitive; all the more so during these hard economic times.

Changing tastes

Moreover scientists are divided about the way forward, and the general public reflects this confusion. Certainly tastes change. Thirty years ago in Britain atomic power was damned as dangerous, even satanic, while coal was deemed the nation's lifeblood. Today, even ecologists tout nuclear stations as the path to clean energy, while nature-lovers were protesting an attempt to re-open a coal plant!

The great challenge of Copenhagen was how to reach a universal solution. On the one hand, globalisation means that all economies are interconnected. On the other, each nation experiences a unique set of challenges, needs and desires, resources and shortages.

The French combination

Take France, for instance, that seedbed of the revolution that so perplexed Secretary Zhou. Here enormous use of low-tech wood fires combines with the highest European usage of high-tech nuclear energy. France also hedges its bets by investing heavily in oil, especially through the partly government-owned Total.

Founded in 1924, Total now operates in 130 countries and boasts a revenue flow of nearly 180 billion Euros. In 2007 the company released a new low-emissions fuel called not Revolution but Evolution.

Meanwhile, Total is keenly bidding in the ongoing and curiously under-reported auction of Iraqi oil fields – an endeavour that proves the Middle East is still key. French ties to Iran, with possibly the world's second biggest oil reserves, profoundly effect energy and military security. And Elf has hugely increased imports of natural gas from Algeria and Libya.

Middle East, nexus of challenges

Perhaps no region better symbolises the complexity of global energy and climate concerns than the Middle East. More than two-thirds of the world's oil resides under its soil, say analysts. Per capita the region is the most oil-rich in the world. Yet petro-tycoons are also the world's greatest water paupers: the average Middle Easterner enjoys access to only 15% of the water available to the average African.

Actually the two issues are connected. If oil – mostly from the Middle East – truly causes global warming, then the same region suffers the worst effects in terms of aridity and desertification. More than half the Middle East is deemed to have reached "water stress crisis". Oil billions may pay for expensive desalination plants in Abu Dhabi, yet the same option is not available to poorer states like Egypt or Syria.

Often competition over oil has generated outright war – between Iran and Iraq, arguably, in 1980-88; certainly between Iraq and Kuwait, 1990; and a giant question mark hangs over America's true motivations in 2003. Disputes over ownership – nationalisation versus global companies – led to the CIA- and MI5-backed coup that toppled Iran's Prime Minister Mossadegh in 1954, and arguably transformed East-West relations. Even today big petro-companies evidently retain exclusive rights to refine, process and market oil, such that Iran, with huge reserves, still has consumer queues at petrol pump stations!

Cartels, boycotts and divergent interests

Moreover, price fluctuations and the threat of cartel boycotts by OPEC, as in 1974, have greatly disrupted the global economic marketplace. Recent Al Qaida attacks on oil distribution facilities further exacerbate the problem.

Worried by the Kyoto resolutions of 1997, oil-rich Gulf states went to Copenhagen determined to counter emissions curbs. Interestingly, other Arab states took the opposite approach, campaigning to combat global warming and safeguard access to water. The last 11 of 12 years in the Middle East have been the hottest since 1850.

Water wars?

In fact, future wars in the region may well be fought over scarce water. Fully 70% of global water usage goes on agriculture; only 10% on home use and 20% for industry. Yet to deprive simple farmers of water would create a catastrophic social meltdown. Meanwhile overgrazing, overpopulation, rapid urbanisation, poor damming and pipeline leakages simply make matters worse.

Besides water usage, high tides resulting from climate change may displace millions who live in coastal Middle Eastern towns. As to armed conflict, the Six Day War of 1967 probably resulted from Syria and Israel tussling over access to the River Jordan, and attempts by engineers on both sides to divert its flow.

Ultimately the most powerful state in the Middle East, in water terms, is Turkey. Here lie the headwaters of the Tigris and much of the Euphrates, the twin rivers that seeded the world's first civilisation, and now water many of its modern states. So is a water war possible?

Future dreams

If somehow Europe could exchange excess water for the Middle East's excess oil, that might be one way out. But still, that leaves the controversy over oil usage itself unresolved. Ultimately China will be a key determinant: last year China surpassed the USA market for cars. It is set to double consumption of petrol and diesel over the next decade. China uses hydro-electricity and nuclear power, yet is also carving out a stake in Middle East oil – not least those Iraqi auctions. So China's thirst for oil cannot be ignored. All of which returns us to Secretary Zhou and the true meaning of the French Revolution – too soon to tell! ■

Lawrence Joffe is a leading authority on Middle East politics

The new green movement

Eco-activist Lianna Hulbert reports from Copenhagen on direct action calls from green protestors. She finds the campaigners very media savvy.

Activists in action

Another long day of negotiations at the 15th Conference of Parties was coming to an end. All day, leaders from across the world had been trying to hammer out a deal to prevent catastrophic climate change. Tired looking delegates in their suits were beginning to drift away from the conference centre, towards the bars and hotels of Copenhagen. Journalists and lobbyists huddled in groups, discussing whether the talks were going anywhere; whether a new deal to replace the near-expired Kyoto Treaty would be possible.

Suddenly, a shout went up and six young people exploded over the barriers and ran towards the conference centre. 'Our world is not for sale', they were shouting. 'This is what democracy looks like!'. Police officers immediately bundled them to the ground as negotiators, businessmen, NGO representatives and UN officials looked on, some in shocked silence, some cheering and chanting along, as the group was roughly handcuffed and dragged back outside to the waiting police van, still shouting their slogans.

Sama was among the group that managed to jump the barricades surrounding the Bella Centre. A 20-year old student at Sussex University, it was the first time she'd ever been arrested.

Sama is small and sparky, with spiral earrings, silver bracelets and a confident manner. Bursting into the Bella Centre was the second time she'd ever participated in direct action (the term activists use to distinguish acts of civil disobedience from more law-abiding forms of protest such as marches) – two months ago, she'd supported an attempt to shut down the coal-fired power station at Ratcliffe-on-Soare, near Nottingham. Sama was detained for seven hours in a facility set up specially by Danish authorities to deal with the climate activists, dubbed 'Guantanamo Junior' by the Danish police, shut in a cage three by two metres with 8 other activists, but has no regrets.

"It was fun, very exciting, but also a bit scary", she says. "I'd been into the conference centre the previous day [as an accredited delegate with an NGO], and when I looked around it was just so wrong. From time to time you'd see groups from the poor world, but they were vastly outnumbered buy those from the developed world: there's a huge power differential between countries. So much takes place behind closed doors".

For Sama, gatecrashing the conference was a way of trying to get the decision makers at the UN conference to listen to her frustration at the unaccountable and inequitable nature of the talks. "We could see the conference failing around us. The power differential between rich and poor countries was huge, it just seemed as though the industrialised countries were deciding what was going to happen. When they don't listen to you objecting with petitions and letters and emails, sometimes they take notice when you object with your body" she says simply.

> "All the big battles - apartheid, votes for women, civil rights in America - were won in part through civil disobedience."
>
> *Vic Wakefield-Jarrett*

From climate-saving Santas, to pink and silver garbed samba bands, to aliens calling on conference delegates to 'Save the Humans', Copenhagen this December was crammed with environmental and social justice activists. Many saw Copenhagen as the Seattle of their generation: the defining moment of the green movement, just as the teargas and street battles at the 1999 World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting in Seattle had been the defining moment of the 90s anti-globalisation movement.

This new green movement is media-savvy, adept at conveying their messages using blogs, Twitter and social network sites. Non-violent direct action, or NVDA as its adherents call it, is the most eye-catching of their campaign strategies. Colourful, often humorous protests are organised with mobile phone messaging and email lists. Laptops are as much a tool of their trade as superglue, handcuffs and D-locks.

The last two years have seen Climate Rush, the suffragette-inspired movement, stage an Edwardian tea-party at Heathrow Terminal Five to protest airport expansion. There's been the 'Kingsnorth Six' scaling Kingsnorth power station to write 'Gordon' on the chimney. (They were planning to write 'Gordon Bin It', asking Gordon Brown to shelve plans for a new coal-fired power station at the site, but were interrupted before they could complete the slogan). Plane Stupid bolt-cut their way into Stansted airport and occupied the runway, causing the cancellation of 56 flights. And the fossil-fuel focussed group 'Leave it In the Ground' used a red flag to wave down a train headed for the power station Drax in Yorkshire, and shovel its coal out before it could reach its highly-polluting destination.

Increasingly, politicians are recognising and even welcoming the activist movement, alongside the more mainstream NGOs such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace. Ed Miliband, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, declared that,"There will be some people saying 'we can't go ahead with an agreement on climate change, it's not the biggest priority'. And, therefore, what you need is countervailing forces. Some of those countervailing forces come from popular mobilisation... Maybe it's an odd thing for someone in government to say, but I just think there's a real opportunity and a need here". Meanwhile, in the US, Al Gore urged civil disobedience to halt the construction of more coal-fired power stations, while NASA's head of climate science, Dr James Hanson, went a step further and was arrested himself after participating in a trespass to protest against the removal of mountaintops for coal extraction.

Vic Wakefield-Jarrett, a Green Party councillor in Brighton, had initially seen the direct action movement as 'full of anarchists, and people who just enjoy protest for the sake of it'. But she'd been drawn into the movement after attending Climate Camp's annual protest camp at E.ON's coal fired power station at Kingsnorth in Kent.

Wakefield-Jarrett readily admits that direct action scares her – "I don't want to get on the wrong side of the police!" she laughs. But she points out that "all the big battles – apartheid, votes for women, civil rights in America – were won in part through civil disobedience."

Wakefield-Jarrett is optimistic about what the green activist movement can achieve. The past year has seen E.ON shelve its plans for a new coal fired power station at Kingsnorth, and it now seems unlikely that plans for a third runway at Heathrow will go ahead. She sees direct action as only one part of a wider effort to prevent climate catastrophe. "But," she smiles, "when climate crimes are being committed, we have an obligation to stand up against them". ■

Lianna Hulbert is an environment campaigner

Part two: The commercial overview

Adapting business to the changing climate

THERE IS A BOTTOM LINE COST FOR THOSE EXPOSED TO CLIMATE CHANGE. BUSINESSES NEED TO PREPARE NOW OR TAKE THE HIT, SAYS **MARK GOLDTHORPE**.

Climate change continues to make the news, even in a global recession. Faced with surviving in a bleak economic climate, businesses might question why climate change should be a priority for them. However, increasing numbers are pursuing the benefits of the 'low carbon' agenda. And business leaders are also realising that climate change presents a second challenge, in addition to cutting the greenhouse gas emissions which are disrupting the climate system: climatic conditions themselves impact society, the environment and the economy in ways which are important to business.

Direct business consequences include loss of income, added costs, prolonged cleanup operations, extended closure, insurance problems and contractual disputes. A 2008 survey of small and medium enterprises by Climate South East[1] – one of the regional climate change partnerships across the UK – revealed that 34% had been affected by flooding or heavy rain in the previous two years, 19% by high temperatures and 16% by low temperatures, with smaller numbers disrupted by storms or drought. These events had affected customers or staff, damaged property or stock or affected sales in weather-dependent goods or services. Naturally, some are able to find opportunities – for example by providing goods or services which help others to reduce their own vulnerability.

As with demographic and economic trends, climate trends should be of concern to company directors, and their recent experiences can be a useful guide to the likely business consequences (Figure 1). By gathering information on how it has been affected in the past – directly through its own premises or processes or indirectly through the vulnerability of others up and down the supply chain – the business can then ask intelligent "What if?" questions about the implications of future climate changes: what would be the consequences for key business areas, such as markets or processes, and the mainstream business drivers that are of real concern (Figure 2)?

Recent extreme events and changes to the seasonal and spatial weather patterns are not themselves evidence of manmade climate change. Nevertheless, they illustrate the trends we expect to see under the latest climate change projections[2]. It's also important to recognise that a trend for winters to become warmer, for example, does not mean that natural variability won't still bring some exceptionally cold periods; transport companies and others will still need contingency plans for rare events.

