

EXPERT PERSPECTIVE

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THE YEAR 2007 WILL PERHAPS BE REMEMBERED AS THE PERIOD WHEN THE WORLD FINALLY WOKE UP TO THE GROWING THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

First, the Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was finalized, culminating in the approval and release of its Synthesis Report in November 2007. This was the result of more than five years of intense work from thousands of scientists associated with the IPCC, which created a profound increase in global awareness on the subject. A few weeks later, the Norwegian Nobel Committee recognized the issue of climate change as a major threat to global peace by awarding the IPCC and Al Gore the Peace Nobel Prize for 2007. In December 2007, world leaders agreed at the Bali Conference to reach agreement on a plan of action to combat climate change by the end of 2009. Last but not least, 2007 witnessed and confirmed the reality of climate change, as being one of the warmest years on record.

One major finding of the AR4 is that warming of the climate system is now unequivocal and the human influence on the Earth's climate is now very well established. Projections of temperature increase in the 21st century have been made on the basis of assessed scenarios of the future. At the lower end of these scenarios, the best estimate of temperature increase by the end of the 21st century is put forward as 1.8°C and at the upper end of the scenarios the best estimate is 4°C. These projections are based on the assumption of no specific action towards mitigation of emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs).

IN ORDER TO MEET THE CHALLENGE POSED BY CLIMATE CHANGE, THE WORLD WILL HAVE TO CREATE AND ADOPT INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS,

but to begin this process all the technologies required are either currently available or close to being commercialized. Since the energy sector accounts for 26% of global GHG emissions, mitigation measures in energy production and distribution are particularly important. Electricity providers have a special responsibility, starting with encouraging users to save energy. The investment decisions that are taken today in terms of energy infrastructure will determine our GHG emissions for decades to come. EDF, as one of the world's largest utilities, can assume a leadership role in meeting the global imperative of a move towards a low-carbon future. This will require wise choices and a long-term vision in adopting a portfolio of low emission technologies (from nuclear to renewable energies), as well as employing instruments by which consumers can be engaged in reducing their energy consumption.

I had the pleasure to be invited in January 2008 by President Pierre Gadonneix to deliver an address to all the managers and directors of the EDF Group, on the occasion of the first Sustainable Development day he organized. I also invited and received President Pierre Gadonneix in February as a keynote speaker among several heads of state and government at the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2008 that my institution, TERI, organizes annually. These events represent the first steps in the collaboration agreement we have signed between TERI and EDF for working jointly to promote global sustainable development.

EDF has positioned itself as the "After Oil Company", thus showing not only its ability to respond to one of the world's most pressing challenges of our time, but also demonstrating the business opportunities that this challenge can offer.



MÉDIATHÈQUE EDF – WILLIAM BEAUCARDET

“Electricity providers have a special responsibility, starting with encouraging users to save energy”

EDF MUST PURSUE THAT ROUTE AND EXPAND ITS INFLUENCE AS A VISIONARY, RESPONSIBLE CORPORATE PLAYER.

One of my wishes would be to see EDF more and more committed to deploying its capabilities in tasks to be accomplished in the developing countries. These countries, and particularly my own, India, urgently need the support, expertise and technology that companies like EDF can provide in order to meet their growing energy demand in a way that is both environmentally and socially acceptable. EDF must become the torch-bearer in the international movement towards a low carbon world on behalf of industry, but most importantly as a model for others to emulate in the energy sector and beyond.

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Nobel Peace Prize Laureate