

IFF Conference Addresses Challenges in the Fight Against Global Warming

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, July 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The International Finance Forum (IFF) in partnership with the Task Force on Carbon Pricing in Europe and the American Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development co-hosted a high-level conference titled "Overcoming New Hurdles in Firms' Fight Against Global Warming." The event brought together leading voices from international organizations, government and industry to discuss emerging challenges and solutions in the global climate agenda.



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Against the backdrop of mounting geopolitical tensions and economic uncertainty, the conference emphasized the need for renewed commitment and bold policy actions to preserve momentum in combating climate change. While the climate agenda has experienced setbacks in recent years, participants agreed that businesses are continuing to press forward, translating climate ambition into action, investment and innovation.

Opening the event, Edmond Alphandéry, Chairman of the Task Force on Carbon Pricing in Europe, warned of growing inertia in climate policymaking. "We need to get the climate control race back on track. Political and financial forces are slowing us down, and this is deeply concerning. The temperature trends globally are alarming, and the consequences of inaction are irreversible," he said.

Zhu Xian, IFF Executive Vice President and former Vice President of the World Bank, echoed these concerns: "After several years of steady progress in advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, a series of obstacles now threatens to halt, and even reverse, our gains. Yet, across the world, companies remain committed to their duty to protect our planet for future generations."

Durwood Zaelke, Founder and President of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable

Development, stressed the importance of both science and communication in addressing the climate emergency. “The climate crisis is defined by three factors: temperature, time, and tipping points,” he stated. “We are already at 1.5°C of warming, and the path we are on could exceed 2°C within a decade. Irreversible tipping points like the collapse of Atlantic ocean currents demand immediate, coordinated solutions.”

The conference’s guest of honor, Philippe Varin, Chair of the International Chamber of Commerce, delivered a keynote address on the evolving role of businesses in the climate fight. “There has been a shift from climate communication to climate execution,” Varin observed. “While companies may speak less about their efforts, they are investing more than ever in green solutions. The commitment is intact, but we need governments to hold up their end of the bargain.”

Varin highlighted several key areas where supportive policy is essential such as voluntary carbon markets which should be strengthened through improved governance and credit quality, the reform of financial regulations like Basel III which are limiting green financing by discouraging risk-taking by banks as well trade facilitation as tariffs on green technologies hinder the global transition. Removing these barriers can enable faster deployment of renewable and clean tech, he said.

“We cannot solve a global problem with fragmented solutions,” Varin concluded.

Keeping the Momentum Alive

The conference explored how firms are scaling up renewable energy projects amid infrastructure and policy challenges.

Marta Martinez Sanchez, Head of Analysis and Special Projects at Iberdrola, highlighted that renewables are gaining ground, but deployment is constrained. “To accelerate clean energy at scale, we need stronger policy support for infrastructure rollout and demand stimulation,” she said. “Supply alone isn’t enough. We need demand-side incentives and industrial value chains to support solar, wind, and battery manufacturing.”

Alphandéry noted that “adequate demand is a critical success factor. If clean energy cannot generate sufficient returns, the sector will falter despite the technology.”

Staying the Course in Oil & Gas

A separate session focused on decarbonization in the oil and gas sector, spotlighting companies making tangible progress.

Jean-Pascal Cléménçon, Senior Vice President at TotalEnergies, detailed the French oil major’s strategic shift. “We’re not just pledging change, we’re implementing it. Since 2020, we’ve cut methane emissions by 55 percent, and we aim for an 80 percent reduction by 2030.”

Cléménçon also shared TotalEnergies’ technology-driven approach: “We developed OZR, a drone-mounted gas analyzer to detect methane leaks. We’re partnering globally, from Brazil to Nigeria, to scale this innovation and share best practices.”

Despite criticisms faced by traditional energy players, Cléménçon emphasized resilience and transparency: “The headwinds are strong, but we are not deviating from our path. The energy

transition requires all sectors to contribute—and to be held accountable.”

Supportive Framework

The final segment of the conference zeroed in on carbon pricing, industrial competitiveness, and emerging technologies like green hydrogen. Participants stressed the need for market mechanisms that foster innovation while maintaining fairness.

Proposals included simplifying the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism to ease compliance, using public procurement to create guaranteed markets for low-carbon products, and encouraging international collaboration to ensure policies are aligned and globally effective. The panel also underscored the importance of methane reduction as a near-term climate solution. Binding international agreements, better monitoring tools, and incentive structures were proposed to accelerate efforts to curb super-pollutants.

Throughout the conference, a common theme emerged: progress is still possible, but only with shared responsibility across public and private sectors. The conference concluded with a unified call to scale up ambition, reduce policy fragmentation, and strengthen cross-border cooperation.

In the words of Alphandéry, “This is not just an environmental issue. It’s an economic, social, and generational challenge. We need to act now, and we need to act together.”

About the International Finance Forum (IFF):

The IFF is an independent, non-profit international organization that brings together financial leaders from around the world to address key global challenges. It serves as a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas among policymakers, industry leaders, and academics.

About the Task Force on Carbon Pricing in Europe:

The Task Force advocates for the development of efficient carbon pricing mechanisms to accelerate Europe’s transition to a low-carbon economy, supporting policies that promote innovation, competitiveness, and sustainable development.

About the Institute For Governance & Sustainable Development (IGSD):

IGSD’s mission is to promote fast climate mitigation to slow near-term warming and self-propagating climate feedbacks, avoid or at least delay catastrophic climate and societal tipping points, and limit global temperatures to 1.5 °C—or at least keep this temperature guardrail in sight and limit overshoot.

<http://www.ifforum.org/>

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