The "one in 500 years" 2003 European heatwave was exceptional. It caused tens of thousands of deaths and hospital admissions, major damage to forestry and agricultural assets and economic losses of billions of Euros. But those record-breaking temperatures won't remain exceptional for long if 2003-style summer temperatures become typical by 2050.

By starting to factor in the projected trends and possible events, businesses can identify and prepare adaptation responses. During 2010, the UK Government will use its new powers under the Climate Change Act 2008 to require key public and private sector organisations to report on how they are doing just that. 90 organisations – including water and energy utilities and key transport operators – are in the priority list. They will need to assess current and projected climate change risks to their functions and summarise how they are addressing these. Although the initial scope of organisations covered might appear limited, as these start to assess risks in their supply chains then it is likely they will look for information and assurances from those they do business with – perhaps through amended contracts.

For the much larger number of businesses who aren't yet facing regulatory or customer pressure on adaptation, there are still clear benefits to understanding the threats and opportunities from a changing climate. This is clearly the case for those whose products or services are weather-dependent (such as food and drink, tourism or leisure), those involved in making decisions with long-term consequences (for example, designers or contractors for buildings and infrastructure), those who are in a position to provide adaptation solutions or services for others (such as technology providers or consultancy services) – and of course, those who have already experienced the disruptive consequences of extreme weather events and do not want to lose out to better prepared competitors. As with making the transition to a low carbon future, those businesses who plan for a climate resilient future should find key competitive advantage through cost savings, regulatory compliance, new market opportunities, customer loyalty and enhanced reputation: a challenge worth accepting. ■

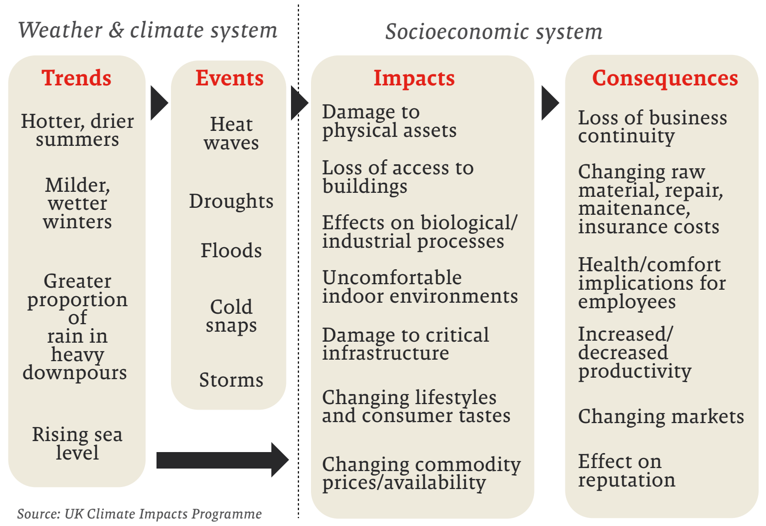
Mark Goldthorpe, *Project Officer (Business), UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP)*

1 - "Climate change and small businesses – how directors are responding to the challenges of climate change" from http://www.climatesoutheast.org.uk/

2 - Details of the UK Climate Projections can be seen at http://ukclimateprojections.defra.gov.uk/

Figure 1

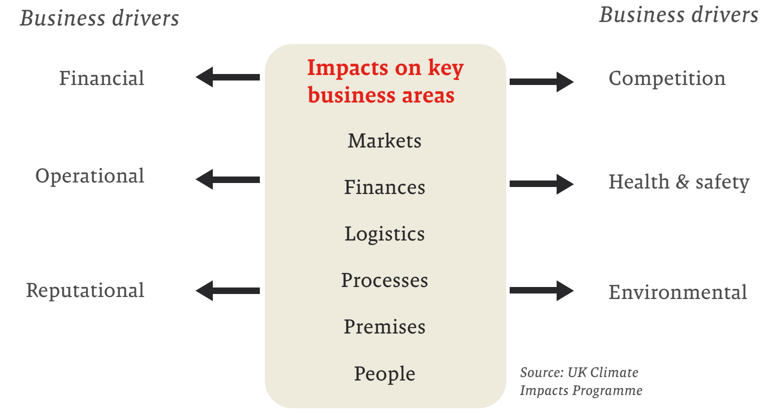
From climate change to business consequences



Source: UK Climate Impacts Programme

Figure 2

Climate change - business risks & opportunities



Source: UK Climate Impacts Programme

About the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP)

UKCIP was established in 1997 and is based at the Environmental Change Institute at Oxford University. The majority of our funding comes from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

We work at the boundary between scientific research, policy makers and people working in the public, private and voluntary sectors who are interested in understanding and adapting to the impacts of climate change on their organisations and activities.

We have developed a range of tools, guides and other resources to help businesses and other organisations to assess how they might be affected by climate change and to plan for this. All of our tools and information are available free of charge at: http://www.ukcip.org.uk

London: a centre for sustainable business

With London's business environment becoming increasingly fertile for green innovation and investment, Paola Cuneo, Head of Europe at Think London, the official foreign direct investment agency for London, explains why they firmly believe the city has further potential to become the world's leading 'low carbon capital'.

Although sustainable development is a relatively new sector, it is already an integral part of London's way of working. The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, has taken a strong positive stance on encouraging green development, introducing initiatives such as 'The Green 500 campaign' and 10 'low-carbon zones' in the city. Sustainability is also at the heart of the largest regeneration scheme in Europe - the Thames Gateway, which includes east London.

It is therefore a very exciting time for sustainable companies and we remain confident that we will fulfil our pledge to become the global leader of sustainable business. With $100m being invested in new waste technologies, a ready market for sustainable products and services and as the forthcoming host of the 2012 'Green Games', London continues to be the natural choice for companies looking to expand their operations into the UK. We urge all French companies operating in this sector to take advantage and reap the long lasting benefits of our sustainable vision.

Paola Cuneo

Innovative French companies

Think London welcomes all innovative French companies with global ambitions who want a share in the sustainable vision for London. Over the last decade, we have helped more than 1,400 companies from 44 countries set up in London. Many of these are from the sustainable sector, including EarthTradeWater - experts in the field of water treatment, and Tesla - the electric sports car manufacturer.

With climate change high on the current global agenda, along with preparations for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, often dubbed the 'Green Games', we remain focused on promoting the wealth of opportunities for businesses operating within this sector. Through a series of international roadshows across North America, and more recently in Spain, we have engaged with companies from the sustainable and cleantech industries, informing them of the commercial opportunities available in London now. We have supported this outreach with our 'Touchdown London' offer, a joint initiative with office space provider Avanta, to provide overseas businesses with up to 12 months rent free desk space, together with a dedicated advisor, to support them through the process of establishing a central London base.

Following the expansion of the service in May 2009, 87 new overseas businesses have benefitted from the offer, including US based 'upcycling' firm TerraCycle, the world leader in converting waste into affordable, eco-friendly products. At a recent business reception attended by Boris Johnson, Tom Szaky, CEO and founder of TerraCycle, announced that there was no better choice of location to expand into than London. ■

***Paola Cuneo,** Head of Europe at Think London*

The green revolution: an investor's view

The market for green companies is tough. Funds are scarce and Copenhagen didn't excite investor interest, says David Bevan.

Few would argue that climate change is near the top of the global political agenda. The sheer scale of the problem and, more importantly, the likely cost of addressing it (estimated by Lord Stern at around 1% of GDP per annum) must provide opportunities for businesses in such a large new market. But has this promise translated into economic success for businesses and investors looking to cash in on this latest economic boom?

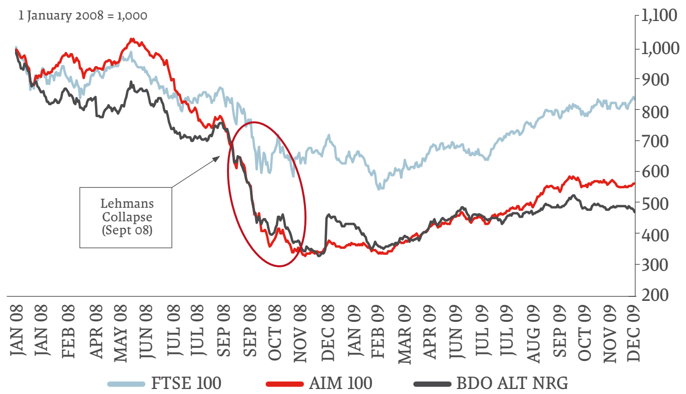
One way to answer this question is to look at the performance of companies with a "green" focus on the equity capital markets. Few companies on London's main market are solely clean tech focussed, so their performance doesn't give a clear indication of investor appetite for "green" businesses. AIM, London's junior stock market provides a better barometer. Lightly regulated, it is suited to less well-established companies typical of those with a clean tech focus.

AIM prospered in 2005-2007 and by the end of 2008 there were almost eighty clean tech companies on the market. Since then, investor appetite has collapsed. In 2009, just 29 new companies joined AIM. Only one of these, Indian Energy (a company which owns and operates a small wind farm in India), has a clean tech focus. It raised £10m in an initial public offering, which hardly suggests an investor gold rush.

As the graph shows, the 59 green companies which remain on AIM have generally underperformed the wider market since January 2008. The Wilderhill New Energy Global Innovation Index indicates a similar picture in the United States.

So why have investors given green business such a rough ride? Uncertainty is key to their behaviour. Few sectors escaped the economic crisis which followed the credit crunch. Green businesses with unproven technology carry more risk and are less attractive to investors in a downturn.

Performance of Cleantech Stocks on AIM



In the longer term, returns for clean tech companies will be driven by the regulatory environment, the price of carbon and the cost of traditional energy sources such as oil and gas. Businesses with a clean tech focus have suffered more than most in the current economic crisis because of a lack of clarity in the market around green stimuli and their implementation; there is a gap between the political rhetoric and how it is actually impacting businesses. Copenhagen has done little to close this gap.

Despite the recent economic gloom, outlook for businesses that will play a part in dealing with climate change remains positive. Market activity is unlikely to remain depressed for long. Away from the public markets, green business continues to attract private investment. According to New Energy Finance, global clean tech investment increased from $13bn in the first quarter of 2009 to an average of over $25bn in the subsequent two quarters – a growing trend. Watch this space. ■

***David Bevan** is a director at BDO Stoy Hayward*

Profit from the gloom

CARBON CAPTURE TECHNOLOGIES MAY HELP SPEARHEAD A RADICAL ECONOMIC SHAKEUP COMPARABLE TO THAT CARRIED OUT IN BRITAIN AT THE DAWN OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, SAYS **JOHN SIMMONS**.

One of the oddities of war is that some economies benefit from them. The Second World War is often credited with lifting the USA out of the morass of the 30s depression and, for decades, the cold war rang tills all over the place. Now, we are all urged to contemplate a global war, a conflict on a scale larger than the planet has ever seen and the enemy is: climate change. What have we to do to win this war and how can France and the UK profit from it?

If we agreed that the forces of evil were represented by man-made carbon emissions into the atmosphere, the ways to overcome these forces are very well known. Princeton University has elegantly shown how different technologies and behaviours could reduce global carbon emissions. Specifically, they show various ways of saving one billion tons per year of carbon emissions, which include, for example, capturing and storing emissions from 800 coal electric plants, increasing wind power fifty-fold, increasing solar power seven hundred fold or replacing 1400 coal electric power stations with natural gas-powered facilities.

Technology to the rescue

The essence of the Princeton argument is to do everything now! Concentrating on one or two of the technologies or delaying action on all of them is just not an option. The good news for the UK and France is that there are opportunities for our science and technology based industries in all of the solutions outlined.

