



CLIMATE – THE HEATED DEBATE OF GEOENGINEERING

Researchers are mobilizing on the issue of global warming. In this alarming context, geoengineering divides. For some, the idea of artificially modifying the climate system could prove disastrous. For others, the principle of urgency would prevail over the precautionary principle and geoengineering should be applied immediately. How to decide? The trend is motivated by the last IPCC conclusion report in South Korea in October 2018. It has been established that in order to limit global warming by 1.5 ° C in 2100, it will be necessary to act accordingly by disrupting greenhouse gas emissions, no matter how much it will cost. The fervent defendants of geoengineering argue their case with this conclusion. What is debatable in these scientific techniques is the cooling of the planet by reflecting the radiation of the sun. In this case, the problem at the source remains. But like a real boxing fight, the expert physicist, David Keith, retorts by proposing his own technique of using calcite capable of restoring ozone. Only, the excess greenhouse gas persists in the atmosphere and in the hypothesis that the geoengineering would be put in place and then stop suddenly, all the masked global warming, would reappear. All that remains is to wait for the next experiments on the subject to start debating the authorities responsible for controlling such a machine.



HEALTH – PESTICIDES BASED ON METAM SODIUM WILL NO LONGER BE ALLOWED IN FRANCE

The National Health Security Agency (ANSES, in French) has just issued its decision: it will withdraw the marketing authorization for all metam-sodium products. "All uses represent a risk to human health and the environment," said the Agency at the end of its reassessment. Several cases of respiratory staff poisoning and riparian farms had been reported. At the end of October, the Ministries of Ecological Transition, Health, Economy and Agriculture had suspended its use for three months pending the conclusion of ANSES. This soil disinfectant is now used for vegetable crops, such as tomato, or for horticulture, around 700 tones are used each year in France.



WASTE – ban on plastic products

The Council of the European Union "clarified" several points of the draft directive presented by the Commission at the end of May on reducing the impact of certain plastic products on the environment. In particular, the directive wants to make focus on two key points: the collection of plastic bottles and the financing by producers of single-use plastic products for the cleaning of abandoned waste outside the collection devices. On these two points, Member States do not want the directive to set binding targets and prefer to negotiate directly with producers to set national rules.



BIODIVERSITY: – LIGHT POLLUTION'S UNKNOWLEDGE

Ministerial process, decrees, or administrative sanctions, the texts against light pollution have multiplied since the environmental Grenelle Law in 2007. Indeed, one of the major goals is the reduction of energy waste, including fighting against light pollution affecting thus biodiversity and our health. The association FNE (France Nature Environment) has thus undertaken the process of verifying the respect of these norms sanctioning the nocturnal lighting while walking in the streets of France between 1am and 6am. The report result is a disaster, more than a thousand irregularities in one night. When the association wondered why, they find answer in the absence of law knowledge. However, "no one is supposed to ignore the law", they said. Following this, the association decided to make contact with these companies to raise awareness. Perhaps they will be more convincing than the suspension legislative sanction of the light sources' operation and 750 euros of fines





JURISPRUDENCE- CJEU, judgment of 4 October 2018, L.E.G.O., C-242/17

In this decision we find Italy which imposes the presentation of sustainability certificates even to third parties who do not physically take possession of bioliquids in transaction with Italy. In this case, L.E.G.O has a printing plant in Italy that uses palm oil. This facility is recognized as using renewable energy sources and thus allows the latter to obtain financial assistance (from 2012 to 2014). The Italian authorities object to this aid on the grounds that the third-party company responsible for the purchase of the bioliquid did not submit sustainability certificates even though the LEGO company had already submitted them with the so-called "ISCC" system which concerns only biofuels and not bioliquids. The company L.E.G.O is therefore attacking the Italian authorities in court. The Consiglio di stato (Italian state court) then seized the CJEU to know if the national regulation is applicable and this even when a third party who does not come into direct contact with the product in question participates in the supply chain . The CJEU first recalls that "Member States may not, for the purposes of the Directive, refuse to take into account, for other sustainability reasons, biofuels and bioliquids meeting the sustainability criteria set out in the Directive" (Directive 2009/28 / EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009). The court added that the Member States are obliged to impose on economic operators the verification of compliance with the sustainability criteria for biofuels and bioliquids without defining what is an "economic operator". Italy can therefore freely define the third party as an economic operator in this case. The CJEU also rules that the Italian authorities were entitled to provide for stricter regulation of bioliquids than the ISCC because this system ignores these products. Finally, the court justifies its decision by protecting the environment and fighting against fraud.

TOURISM –

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL THANKS TO THE NEW TREATY "THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON TOURISM ETHICS"

The two Presidents of the 2nd Destination Summit held in October 2018 recall that people with disabilities travel. Marina Diotallevi, part of the WTO (World Tourism Organization), explains that universal accessibility is a human right and that "The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism calls for the removal of obstacles that hinder direct and personal access to tourism." It welcomes this code, which in 2019 will become a binding treaty. We will then talk about the Framework Convention on the Ethics of Tourism. Thanks to this, the number of tourists could increase significantly in 2030. Note also that people with disabilities rarely travel alone. This approach will concern about 35% of the world population including people with plaster, pregnant women, seniors. Accessibility will concern not only travel, but also information or reservation.

This annual Summit thus makes the point on a sensitive subject. How is it that with so many technological innovations, France remained at the same stage as in the 70s. Today, the possibilities are already very numerous as for example the escalators. But, the technological advance promises us even more opportunities, why not exoskeletons or robots.

FINANCE – ECOLOGICAL TAXATION

The draft budget law for 2019, presented Monday, September 24, 2018 by the executive, is currently under consideration by Parliament, and the final text will be adopted imperatively before December 24, 2018. It includes measures of "green taxation" or "ecological taxation ", confirming a policy oriented in recent years in favor of ecology, particularly on waste taxation and energy taxation, which will result in new revenues for the State.

With regard to taxation on waste, the draft budget law for 2019 provides for some measures with important consequences for local authorities, notably the very significant increase in the TGAP (General Tax on Polluting Activities, in French) waste.

Regarding energy taxation, the draft budget law does not question the increase in the carbon tax. The only evolution concerns the devices supporting the energy transition. It is in this context that the CITE (Tax Credit for Energy Transition, in French) is slightly revised downward.

RENEWABLE ENERGY – A WIND TURBINE PROJECT IN DUNKIRK

On Thursday, November 15, 2018, the Prime Minister, Edouard Philippe, announced the official start of a project to install 500 megawatts in the North Sea.

All the European giants, including EDF, have received the final specifications in the framework of a competitive dialogue with the public authorities, once their answers formalized, the files will be instructed by the Energy Regulation Commission (CRE, in French), the winner will be announced by the Minister of Ecological Transition.