For the last eight years, part of my work has been focused on helping to communicate the scientific and technological realities of one of these technologies, Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) to decision makers and influencers who need to build the political and fiscal environment in which all these technologies can be implemented. For France and the UK, CCS seems to have 'golden opportunity' written all over it - as long as we act now.

Simply put, this approach, which could remove 20% of man-made CO_2, means putting carbon back where most of it came from, deep underground. All of the technologies needed to carry this out exist, although joining them up at scale has yet to be done. The practical starting point is to tackle large fixed emitters first, namely thermal power stations and industrial plants in cement, refining and steel. All of these produce large volumes of exhaust gases and capturing the CO_2 from these exhausts is the first challenge. The technology needed to efficiently capture CO_2 from a single large industrial plant will cost millions of Euros and there are literally thousands of plants worldwide that will need to be adapted. What an astonishing opportunity for government research establishments and companies, large and small, across the UK and France to join forces. Concorde may not have been a great financial success but it elegantly proved that Franco-Anglo industry could beat the world.

Capturing CO2

Once the CO_2 is captured, it has to be sent somewhere and this is where the UK is particularly blessed. The two geological settings that are best suited to long term storage are depleted oil and gas reservoirs and saline aquifers - layers of rock saturated in undrinkably salty water. Britain's share of the North Sea literally sits on hundreds of potential sites, so many in fact that some pundits are talking about the UK setting up business as a store for all of Europe! To make this come true will require an undertaking at least as large as the present day oil and gas industry, encompassing a similar range of skills, services and products, from geological consultancy to offshore platform construction. France and the UK are home to many world-class companies across this sector, many of which are already active in CCS.

The gap between capture and storage presents another huge opportunity. It would be cripplingly uneconomic for every power station and cement works to build a pipeline to carry CO_2 to some distant store. Consortia are needed to build regional networks into which industry can tap. The Yorkshire and Humber RDA, sitting in the middle of Europe's second largest CO_2 emitting region, is actively investigating just such a venture, aimed ultimately at maintaining industry in the region and possibly even attracting in new industry. As the world recognises the need to tackle carbon, the price of emitting it will rocket and CCS will become an attractive way to stay in business. If an English region can contemplate building a pipeline network then the idea of a nationally funded super network to bring CO_2 from all over Europe suddenly looks possible. To put it into context, most of Europe's biggest emitters are much closer to the UK sector of the North Sea than Baku in Azerbaijan is to Ceyhan in Turkey, joined today by the giant, BP led, BTC oil pipeline.

A visionary and well structured Anglo-French effort to address the gigantic demand for CO_2 Capture, Transport and Storage could contribute to winning the war, help to promote the countries as centres of innovation and bring hundreds of thousands of jobs. That really would be a profit from the gloom. ■

John Simmons, *Founder-Director, ON Communication – science and technology communication agency.*

Part three: Business takes up the green challenge

Renault's low-carbon drive into the unknown


© Renault

Fluence Z.E. concept

ENVIRONMENTALLY CONCERNED DRIVERS WILL INCREASINGLY ACCEPT THE ELECTRIC CAR. BUT THE MARKET HAS A LONG WAY TO GO, SAYS **RENAULT'S ANDY HEIRON**.

With road transport responsible for something like 22% of CO2 emissions the motor industry has a critical role to play in the battle to prevent global warming. Renault has been working for many years to bring down the emissions of its models during their complete lifecycle as part of its ongoing bid to reduce the automobile's ecological footprint. As demonstrated by its eco² programme, Renault believes it is essential to ensure that the most effective technologies are available to as many motorists as possible at an affordable price. Renault has made significant efforts in this area over a long period and, today, its brand has emerged among the three most efficient carmakers in Europe.

Renault aims to become the number one European carmaker with regard to CO2 emissions. To achieve this, Renault is working on two main fronts:

- the introduction of new technologies for internal combustion engines and transmissions
- an unprecedented commitment to all-electric vehicles

Renault estimates that electric vehicles will account for 10 per cent of the world market by 2020. The Renault-Nissan Alliance is investing €4 billion in its zero-emissions programme and a 2,000-strong team (1,000 at Renault, and 1,000 at Nissan) is working on electric vehicle programmes.

The argument for electric vehicles is compelling as they represent a step change, aimed at bringing sustainable mobility within the budget of the majority of motorists. In keeping with the philosophy behind the Renault eco² environmental policy, the mass marketing of electric vehicles is set to achieve a significant breakthrough in favour of the environment.

The Renault-Nissan Alliance will market a comprehensive range of high-quality, reliable and innovative electrical vehicles at affordable prices. Renault Z.E. (zero-emission) electric vehicles will be safe, easy to drive, quiet-running and generate zero-emissions in use. In a period of 12 months, starting in 2011, Renault will launch four new electric vehicles as the foundation of their Z.E. range – the medium-segment Fluence, a Kangoo van, the Twizy city car and, in 2012, the Zoe, a five-door hatchback.

This commitment to the electric vehicle is founded on a single, underlying principle: unlike all other technologies (internal combustion engines, hybrids), electric vehicles are genuine zero-emission vehicles regarding their use on the road. They also permit a reduction in oil-dependency.

Although the well-to-wheel emissions of greenhouse gases (expressed as equivalent CO2) can vary significantly depending on how the electricity they use is produced in the different countries where they are driven, electric vehicles still account for a smaller quantity of greenhouse gases than equivalent internal combustion vehicles.

When the electricity is produced by nuclear or renewable sources (hydro-electric, wind-generated, photovoltaic), the well-to-wheel performance of electric vehicles is indisputably superior. In order to realise their goal of true zero-emission motoring electric vehicle manufacturers are therefore heavily dependant on the efforts of the electricity industry to generate sustainable power. With the electricity generation methods currently employed in Europe, the results are still compelling, since CO2 emissions are halved compared to those produced by an internal combustion engine.

Customers discouragements

Historically potential customers have been discouraged by concerns over performance and safety of electric vehicles. As a leading manufacturer Renault already has an excellent reputation for safety and it is our goal to maintain our lead in the field of safety in all respects – adult, child and pedestrian protection as well as active and passive safety. To this end Renault is investing a significant amount of engineering man-hours into considering EV safety from all possible angles and it is fair to say our objective is to have safety at least equivalent to a comparable Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) car within our range.

Similarly the performance of an electric vehicle in terms of speed and acceleration should be comparable to that of an equivalent ICE model in everyday driving. High torque at low speeds and the immediate delivery of power are inherent features of electric motors and result in a linear acceleration until the maximum speed is reached.

A range of 100 miles is achievable through using the latest-generation lithium-ion batteries. These compact, innovative lithium-ion batteries are produced by AESC (Automotive Electric Supply Corporation), a Nissan-NEC joint venture founded in April 2007. Lithium-ion batteries do not suffer from the so-called memory effect resulting from incomplete charge cycles which can ultimately lead to a drop-off in capacity in conventional batteries. AESC batteries are maintenance-free and are expected to deliver between 80 and 100 per cent of their original capacity for an average duration of six years. It will also be possible to charge them for short cycles with no adverse effect on capacity. The battery charges during deceleration: when the driver lifts their foot off the pedal, kinetic energy is recovered by the motor which converts it into electrical energy. Current generated in this way is used to charge the battery.

Sobering thought

The two most common recharging methods will be a conventional charge using domestic mains supply (13A 220V) which can charge the vehicle in between six and eight hours and a faster charge using a 32A 400V three-phase socket enables 80 per cent of vehicle's battery to be charged in approximately 30 minutes. Generally speaking most people will use standard charging when their vehicle is parked overnight or during the day in the workplace, but the UK government is also encouraging cities and regions to develop publicly available recharging infrastructure projects through its 'Plugged in Places' scheme.

And finally, a sobering thought. The cars we buy today will remain on the road, in the hands of various owners, for typically 10 years or more thanks to improvements in product reliability and durability. Many of today's cars will still be on the road into the '20's and the sooner the majority of car buyers recognise the electric vehicle as a credible alternative to internal combustion engine technologies then we can make an impact on carbon emissions. ■

***Andy Heiron,** Operational Performance Manager and Head of Electric Vehicle Project, Renault*

FOCUS

More clarity needed on carbon pricing says EDF Energy

COMPANIES INVOLVED IN THE ENERGY SECTOR WILL LOOK TO GOVERNMENT TO GIVE CLEAR AND CONSISTENT SIGNALS AS TO THEIR EXPECTATIONS OF CARBON PRICES, CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES AND TECHNOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS. **PAUL SPENCE, THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND REGULATION AT EDF ENERGY** AND A LEADING INDUSTRY SPOKESMAN, GAVE A WIDE RANGING INTERVIEW TO *INFO*'S EDITOR-IN-CHIEF NICOLAS KOCHAN.

Could you describe the EDF Energy view on energy provision?

EDF Energy has looked at the different scenarios of providing future energy supplies. One possibility sees a core component of nuclear, another has carbon capture and storage and the third has renewables. Depending on the scenario, we could be talking about differences of hundreds of pounds to a consumer's annual bill. We believe that nuclear is the cheapest way of decarbonising the electricity sector – something we need to do if we are to meet our climate change targets, while including portions of the other two. Nuclear already accounts for about 20% of today's UK electricity production, and we think that that contribution needs to not only be maintained but increased over the coming decades.

EDF Energy runs the UK's eight nuclear power stations comprising 15 reactors in total. Fourteen of these are gas-cooled reactors. While our plant at Sizewell is a pressurised water reactor (PWR), using similar technology to that used by EDF in France.

What is your proposal for building reactors in the UK?

We are proposing to build 4 reactors in the UK over the next two decades. They will be based on the design of the new reactor currently under construction at Flamanville in northern France. Each of the four reactors will produce 1,650MW. This will be a large component of the UK's electricity provision. We hope to have the first of those reactors running by end of 2017.

We are going through the process of consulting the local communities. We aim to submit our planning applications for our project at Hinkley Point in Somerset this year. It will be considered by the Infrastructure Planning Commission and we hope to get planning permission by 2012, and start building. We believe our plans are at a more advanced stage than the other consortia considering nuclear new build.

Paul Spence

This is a real skills challenge for the UK. Each station will be a major construction project with 4,000 to 5,000 people and a multi billion price tag for each reactor, the cost of EDF's single reactor project at Flamanville is approximately €4bn. Each site is likely to be of a similar scale as the Olympics project. These are enormous civil engineering projects and it is a while since the UK has engaged on such a project.

There is a liberalised market for energy in the UK and these won't be private public partnership-type arrangements, like a road build project. This is EDF with our minority investors Centrica, choosing to build the station. If our investment case is right, we will build them and sell the electricity.

What are you asking of the UK government?

There is already a broad political consensus on the need for new nuclear for the UK. This was reflected by the recent draft National Policy Statement which we regard as a defining moment in the development of affordable, secure and low-carbon energy. It acknowledges the role that new nuclear will have in contributing a significant share of the 25GW of new generation it says the UK needs by 2025 and has given us additional confidence to move ahead with its plans to develop low carbon, affordable energy on behalf of our customers.

To complement this support we think some additional signals should be provided by Government for its trajectory for carbon prices. It also needs to set the rules governing how much money is put a way by developers to cover the cost of waste. In essence it needs to set some of the finer rules of the game. It also needs to help ensure there are the skills in place – something we are already doing by engaging with the UK supply chain. But Government has to make sure the economy is there to sustain the infrastructure build.

Another key factor is planning. We need to maintain a planning system that is sustainable and reasonable and one that avoids unnecessary delay while ensuring the greatest possible local engagement and consultation on new projects.

What is the role of government in obtaining this balance?

We are looking for clarity about what we as nation want to achieve over the longer and shorter term. There are a number of variables which could determine the overall strategy. For instance were we to take a view that says if energy price is absolutely critical, probably the cheapest way of producing electricity going forward would be to burn lots of gas and coal, with climate targets taking a back seat, and we'll take the consequences.

If, at the other end of the spectrum, we say the only thing that matters is averting climate change and cost is not an issue, then we would build lots of wind turbines. But then the price of energy would be massively higher. How we judge that trade-off is critical. We think that a key balance needs to be struck so that we can achieve our climate change targets while ensuring secure affordable energy supplies.

With clearer signals around issues such as future carbon prices, companies would then have the confidence to make 60 year investments of the type required for new generation assets without the concern that policy will change.

What is the UK's situation for energy provision?

A large chunk of today's infrastructure in the UK is middle-aged and will retire over the next decade or so. We have to replace that with something and we're making the decisions now as to what we are going to replace it with.

We are very encouraged by the broad support for new nuclear but these types of investments require a very long term view looking out to 2030-2050. To get us where we need to be in the shorter term we need some assurance that any bumps on the road in establishing the carbon framework aren't going to cause us to make the wrong investments. We at EDF Energy talk about a carbon floor as something which could provide the clarity we need and therefore a part of the route to getting to the long term energy provision. Nuclear power stations run for some 60 years, so it's vital we get better clarity as we assess our investment case.

What pressures do companies face to use or supply green energy?

All energy companies providing electricity are obliged to have a portion of that electricity coming from renewable sources and they are obliged to either produce that electricity or buy it. They also have to buy a certificate, essentially certificating that this power comes from renewable sources. At the moment this costs about the same per unit as the underlying power. All of this means they have to pay a higher price for renewable electricity. About 5% of the UK's electricity comes from renewable sources today. The Government has ambitious targets to increase this dramatically by 2020. If subsidies for this power continue at or above current levels, this will have a marked impact on the costs to domestic and industrial customers. To mitigate this, we're saying that 30% of the UK's electricity coming from nuclear by 2030 is both necessary and achievable. Supported by an increased participation from renewables we think that this will help deliver the low carbon, secure and affordable energy supplies we need to drive a future low carbon economy. ■

How intelligent IT can help save the planet, lowland gorillas - and money

EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE SIGNIFICANT POLLUTERS, COMPUTERS ARE PROVING CRUCIAL IN REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS WHILE CUTTING BUSINESS COSTS AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT, ARGUES **DOUGLAS FARQUHAR OF CAPGEMINI UK.**

At first sight, the rise of IT looks like bad news for the environment. Well-validated research in 2007 indicated that IT accounts for 2% of global CO_2 emissions, right up there with the aviation industry. And some say that with ever-increasing data storage and processing, IT will soon be up with the oil industry as a global polluter.

But look behind the headlines and a different picture emerges, and a much less gloomy one. To understand why, we have to understand what is being done within the IT industry and, even more significantly, at the role IT is playing in helping businesses across many sectors of the economy fight pollution and reduce carbon emissions.

The Sustainability Revolution

In IT, a quiet sustainability revolution is well under way. First, new techniques of server virtualisation are starting to be widely adopted, and they typically reduce both energy consumption and floorspace in a ratio of 7:1. Secondly, a transformation is happening in data centre efficiency, and this is of course key, given their huge concentration of processing power. Today a Power Usage Efficiency (PUE) of 2.0 is standard, but next generation centres will do dramatically better. For example Capgemini's new Swindon data centre opens this year with a PUE of just 1.2, the best rating in Europe.

Extending the life of hardware can also benefit the environment. Typically, half the energy usage of a PC occurs during its production, so extending its life spreads that 'embedded' energy over a longer period. It also, of course, reduces total cost of ownership by avoiding the technology refreshes that are fashionable but not always strictly necessary.

But energy consumption and CO_2 emissions are not the only environmental factors to consider in IT. There are other scarce resources involved with profound environmental implications. A derivative of the rare mineral Coltan is essential in PCs, and until recently the main source was the Democratic Republic of Congo, where it was mined by child soldiers in operations that threatened the habitat of the lowland gorilla. Today, however, companies with a responsible approach to environmental matters, my own included, are insisting that every PC they buy, lease or use has its Coltan components sourced elsewhere, eg Australia. And it's the same story with other raw materials known to have environmental issues attached.

'No left turns' - using IT to minimise footprint

Despite the enormous – and successful – efforts being made within the IT industry itself to maximise sustainability and reduce carbon footprint, the real value of IT in saving the environment is the way in which computer power is now being used to address these same issues in sector after sector of the global economy.

In manufacturing, retailing, travel, transport and logistics, the use of IT to analyse and solve problems across the supply chain is of immense value in the battle for sustainability. One of the largest logistics companies in the US has reported on the successful deployment of in-vehicle computers in all its trucks and vans to achieve an 18% reduction in mileage and fuel costs without loss of business or customer service levels. One surprising outcome was a decision to ban drivers from making urban left turns in favour of driving round the block: in this case a small increase in mileage was outweighed by a larger reduction in fuel consumption.

Similar examples can be found in many industries. Across the supply chain, the use of smart IT-enabled techniques such as just-in-time have enabled businesses to 'do more for less' and to save large sums of money while reducing their carbon footprint.

Smart Energy and New Legal Requirements

For many UK businesses, the need to take sustainability seriously is about to become even more urgent. That is because in April 2010 the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) becomes UK law. It requires companies to report on CO_2 emissions from all parts of their business, with significant financial penalties for those failing to comply and – even more important – fines (in effect) for those doing poorly in reducing carbon emissions. One benefit of the new law is the huge boost it will give to smart metering and, ultimately, smart grids. With the help of these IT-enabled devices, we will know exactly where energy is being squandered and where most effort is needed to solve the problem. We will also have, for the first time, comprehensive quantified data at the micro level on energy usage.

New IT outsourcing contracts are increasingly putting sustainability at their heart, and it is surely a development that sets a new pattern not just for the IT industry but for the whole UK economy as organisations move to satisfy customers, employees, investors and public opinion.

So to summarise, although IT is one part (among many) of the problem in matters of sustainability and the environment, it is also proving itself a massive part of the solution. ■

__Douglas Farquhar__ is Head of Sustainable Outsourcing at Capgemini UK

The show must go on

CARBON CAPTURE REPRESENTS AN ENORMOUS OPPORTUNITY TO REDUCE EMISSIONS, IF THE TECHNOLOGY CAN BE PROVEN, SAYS **TOTAL'S NICK COOK.**

World leading energy companies confront the environmental challenge from both commercial and technological perspectives. Total for example has a climate change strategy which targets four main areas:

- Flaring reduction.
- Improving energy efficiency not only at our own locations, but also where we can with our customers recognising that around 85% of oil and gas CO_2 emissions actually arise in final consumption.
- Development of carbon capture and storage technology that will enable ongoing use of fossil fuel but abate the CO_2 produced.
- Developing alternative energies (Solar, biomass, nuclear, etc) to complement and probably one day replace existing fossil fuels.

Flaring reduction and energy efficiency

In 2008, Total's global GHG (Greenhouse gas) operating emissions amounted to some 58 million tonnes worldwide, of this 46% came from exploration and production (E&P), 41% from oil refineries, and 13% from our petrochemical activity. Of the 46% from E&P, close to one third arose from flaring. We have an ongoing target to reduce this by half by 2014 vs 2005. We also have an energy efficiency improvement target of 2% per year, and in refining we have a similar target of 1% per year.

The results of actions already taken have meant that between 1990 and 2008 we have been able to reduce our emissions intensity (per unit throughput) by 17% from oil refining and by 40% from E&P. Continuing with our current strategy we anticipate further reductions of 15% by 2015 based on 2008.

With so much CO_2 arising from the end use of oil and gas we must provide ways to help our customers improve their own carbon footprints. We offer advice on energy efficiency and reducing fuel consumption through our service stations and fuel distribution networks. In 2008 we blended over 2 million tonnes of renewable biofuels into petrol and diesel. Additionally Total Excellium is a cleaner burning more efficient petrol and diesel that reduces the fuel consumption of cars and light vehicles all of which will help our customers to use less fossil fuel.

Development of carbon capture and storage technology

Completed in the autumn of 2009, and to be inaugurated early in 2010, Total's fully integrated Carbon Capture & Storage (CCS) demonstration project in the south west of France will, at an existing power station already using natural gas from the Lacq reservoir, capture 200 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2) a day.

The CO_2 will be transported 27 kilometres by pipeline to the depleted Rousse gas reservoir where it will be pumped down to be permanently stored 4500 metres below ground. This company funded demonstration project will run for 2 years and permanently keep from the atmosphere the equivalent CO_2 emissions of 40,000 cars. We are partners in many other CCS projects worldwide and, when proven, such technology could be rolled out worldwide on a much larger scale to significantly reduce global CO_2 emissions.

Developing alternative energies

Total is a market leader in biofuels in Europe and has been since 1993. Today Total is continuing with the development of more advanced "second generation" biofuels that will give higher yields and reduce competition with food crops. Total has long been active in supporting the development of photovoltaic technology, and with its affiliates Photovoltec and Tenesol is a major player in the development of photovoltaic cells and solar panels.

In the UK, Total is researching Tidal power with Scotrenewables in Orkney, Scotland (a further example of our continual investment in GHG reducing technologies). ■

Nick Cook, *Carbon Capture & Public Affairs Adviser, Total UK*

Building on a low carbon foundation

IN BRIDGE BUILDING AND OTHER GRAND PROJECTS, INNOVATIVE RESPONSES TO CONCERN FOR ECOSYSTEMS ARE PAR FOR THE COURSE, SAYS VINCI.

As the world leader in concessions and construction, VINCI is committed to act as a role model on sustainability. Environmental management has been embedded in our company processes and procedures since the 1990's. Energy savings and climate change impacts are indeed day to day concerns and form part of our continuous improvement approach.

Climate change challenges substantially modify the expectations of stakeholders - clients, both public and private sector, inhabitants, regulators, Non Governmental Organisations and the media - and it is our responsibility as a responsible contractor to anticipate the economic, social and environmental consequences of these phenomena.

Still, the balance between investments and financial viability of proactive sustainable choices can represent a 'showstopper' to major projects. The challenge is to embed sustainability in our solutions, in partnership with our clients and supply chain, through evidence of long term added value.

Today, VINCI Construction Grands Projets aims to propose to its clients solutions that are not only financially and technically better, but also more sustainable during construction and operation. Lifecycle analysis is an integral part of our decision making process.

New European regulations on carbon emissions including the UK Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) are welcome incentives to raise awareness and reduce direct emissions.

CRC financial risk is now considered at the tender stage for all UK projects. For example, we made a detailed analytic assessment of energy and fuel consumption of the recently awarded Lee Tunnel project. This analysis, based on experience and feedback from previous projects, enabled us not only to evaluate the financial risk but also to identify the "hotspots", such as the biggest energy demanding plant or equipment, enabling us to work together with our supply chain partners to develop improvements and alternatives.

Materials embodying carbon represent the major source of emissions. Hence, VINCI's Research & Development departments strive to develop and demonstrate the benefit of low carbon alternatives for concrete or pavement materials. Patented business specific CO_2 assessment tools enable us to refine emission factors of engineered alternative mixes, for example:

- CO_2 Crete Impact®, developed by VINCI Construction Grands Projets
- GAIA®, developed by Eurovia

Beyond energy and materials considerations, a whole project assessment, based on lifecycle analysis, is proposed to our clients with dedicated internally developed tools such as:

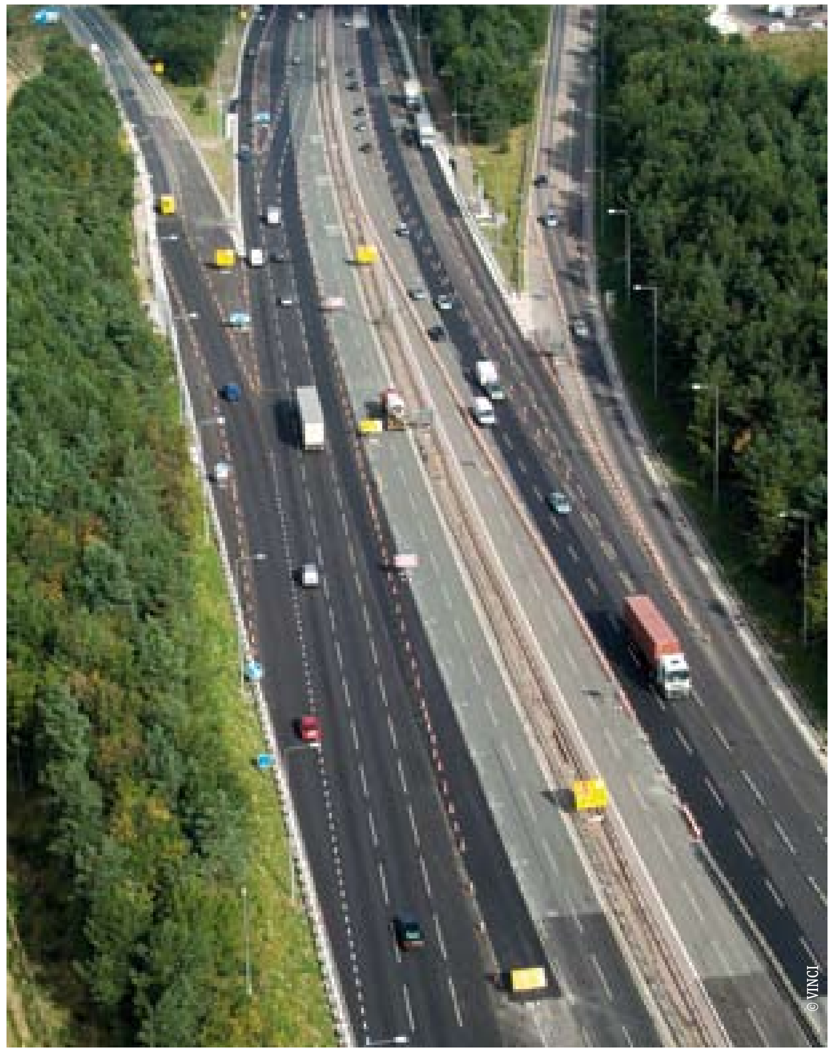
- GEStim™, which assesses the CO_2 emissions on a project's entire 'cradle to grave' lifecycle
- Equer is dedicated to buildings and takes into account building use and maintenance

Benefits of these assessments allowed us to demonstrate that around 40,000t of CO_2 equivalent emissions were avoided on the M1 J25-28 widening project through value engineering and optimisation of design or construction methods:

- Design optimisation enabled us to reduce the length of Retaining Walls which led to an important reduction of materials use
- For Compound reinstatement we were able to reuse excess inert materials in landscaping
- In the central reserve we reused planing materials in the sub-base

Through all these initiatives, VINCI Construction Grands Projets is taking the leading position in developing solutions to tackle Climate Change in line with its Corporate Social Responsibility strategy. We are hoping that by establishing long term partnerships with responsible clients who share our values we can take these proposals forward together on future projects. ■

Martine Julia-Sanchez, *Sustainable Development Director,*
Céline Jamard, *Quality Manager &*
Clarence Michel, *Marketing & Communication Manager British Isles, VINCI Construction Grands Projets*



M1 Widening J25-28, Nottinghamshire

The search for green principles

The construction industry has a vital role to play in meeting environmental targets, says Saint-Gobain's general delegate Peter Hindle MBE.

Following the lack of binding emissions targets in the Copenhagen Accord, the need for developed countries to set the standard and push for a legally binding, fair and economically viable deal is greater than ever. The UK is setting its sights high with aspirational targets designed to deliver zero carbon in all new homes by 2016 and new non-domestic buildings by 2019. However, are we doing enough to meet existing emissions targets and what lessons can we learn from the successes of policies and initiatives overseas?

80 per cent of existing buildings will still be standing in 2050 and an estimated 20 million homes will need to be refurbished to zero carbon standards by this date.

Buildings are responsible for around 40 per cent of energy use and up to 30 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions globally. The construction industry therefore has a vital role to play in achieving carbon reduction and governments around the world must support this by committing to targets and implementing sound regulatory frameworks, supported by appropriate incentives. The way in which countries around the world approach the carbon reduction challenge varies greatly. In some there is a large political influence and actions are driven by legislation, whereas in others market incentives are central to influencing behaviour.

Despite the failure to achieve a worldwide agreement on 50 per cent reductions in global emissions by 2050 or on 80 per cent reductions by developed countries it is widely acknowledged that there is a need for urgent action and this is reflected in recent developments such as the decision to recast the EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive. The revised Directive requires all new buildings to be 'nearly zero energy' by December 2020, with 2018 set as the target date for new public buildings to achieve 'nearly zero energy'. This fails to take into account the embodied energy used in the buildings' construction and it is clear there is work to be done when it comes to establishing common principles for the definition of low and zero carbon buildings. However, there are still lessons we can learn from approaches adopted by other countries.

Take the German PassivHaus[1] for example. It is leading the field when it comes to achieving economic and energy efficient living standards and, with long term cost and energy savings rapidly negating any additional building costs, a number of countries have adopted this standard. Germany has over 2,000 PassivHaus buildings and has made the standard mandatory in a number of cities, while Sweden's current building regulations are in line with PassivHaus requirements and Austria and Switzerland also have a large number of PassivHaus dwellings.

> "In 2009, businesses from across the globe, including Saint-Gobain, signed the Copenhagen Communique to call for an ambitious, robust and equitable deal on climate change."

Although the UK government's proposed overhaul of the Code for Sustainable Homes aims to bring it in line with forthcoming changes to Part L of the building legislation as well as the 2016 definition of zero carbon, the minimum energy standard housebuilders will be expected to meet by 2016 will fall short of the PassivHaus standard. However, new homes are only part of the problem, as 80 per cent of existing buildings will still be standing in 2050 and an estimated 20-million homes will need to be refurbished to zero carbon standards by this date.

Japan is a leading example of a country which has taken decisive and effective action to cut emissions from existing housing stock. In 1994, it launched an incentive scheme covering 50 per cent of photovoltaic roof installation costs. This was so successful that Japan became a world leader in photovoltaic cell manufacturing and, by the time the incentives were phased out, the cost of production had reduced by over 75 per cent. The link between the economy and the need to retrofit for low carbon has also been acknowledged by the US government, which claims its 'Recovery Through Retrofit' report is the most comprehensive roadmap to create green job opportunities and boost energy savings by retrofitting homes while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Examples such as these clearly demonstrate the results that can be achieved with a simple, focused approach and, over the coming years I believe we will see increased demand for technology to be integrated into a building's design. In turn, this will lead to the adoption of a more solutions-based approach. Many of these technologies are already available and a joined up approach throughout the supply chain will be essential in order to drive the specification and installation of these products to give the best results. This is something Australia has fostered through its Green Smart scheme, which focuses on educating manufacturers, designers, builders and end users in the field of sustainable building. The Netherlands is also working to encourage collaboration throughout the industry and the government's 'Meer met Minder' (More with Less) programme has established voluntary agreements with key partners in the housing, energy and construction sectors to ensure targets are met successfully.

In 2009, 950 businesses from across the globe, including Saint-Gobain, signed the Copenhagen Communique to call for an ambitious, robust and equitable deal on climate change that responds credibly to the scale and urgency of the crisis. Unfortunately, a legally binding deal has not yet been reached. However, looking at some of the most successful examples of carbon reduction from around the world it is clear that ambitious targets and clear, focused policies are setting the agenda for change and it is hoped that by moving towards a mandatory agreement in 2010, the effects of this change will be felt on a global scale as governments around the world embrace the long term environmental and economic benefits this will bring.

Improving the energy efficiency of buildings is a major strategic focus for Saint-Gobain. Supporting this goal is a £350-million plus R&D budget, which is committed to developing sustainable solutions such as photovoltaic systems, high performance insulation and new lighting technologies. In the UK and Ireland companies including British Gypsum, Saint-Gobain Glass, Saint-Gobain Isover, Weber and Ecophon are part of the group, and they are playing a key role in ensuring the sustainability of both new and existing buildings, working with companies and organisations throughout the supply chain to create a better built environment. ■

Peter Hindle MBE is general delegate for Saint-Gobain in the UK, Ireland and South Africa

1 - The term 'PassivHaus' refers to a specific construction standard for buildings which have excellent comfort conditions in both winter and summer. These principles can be applied not only to the residential sector but also to commercial, industrial and public buildings.

Dig for victory!

There are commercial opportunities in the manufacturing and development of the food sector, says Lianna Hulbert.

Every January, buoyed by the optimism of a new year, thousands of people start diets. From the sensible (eat less fat and sugar) to the plainly wacky (eat like a caveman), the hope of a svelte, sleek body goads people into changing what they eat... at least for a week or two.

But for Beth Tilston, the impetus to start her year-long diet was not to reduce her impact on the bathroom scales, but to reduce her impact on a warming planet. The self-described 'positive change activist' decided to spend a year eating only food which had been produced within a hundred miles of her home in Brighton. She called it the 100 mile diet.

Tilston had been involved in the green movement for several years, and was increasingly worried about how much the UK's food system is based on importing food from abroad, using planes, ships and trucks.

"A lot of my friends are activists, and were campaigning around food and climate change issues. But it seemed to me that protests were just not effective: I wanted to do something personal and to learn things, and thought this would be a good way to open my eyes", she says.

Chocolate was off the menu, as was tea and coffee. "I lost a lot of weight," she laughs. "It's a lot of effort to make a snack if you have to start from unprocessed basics!"

But as Tilston points out, before the advent of cheap oil, restricting one's diet to local food used to be the norm. "People used to get the bulk of their produce locally, with small additions like spices brought in from abroad. But now, that's completely flipped: the bulk is from wherever is cheapest – usually abroad – with only a small proportion grown locally."

"Following the 100 mile diet completely changed my life, and made me look at the landscape in a different way. I live in Sussex, and walking in the countryside, I'd see fields and fields of wheat. Yet when I tried to buy local flour, the nearest I could find was from Oxfordshire. We have a crazy food system".

After a year of eating locally, trying new foods like smoked potato and medlar (a fruit typically made into jam), Tilston still eats about 80% local food, but is enjoying being able to add exotic additions like cacao nibs and spices to her diet.

While Tilston's response may be more radical than most, more and more UK consumers are beginning to consider how the meals they eat are affecting the world's climate, and in turn the lives and livelihoods of people around the world.

The food sector is responsible for 17% of the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions: 19 million tonnes each year. That's more than both the aviation industry and car transport (6.3 and 11.7% respectively). Nearly half of this – 8% - is from the livestock industry. Partly it's the belching cows we've all heard so much about, but the emissions from producing fertiliser, from food packaging and from trucking food up and down the motorway system all play a part.

Liz Barling works for the Food Ethics Council, a charity that advises business and government on the ethics of food and farming. She's adamant that eating with the climate in mind does not have to be a 'hair shirt' experience.

"It's not about restricting yourself to just British food, because to be honest, if you did, from February to May you'd just be eating swedes and parsnips", Barling says briskly.

Barling has seen a huge upsurge in interest in eating local food recently – and big business is taking notice. In the last few years, the Food Ethics Council has worked with leading companies including Marks and Spencer, Cadbury and Tesco, helping them to look at how they can reduce their carbon footprint throughout their supply chains. Barling is clear that this is no passing trend.

FOCUS


© René Ehrhardt

The Camden Market in London

"The threat to businesses posed by climate change is real. From supporting fair trade to cutting packaging, waste and energy, forward-thinking companies are forging the way, internally and along their supply chains. Consumers can do their bit too, by asking where their food comes from, what it contains, and how it's packaged. Demanding change from retailers and producers is just one way of encouraging them to behave more sustainably."

"People are fed up with overprocessed, overpackaged food. They enjoy knowing where their food comes from and being more in touch with natural seasonal cycles. They like engaging with local shops and producers." One study suggests that buying local food is more convivial. Sociologists at the University of California-Davis found that shoppers in a farmer's market are seven times more likely to have a conversation with a fellow shopper than when at a supermarket.

And of course, crucially for foodies, there's the taste. "If you're eating British tomatoes bought in the tomato season, they'll have been picked just two or three days previously, and they'll taste fresh and fantastic," says Barling. "If they're imported in December from abroad, grown in polytunnels out of season, they're just not going to be the same."

So what steps can the ordinary consumer take to ensure that their meals minimise harm to the climate, and support low-carbon food production?

Barling advocates considering locality and seasonality when shopping for food. "Take oranges. In the UK, we don't grow oranges, but there are seasons in Spain when oranges grow naturally. But then, outside those times, your oranges would have probably come all the way from Chile and are therefore best avoided."

The other key thing that consumers can do to reduce the carbon footprint of their diet, she advises, is to eat less, but better quality, meat. The livestock sector accounts for at least 18% of all global emissions (according to the UN study called Livestock's Long Shadow), and a recent report by two World Bank advisors suggest it could be up to 50% of all emissions. Either way, there is a staggering quantity of emissions produced in bringing milk to our tea, eggs to our sandwiches and steak to our plates. In the UK, we eat about three and a half times as much meat as is recommended by the World Health Organisation, so eating more plants and less meat would benefit our health, as well as the planet. ■

Lianna Hulbert is an environmental campaigner
www.betheatslocal.org ; www.foodethicscouncil.org

Aaron Koblin, House of Cards

DECODE: DIGITAL DESIGN SENSATIONS

The exhibition showcases the latest developments in digital and interactive design, from small, screen-based, graphics to large-scale interactive installations. It includes works by established international artists and designers such as Daniel Brown, Golan Levin, Daniel Rozin, Troika and Karsten Schmidt and features both existing works and new commissions created especially for the event.

Decode: digital design sensations explores three themes: Code presents pieces that use computer code to create new works and looks at how code can be programmed to create constantly fluid and ever-changing works. Interactivity looks at works that are directly influenced by the viewer. Visitors will be invited to interact with and contribute to the development of the exhibits. Network focuses on works that comment on and utilise the digital traces left behind by everyday communications and looks at how advanced technologies and the internet have enabled new types of social interaction and mediums of self-expression. ■

Victoria & Albert Museum | 8 December 2009 – 11 April 2010
To book ticket visit www.vam.ac.uk/microsites/decode/booking

What's on: upcoming highlights

WARRIORS OF THE PLAINS: 200 YEARS OF NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN HONOUR AND RITUAL

7 January – 5 April 2010 | Room 91 | British Museum

© Jeff Thomas

||| The exhibition focuses on the material culture of Native North American Indians of the Plains between 1800 and the present, and the importance of the objects in a social and ceremonial context.

The societies played a prominent role in battles, offering members the opportunity to gain honours through individual acts of bravery such stealing horses, capturing women, and taking scalps during war raids. These societies, however, had a rich ritual life that was marked by a strong sense of spirituality. In their ceremonies society members made use of objects such as pipes, rattles and headdresses, as these were significant to their shared ideas of ritual and honour.

The exhibition explores the world of the Plains Indians through exceptional examples of feather headdresses, shields, moccasins, painted hides, scalps, pipes, tomahawks, and traditional and contemporary costumes. Although many of these items may seem initially familiar from popular culture, the exhibition uncovers the deeper ritual significance of these iconic objects.

A selection of photographs shows past and present contexts of the objects used in these societies. The legacy of the warrior societies is also examined, revealing how crucial they are in the maintenance of tribal identity among Plains Indians today. ■

HENRY MOORE

24 February – 8 August 2010 | Tate Britain

||| Radical, experimental and avant-garde, Henry Moore is one of the greatest sculptors that Britain has ever produced. This major exhibition will reassert his position at the forefront of progressive twentieth-century sculpture, bringing together the most comprehensive selection of his work for a generation.

Moore first emerged as an artist in the wake of the First World War. His sculpture expressed new ideas about the human body, reflecting the birth of psychoanalysis and growing public anxiety about further conflict. In collaboration with the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. ■

THE REAL VAN GOGH: THE ARTIST AND HIS LETTERS

23 January - 18 April 2010 | Royal Academy of Arts

||| The Royal Academy of Arts presents a landmark exhibition of the work of Vincent Van Gogh (1853–1890). The focus of the exhibition will be the artist's remarkable correspondence.

Over 35 original letters, rarely exhibited to the public due to their fragility, will be on display, together with around 65 paintings and 30 drawings that express the principal themes to be found within the correspondence.

The first major Van Gogh exhibition in London for over 40 years, this will be a unique opportunity to gain an insight into the complex mind of Vincent Van Gogh. ■

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

5 January - 13 February 2010 | Royal Albert Hall

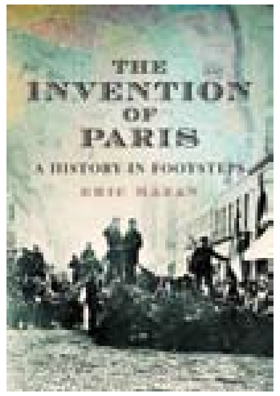
© Cirque du Soleil

||| *Cirque du Soleil* celebrates its 25th anniversary with a special return visit to the Royal Albert Hall with Varekai in January 2010.

In a dream forest, acrobatics and beauty meet. Deep within a forest, at the summit of a volcano, exists an extraordinary world - a world where something else is possible. A world called *Varekai*.

From the sky falls a solitary young man and the story of *Varekai* begins. Parachuted into the shadows of a magical forest, a kaleidoscopic world populated by fantastical creatures, this young man sets off on an adventure both absurd and extraordinary. On this day at the edge of time, in this place of all possibilities, begins an inspired incantation to life rediscovered. ■

To book tickets, visit: www.royalalberthall.com



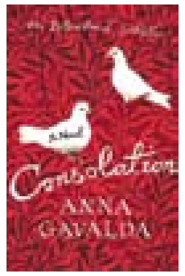
Talks at the Institut Francais

TEXT AND THE CITY: PARIS AND LONDON

3 march | 7.30pm | £5, conc. £3 | in English

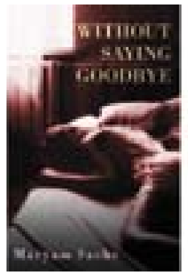
||| Eric Hazan's newly translated urban history of Paris, *The Invention of Paris, A History in Footsteps,* maps centuries of architectural revolutions and weaves concrete development with politics and literature. Iain Sinclair equally understands the poetics and politics of place. In London Orbital, Sinclair walked the length of the M5 motorway circling London on foot. His latest work, Hackney, That Rose-Red Empire pieces together the oral accounts and occult psychogeography of East London. The pair will discuss their journeys through Paris and London. ■


A SELECTION OF BOOKS WRITTEN IN FRENCH AND RECENTLY TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.
By the bureau du livre de Londres, translators and publishers



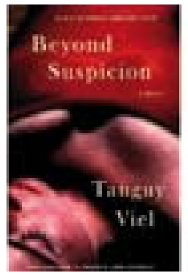
CONSOLATION

by **Anna Gavalda**, translated by Alison Anderson
III This second triumphant book was the bestselling French novel in 2008, with sales of over half a million copies. It tells a heartbreaking and unusual story about one man, two remarkable women and an unforgettable transvestite.
A 47-year-old successful architect hears about the death of a woman, whom he once loved - Anouk, the tragically big-hearted mother of a childhood friend - and his life starts to unravel. Charles seems to have everything, but turns his back on the present to go in search of her past and his childhood, falling a long way down. One day he finds himself on a Paris pavement covered in his own blood. But, as the title suggests, fate holds out a final chance of consolation – when, far from his Parisian milieu, he meets Kate, an enchanting young woman, herself damaged but fearless and in love with life. Alive with wit and vivid observation, sparkling dialogue and brilliant characters, this is a triumphant, spellbinding, finally consoling novel about life, love and second chances. ■



WITHOUT SAYING GOODBYE

by **Maryam Sachs**, translated by Sara Sugihara
Roxane, an Iranian exile in Paris, works in a bookshop and is married to the man she fell in love with when she was twelve-years old. Although her husband is often away on business and she longs for the smells and tastes of her home in Tehran, Roxane is never lonely. She lives in the company of books and her own vivid imagination. One evening at a local restaurant, she catches sight of a young man with blue eyes. Immediately, everything else in her life falls away. Normally timid and withdrawn, Roxane finds herself brazenly following him through the streets of Paris. While he lights a cigarette on a street corner and she gathers courage to speak with him, something happens that will change both their lives forever... ■



BEYOND SUSPICION

by **Tanguy Viel**, translated by Linda Coverdale
Here is a "story worthy of Hitchcock" (Paris Vogue), from one of the most promising French novelists to emerge since Michel Houellebecq.
Bestselling French wunderkind Tanguy Viel has created his own literary genre in the noir tradition: thrillers with Proustian attention to detail and Freudian insights into his characters. A master of style and suspense, Viel explores moral dilemmas in poetic language rarely found in a crime novel. Called "a marvel of grace and precision" by the French press, Beyond Suspicion is a story of marriage, murder, and double-crosses. Set in the south of France where the stakes are high and no one is beyond suspicion, this Hitchcockian tale presents siblings and lovers in constantly shifting configurations. The grace and precision of Viel's language are eloquently captured by prizewinning translator Linda Coverdale's lyrical prose. ■

WINE IS FRANCE'S BEST KNOWN AND MOST LOVED PRODUCT. SO *INFO* IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE LAUNCH OF A NEW COLUMN ON WINE. IT IS WRITTEN BY THIBAULT LAVERGNE, AN INDUSTRY EXPERT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF WINE STORY. THE COLUMN WILL COVER ALL ASPECTS OF WINE, FROM PRODUCTION, THROUGH TO MARKETING AND SELLING.

Organic wines: standards rise to meet growing demand

The French viticulture industry didn't wait to start thinking about the influence of its methods of production on the quality of its wines and on our health. However, between restrained viticulture, organic wines, natural wines or biodynamic wines, it could be hard for the consumer to make his choice between the different labels.

Conventional Viticulture

Firstly, if conventional viticulture is still dominant, the behaviour of each wine-grower is different and we need to distinguish between those who cultivate their vines with the "*systemic*" approach from those who practice restrained viticulture ("*culture raisonnée*"). The first category of winegrower adds chemicals very regularly, using a treatment calendar established in most cases by their supplier. This preventive work is carried out even if the vines are not showing deceased symptoms. It constitutes a form of insurance for the winegrower. The second category of winegrower, who practices the "*lutte raisonnée*", uses chemical inputs only when necessary. This approach creates a very good balance between the economic preoccupations of the wine-maker who is also an entrepreneur who can't afford to lose his entire production and the necessary respect for the environment and the health of the consumer.

Organic Viticulture

In all types of organic viticulture the use of OGM plants and chemicals is prohibited. In France, the *AB* (Organic Farming) label certifies that the wine is produced according to this principle. Until a new

Retrieving a biodynamic preparation from a cow's horn that has been buried in the ground

European regulation comes into force in June 2010, the wine-making process is not regulated and European norms only encompass the work on the vines.

Natural wines

Today it is not impossible to find wine which is labeled as organic but which still contains a considerable amount of sulfites (SO2). It is these sulfites, when present in excessive quantities in wine (around 400mgr/litre), which are often responsible for causing headaches in wine drinkers. This is the key element that the new European regulation will limit. Most of the traditional wines contain an average of 250mgr/litre of sulphites. Producers who want to produce natural wine limit the level of sulphites to 50mgr/litre. If you are not familiar with a particular producer, I would not recommend the so-called unsulphited wines which have sulphites of below 10mgr/litre and are more often unstable and need to be stored at a temperature of below 15°C.

Biodynamic wines

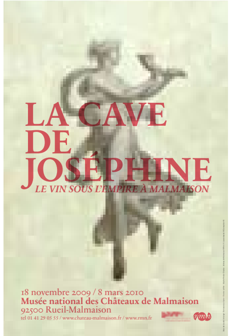
The key to biodynamics is considering the vineyard as a farm and in its entirety as a living system. Biodynamics also see the farm in the context of the wider pattern of lunar and cosmic rhythms. In this holistic view, the soil is seen as an organism in its own right. The difference between biodynamic and organic is simply the range of nine special preparations invented in 1924 by the founder of biodynamics, Rudolf Steiner. For example, the preparation number 501 (see photo) is a ground quartz (silica) mixed with rain water and packed in a cow's horn, buried in spring and then dug up in autumn. The largest certification body is Demeter, an international organisation formed in 1928. In France a rival organisation to Demeter exists, which is called Biodyvin.

Thibault Lavergne

A graduate in Viticulture and Oenologie, Thibault Lavergne has worked for the past 15 years in the wine industry as a wine buyer, wine importer , wine maker and wine writer. In partnership with the French Chamber of Commerce Thibault organises the Chamber's wine tasting events.

Josephine's Wine Cellar at Malmaison during the Empire

18 November 2009 – 8 March 2010 - Musée National des Châteaux de Malmaison et Bois-Préau



The idea for this exhibition came from the inventory drawn up after the death of the Empress Josephine which listed the contents of the cellar at Malmaison - over thirteen thousand bottles. It attempts to show the evolution of wine production and marketing during the Empire. It was boosted by progress in the glassmaking industry, which was particularly noticeable in the shape of the bottles. Elegant ice buckets, glass coolers, crystal and metal punch bowls illustrate the refinement and prestige of the tableware at Malmaison and stand alongside the most brilliant pieces of glassware, some bearing the monograms of the sovereigns from Josephine to Louis-Philippe. The latter demonstrate the technical progress made in French glassmaking, which facilitated the search for new forms, and bear witness to the evolution of table manners in the years after the revolution. Objects made after the Consulate and the Empire complement this rich overview and show the changes in the production of glassmaking, bottling and labelling in the first half of the nineteenth century up until the beginning of the Second Empire.

The exhibition is organised jointly by the RMN, the Musée national des Châteaux de Malmaison et Bois-Préau, the Musée Napoléon, Château d'Arenenberg, the City of Rome and the Museo Napoleonico.

France overtakes Italy to reclaim its place as the world's biggest wine producer: good news or bad news?

The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) has just revealed that, in 2009 France produced 45,7 million hectolitres of wine, putting it just in front of Italy, which had been the world leader since 2007 and which produced 45.5 million hectolitres. However, the main problem facing the French wine industry during this period of decreased wine consumption is to manage to sell its massive production. No month goes by without French wine-growers organising demonstrations in the street to try to pressure the government for more support. With a fall in national consumption and in the export market, France struggles to maintain its current market share and to conquer new ones. In response to this pressure, Bruno Le Maire, the French Minister of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, announced recently the creation of a new foundation to support the exportation of the French wines and asked the wine industry to develop the production of grape varieties which have been a key element in the success of New World wines during the past ten years. But in the country of 500 cheeses and almost as many "Appelation d'Origine Contrôlée" wines, it takes more time than anywhere else to change people's mentality.

Le Monde.fr November 26th, 2009

Chamber Gala dinner, 2009: 'A glittering success'

The French Chamber of Commerce held its annual Gala dinner, sponsored by Capgemini as the main sponsor and Accor and Nespresso as the supporting sponsors, on 8 December 2009. The dinner was a glittering occasion, held at the The Landmark Hotel, Marylebone, in the presence of French Ambassador, Maurice Gourdault-Montagne and the Chamber's Amabassador, Raphaël Ibanez. Some 300 members of the Chamber, their clients, colleagues and friends attended the Gala.

The guess speaker was Miles Templeman, the Director General of the Institute of Directors, who addressed the guests on the subject of: 'What does business want from the next Government?'

The Gala was hosted by Arnaud Vaissié and by the French Ambassador who reflected on the state of Anglo-French trade relations. The Chamber was then proud to award its Annual Intercultural Trophy to Cinémoi, the extraordinarily successful television channel devoted to coverage of French films (see page 28 for a profile of Cinémoi.)

Guests were also entertained by the extraordinary mime artist and magician, Jean-Philippe Loupi, previously seen on the Famous French TV show, 'Le Plus Grand Cabaret du Monde.' A tombola, sponsored by Accor, Air France, Apple, Cartier, Chivas Brothers, Cirque du soleil, LVMH, Louis Vuitton, Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons, Nespresso, Tapis Rouge, TAG, JM Weston, Citroën and Chanel.

Miles Templeman's recipe for success: Keeping Government out of Business

The talk given by Miles Templeman was a pithy analysis of the role of Government and business. Mr Templeman, observing that Britain faced a general election in the first half of 2010, made some of the following points.

He said that, business wants a British Government which gets out of the way and crowds business in not out. Private sector productivity growth is very low or negative. 'We simply cannot sustain public spending to GDP ratios approaching 50%. You might say, the French have managed it successfully. Well, yes, but the counterfactual argument is critical here and that is that the French economy would have performed even better if the state sector was smaller.

'One area where the UK would do very well to copy some French habits is with regard to transport infrastructure. The expansion of the Charles de Gaulle airport in recent decades, whilst the British argue over a third runway at Heathrow struggling with 99% capacity, powerfully illustrates what good and bad Government process can achieve.

'Whether British or French, we need a government which taxes little and regulates less. Unfortunately we are converging with the French here for all the wrong reasons.

'We also need to see an EU which lowers its barriers both inside and outside the Union. So much more could be done to achieve a genuine single market inside the EU and also to remove protectionism with those outside (eg Common Agricultural Policy). However all too often French nationalism and protectionist influences work to prevent this.

'Whilst protecting national carriers and strategic industries has an obvious political appeal it ignores the globalisation tsunami flowing towards and across the EU from the emerging and emerged economies. We also need to see a Government which trusts the market when it comes to labour market protection. We mustn't make the mistake of defining labour market flexibility in negative terms. Excessive protection creates less not more employment. Moreover it is not just the underperforming tail which gets excluded from the job market. Attractive high value added inward investors are also encouraged to locate elsewhere in an environment of footloose global capital.'

The evening ended with a farewell address from M. Vaissié and further dancing and entertainment. ■ *N.K.*

Our Guest Speaker

Miles Templeman

Miles Templeman, Director General of the Institute of Directors (IoD), began his career as a marketing specialist and gained his pedigree leading such major consumer brands as Daz, Ribena, Lucozade and then Levis jeans. He then moved to general management and became successively Managing Director of Threshers and of the Whitbread Beer Company. He had great success in building those companies, especially with the growth of such brands as Boddingtons and Stella Artois.

Miles then had a series of non-executive directorships and consultancy roles including Royal Mail, Ben Sherman and Accenture before becoming Chief Executive of Bulmers, which was eventually successfully sold to Scottish & Newcastle. Miles was also Non-Executive Chairman of restaurant chain YO! Sushi between 2003 and 2008.

A firm believer in the power of the brand and the importance of valuing your team, Miles is a passionate believer in the values of enterprise and assumed the role of Director General of the IoD in 2004, at a time when its membership, influence and relevance was steadily increasing, particularly with the growing importance of corporate governance, director standards and the importance of entrepreneurship and innovation in business. One of the key objectives is to make the IoD more international and build its reputation as a centre of excellence for directors around the world. ■

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Events

Franco-British businesses celebrated at Paris awards ceremony

From left to right: Arnaud Vaissié, President of the French Chamber of Commerce in Great-Britain; Michel Zany, CEO of Cornilleau; François Bergerault, co founder and CEO of l'Atelier des Chefs; Cédric Filet, CEO of Aldelia; John Wright, Chairman of the FSB; Michel Fouché, President of Clyde Union Pumps; Cécile Boyer, Business Development Manager of GrIDsure; Stephen Howes, CEO of GrIDsure and Michel de Fabiani, President of the Franco British Chamber of Commerce and Industry in France.

THE FRENCH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE FRANCO-BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN FRANCE TEAMED UP TO HOST A MEMORABLE OCCASION, ATTENDED BY LEADING FIGURES, INCLUDING ANNE-MARIE IDRAC, FRENCH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR OVERSEAS TRADE.

The Franco-British Business Awards have been recognising and rewarding success in cross-border trade between France and Great Britain since 2000. As the resonance of the Awards continues to increase, the Franco-British Chamber of Commerce & Industry in France (FBCCI) and the French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain (FCCGB) decided to join their efforts last year and co-organise the event, which was placed under the patronage of both the French Ambassador to the UK Mr Maurice Gourdault-Montagne and the British Ambassador to France Sir Peter Westmacott. Arnaud Vaissié, President of the French Chamber, expressed his satisfaction with "the quality and diversity of the applications received [which] provided ample evidence of a continuing interest in the event, as well as its great significance". We would like to take this opportunity to renew our thanks to our sponsors: Barclays, BDO and Cripps Harries Hall LLP, our partners: the Assembly of French Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ACFCI), the Institute of Directors (IoD), UKTI, Visit London, as well as our press partners: Les Echos and the Financial Times. A very special thank you to Eurostar for its contribution to the event.

The Awards ceremony took place at the Automobile Club de France in Paris on 3 December, in the presence of guest speakers Anne-Marie Idrac, French Secretary of State for Overseas Trade and John Wright, Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses. Both speakers debated on the status of trade relations between our two countries, a lively and interesting discussion chaired by Nicolas Barré, journalist at *Les Echos*.

However, the event was first and foremost an occasion to reward innovative and successful small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on both sides of the Channel. The prize for Export was awarded to **Cornilleau SAS**, a French manufacturer of table tennis equipment worldwide. Created in 1969, the company

From left to right: John Wright, Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses, Nicolas Barré, journalist at Les Echos and Anne-Marie Idrac, French Secretary of State for Overseas Trade

Sir Peter Westmacott, British Ambassador to France

is now present in over 50 countries and presented a turnover of €22 million in 2008, 40% of which coming from its international branches. Despite the crisis, it was anticipating a turnover of €23 million in 2009. Its UK turnover was €1.15 million in 2008 (the company was anticipating a similar figure in 2009), with a 50% market penetration share. For the past 20 years, the Cornilleau brand has sponsored many prestigious national and international table tennis events and was the Official Sponsor of the 2007 World Team Cup in Magdeburg, Germany.

The prize for Implantation was awarded to **CLYDEUNION Pumps**, a Scottish pump manufacturing company formed in 2008 by the joining of the former Union Pump business from Textron and CLYDEUNION Pumps of Glasgow, two of the largest heritage brands in the nuclear pump worlds. It operates in five key markets (upstream oil, downstream oil, nuclear power, conventional power and water & industrial) and has operations in the UK, France, the USA and Canada. In 2008, its turnover was in excess of £200 million, with an anticipation of a £250 million turnover in 2009. CLYDEUNION Pumps successfully penetrated the French market by acquiring the respected DB Guinard pumps in Annecy. CLYDEUNION Pumps Annecy facility has a worldwide reputation for high energy pumps used in the oil and gas and nuclear power sectors and is well know for its DB Guinard Pumps brand.

The Prize for Innovation was awarded to **GrIDsure**, a new high security ID authentification British company created in 2007, whose technology is capable of boosting the security of any device or system (where a display can be shown). Its originality lies in its creation of one-time passwords without the need for individual tokens and in its capacity to identify individuals rather than mere devices as computers do.

For its part, **Aldelia** received the Jury's Special Award. A loyal Member of the French Chamber, notably by its strong involvement in the SMEs and Entrepreneurs Club last year, Aldelia is also a very successful company and one of the leading suppliers of specialist oil and gas staffing solutions to projects all around the world. As a technical contracting agent, the company offers clients a complete solution for all their project staffing needs.

Given the profile and exceptional quality of its application, the Jury finally decided to award a "coup de coeur" trophy to **l'Atelier des Chefs**. Founded by two brothers in 2004, l'Atelier des Chefs is an original concept of cookery classes (the idea being to cook your own lunch or dinner under the supervision of a Chef). First established in France, the company went on to open two new branches, in Brussels and then in London. Winners were offered a free membership to both Chambers, as well as free memberships to Barclays France's Latitude Club and to the IoD.

We would like to congratulate all our winners and encourage further companies to take part in the 2010 edition of the event, which will be held in London, in the second semester of the year. ■

FRANCO BRITISH BUSINESS AWARDS 2009 WINNER

| Events

Hospitality and Leisure Industry Cocktail

Bob Cotton, Chief executive of the British Hospitality Association, addressed the Chamber's Hospitality and Leisure Industry Cocktail on the consequences of a Conservative Government for the hospitality industry. Some hundred people attended the meeting, which was held on 30, November at the BCS City Lounge in Marble Arch.

What can the hospitality industry expect from a Conservative government?

The Conservative Party's Tourism Taskforce, of which I was a member, has just published its report. Its principal proposal is that there is a Minister who is solely responsible for tourism, who leads tourism policy within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and who builds up tourism expertise within the department. At present, this is entirely lacking. The Minister will represent the industry across Whitehall and ensure that tourism's specific needs are taken into account when policy is being drawn up by other government departments.

Secondly, conflating iconic and discrete tourist areas (such as East Anglia or the Lake District) into RDAs which stretch for many miles on either side, does little to promote tourism in the area itself. The Taskforce suggests that voluntary associations of local government and private partners should get together to develop partnerships that can promote a specific tourist area in a more focused manner. Thirdly, the economies of seaside resorts need to be revitalized.

Investment should be encouraged and the Conservative party's move away from regional quangos towards helping local authorities to develop partnerships is a step that the industry would support. Allied to this is the prospect of establishing Tourist Growth Zones, to be set up by local authorities to give tax incentives to encourage development and regeneration.

The industry would welcome these measures but only time will tell if they come to pass. ■

***Bob Cotton,** Chief Executive, British Hospitality Association*

Hard Times, Hard Cash

The Chamber's "Hard Times, Hard Cash- Tax Saving Opportunities" seminar, sponsored by Mazars LLP and hosted by BCS City Lounge on Wednesday 2nd December 2009 gave participants a full insight on the current Tax environment. Reflexions by David Sayers, International Tax Partner at Mazars.

When governments are short of funds they have two choices, either to cut public spending or raise taxes. Faced with public opposition to the former, the UK tax authorities have chosen some soft targets in recent times. Taxing Bankers' bonuses in particular has been a popular choice, although many in the financial sector are still trying to work out whether they qualify as a banker or not. However it is not just the banking sector which will be hit, from 6 April next anyone earning £150,000 will be faced with paying tax at 50% on the top end of their earnings. Hence an immediate revival of interest in tax planning to try and mitigate this. Footballers, pop stars and senior executives alike are all trying to mitigate the impact.

It is not just individuals who are affected. Although corporate tax rates have not risen, we are seeing increased enforcement of tax collection through enquiries into Corporate Tax Returns. In particular multinationals are facing severe challenges to inter company pricing and financing as never before. Even businesses trying to do the right thing by strengthening their balance sheet can unwittingly create significant tax charges if not structured correctly. UK tax legislation is now so complex that even the most simple of transactions often requires detailed scrutiny to make sure that it does not fall foul of the UK's extensive anti avoidance regulations. ■

***David Sayers** can be contacted at david.sayers@mazars.co.uk*

New members

14 COMPANIES HAVE JOINED THE CHAMBER IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS, 2 AS PATRON MEMBERS, 2 AS CORPORATE MEMBERS AND 10 AS ACTIVE MEMBERS.

Our new patron members' main representatives at the Chamber are:

Denis Dupart, *General Manager,* Sofitel London St James

Denis Dupart began his career in France before moving to Australia and joining Accor as an Executive Chef in Novotel Melbourne in 1992. After successfully navigating food and beverage and hotel management, he progressed through several successful roles in Accor Asia before moving to Sofitel Montreal in 2002 as Director of Operations.

Denis has been with Accor for 17 years, and before coming to London he was the Sofitel Washington DC General Manager.

Pierre-Yves Commanay, *CEO,* Sopra

Pierre-Yves Commanay became CEO of Sopra Group UK in January 2009 and is based in London. He joined Sopra Group in 1991. Beginning in software product development, Pierre-Yves later became Head of Research & Development for Sopra Group's HR and Payroll software in Paris. In 1998 he managed Sopra Group's entry into the UK market, starting with Axway's operations, a Sopra Group subsidiary and moving to the Sopra Group System Integration business later on.

Under his leadership Sopra Group had acquired three UK companies by 2006. In 2007 Pierre-Yves left the UK to head up the integration and industrialisation of Sopra Group's newly acquired Indian Offshore Delivery Centre in Delhi.

New Corporate members:

Power Vote - Get LIVE instant feedback
Power Vote provides audience response systems which allows any participant at a meeting or a conference to answer questions directly, through individual keypads, the results are instantly displayed visually via graphs and charts. Created in 1997, PowerVote is marketed in France, Great-Britain, Germany, Spain and Brazil.
Represented by Vincent Thébault, Managing Director

Dior Couture UK
Dior Couture UK is the luxury fashion retail division of Christian Dior, Paris. Christian Dior, the French couture house famously launched in 1947 and designed by Christian Dior defined a new image, for a new era.
Represented by Severine Darbois, General Manager

New Active members:

Arrow Financial
Consultant Financial Company
www.arrowfinco.com
Represented by Mr Stéphane Gornes, Financial consultant

Bastille Day London
Media / Event
www.bastilledaylondon.com
Represented by Ms Caroline Sivilia, President

Canifrance
Dog Accessories
www.bobby.fr
Represented by Mr Pascal Meunier, Director

ELP Lessons
Remedial courses
www.elplessons.com
Represented by Ms Yasmina Kazi-Tani, Marketing Office Manager

Fromagerie Beillevaire
Cheese dairy
www.pascalbeillevaire.net
Represented by Mr Fabrice Beillevaire, Director

La Cave à Fromage
Cheese retailer. www.la-cave.co.uk
Represented by Mr Eric Charriaux, Director

Lambert & Lambert
Consultant Business Development
www.lambert-and-lambert.com
Represented by Eric Lambert-Duverneix, Director

Instinct and Reason
Marketing solutions and research issues. www.instinctandreason.com
Represented by Mr Arnaud Gagneux, Vice President – Research

International Breweries & Beers (IBB)
Beer Producer
Represented by Mr Thomas Bulcke, Export manager

Ipanema Technologies
Provider of advanced application traffic management solutions
www.ipanematech.com
Represented by Nigel Pink, Vice President & General Manager UK & Ireland

For your diary...

2nd FEBRUARY
18.00 - 20.30
hosted by MIC hotels
£40 +VAT
All members
Followed by a Cocktail

Security Industry Event on the theme: "Safer neighbourhoods"

Guest Speakers: **Dr. Stuart Burgess, CBE,** *Chair of the inter-faith group for the safer neighbourhoods scheme,* **Detective Superintendent Alaric Bonthron** *the Metropolitan Police and* **Caroline Birkett,** *Victim Support.*

For more details, please contact Marie-Anne Taillon on mtaillon@ccfgb.co.uk or on 020 7092 6642

3rd FEBRUARY
18.30 - 20.00
Sofitel Saint James
For Patrons only

Champagne Reception at the Sofitel London Saint James

For more details, please contact Christelle Kinkead on ckinkead@ccfgb.co.uk or on 020 7092 6638

10th FEBRUARY
9.00 - 17.00
Offices of The Kingstree Group
£390 +VAT
Limited to 6 participants

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For Managing Directors and their leadership team who are interested in developing their communication skills by making the most formal presentations using their own style in all critical meetings and communications.

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26th FEBRUARY & 27th FEBRUARY
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Package includes tickets, accommodation and transport

For more details, please contact Julia Pintore on jpintore@ccfgb.co.uk or on 020 7092 6641

NOT TO BE MISSED!

24th MARCH
18.00 - 21.00
Venue TBC
£40 + VAT

Member to Member: Cocktail & Exhibition

The M2M Exhibition is the biggest Business Club Cocktail of the year. We expect over 300 participants. The M2M Cocktail offers the opportunity to showcase your products and services to the Franco-British business community and is a very good way to promote your company.

For more details, contact Marie-Anne Taillon on mtaillon@ccfgb.co.uk or on 020 7092 6642

13th APRIL
19.00 - 24.00
£169 +VAT,
£1,690+VAT
for a table of 10

Gala Evening with Boris Johnson, Mayor of London

For more details, please contact Julia Pintore on jpintore@ccfgb.co.uk or on 020 7092 6643

6th MAY
18.30 - 20.00
Hosted at Reed Smith
Free

FCCGB 76th Annual General Meeting

Giving you the opportunity to learn about the Chamber's accomplishments in 2009 and to discover this year's new projects and challenges: an instructive evening followed by a **Cocktail Reception.**

For more details, please contact Carla Coutinho on ccoutinho@ccfgb.co.uk or on 020 7092 6603

Questionnaire De Proust

Gautier Deblonde

Gautier Deblonde grew up in France and came to London to work as a photographer. He photographed the creation and installation into the Millennium Dome of Ron Mueck's Sculpture "Boy". This series won a World Press award and was published to accompany Mueck's exhibition at the 2001 Venice Biennale. His photographs have been exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery, Tate Britain, The Tom Blau Gallery and Focus Gallery, La Chambre Claire in Paris, the Natural History Museum, La Maison de la Photographie, the French Institute of Warsaw and la Galerie du Jour in Paris in 2008. He is currently finishing two projects, "True North" a journey in Svalbard in the High Arctic and a series of portrait of artists' studios.

The principal aspect of my personality
Positive

The quality that I desire in a woman
happiness

What I appreciate most about my friends
their honesty

My main fault
forgiving

My favorite occupation
looking at, for and making photographic books

My dream of happiness
having a family

My greatest private misfortune
too private

What I should like to be
Frank Zappa

The place I would like to live in
On the sea front

My favourite color
Black

The flower I like
Tulip

My favourite animal
The Robin

My favourite prose author
John Steinbeck

My favourite poets
Raymond Queneau

My hero in fiction
Jean Baptiste Adamsberg by Fred Vargas

My favourite heroines in fiction
Anna Karenina by Tolstoy

My favourite composers
J.S Bach, Miles Davis, Philip Glass

My favourite painters
Rembrandt, Edward Hopper, Luc Tuymans

My heroes in real life
My sons

My favourite name
Ambre

What I hate the most of all
Vanity

Historical figure I despise most
Hitler

My favourite food and drink:
Roast lamb and Rosé des vignobles de Carsac

The military event that I admire the most
Peace treaty

The reform which I admire the most
Jules Ferry's reform for primary education; free schools for everyone, non-clerical and mandatory.

The gift of nature I would like to have
To be able to sing

My present state of mind
Positive

Faults for which I have the most indulgence
Being late

My motto
If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything

IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

AND ELSEWHERE, WE STAND BY YOU.

All over the world, we're there to support our clients' projects. More than ever a key part of the economy, we're constantly aware of the stakes of sustainable development and fair trade. We're there to protect, act and anticipate. Positively optimistic, committed and responsible, our group's strategy owes much to the diversity and skills of our employees. Each of us is ready to meet the challenges of today and build the future together. **www.societegenerale.com**

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82 countries
30 million clients

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