

WWF's MaxiMiseR project - an overview

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Why

The MaxiMiseR project focused on the EU **M**onitoring **M**echanism **R**egulation (**MMR**) - from which **MaxiMiseR** gets its name. The MMR required EU Member States to prepare low-carbon development strategies (LCDS) - and to report on the status of their implementation - by the 9th of January 2015. It also required EU Member States to provide the European Commission with updates to their LCDS from 2017 onwards. Furthermore, the MMR required Member States to inform the European Commission as to how they were using the money they received from the auctioning of EU Emissions Trading Scheme allowances (the permits which polluters have to buy in order to be able to emit one tonne of carbon dioxide).

The MaxiMiseR project team identified a risk that EU Member States would fail to comply with the MMR, and would treat low-carbon development strategies as a non-essential box ticking exercise rather than a crucial tool in cutting pollution in the EU and its Member States.

Therefore, the aim of the MaxiMiseR project was to help make low carbon development strategies (also known as national long term climate plans or long term strategies) as strong as possible - and to see the extent to which climate action can be financed through the EU Emissions Trading System.

What

'Long-term climate plans in context'

Long-term climate planning has been around for a while in the EU. Following the adoption of the MMR in Europe, in 2015 the international Paris Agreement on climate change invited all countries to produce 2050 low-emission strategies. The EU supported this invitation and, as of June 2018, is replacing the MMR with a new 'Energy Union governance regulation'. This new regulation is expected to place more importance on the development of medium and long-term emissions reduction plans than the MMR. It recognises the value of climate strategies that are ambitious and developed in a transparent way - with the participation of civil society and other stakeholders - and identifies them as a tool that is crucial to meeting the EU's emissions reductions goals and the Paris Agreement's temperature targets.



What is a Low-Carbon Development Strategy?

There are many names for long-term low-carbon development strategies, and no clear consensus on what they should do. It was therefore important for the MaxiMiseR project to come up with its own definition of what a good LCDS should be:

A Low-Carbon Development Strategy is a country's plan for cutting its greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the aim of keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees and to drive efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels while securing the well-being and prosperity of its citizens. It should set clear goals to at least 2050 and explain how they will be achieved. It should be based on the best scientific understanding and on a transparent process involving stakeholder participation.

Main project findings and recommendations

1. There is a growing community of people and organisations who understand the broad importance of 2050 strategies and who want to work together to support their use. From businesses to trades unions and from environmental NGOs to financial investors, many stakeholders are adopting a 2050 vision and plan as a means to both cut emissions and to ensure our prosperity and well-being as well as that of our natural resources.

The increasing focus on 2050 needs to be harnessed by policymakers who want to help tackle climate change along with other socio-economic challenges.

2. The current EU framework for the development of long-term strategies is not strong enough. More than half of the EU Member States ignored the requirements of the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation and the quality of those strategies which were produced was very variable.

More stringent EU legislation, backed by guidance for Member States, is required.

3. Countries never get to where they need to be in 2050 by only planning for the next five or even ten years. They need a clearly defined plan for reaching a longer term objective.

Planning for 2050 is as crucial for defining immediate/near-term action, as it is for defining action that is needed further in the future.



Key work areas

Assessing the quality of Low-Carbon Development Strategies

Using a **specialty developed methodology**¹, the MaxiMiser project evaluated the quality of the low carbon development strategies submitted to the EU and scored them twice over the course of the project (Member State submissions of 2015 and 2017). Key findings are:

- The quality of EU Member States countries' 2050 climate plans varies enormously. The scores MaxiMiser gave them range from 78% in the case of France to 25% in the case of the draft LCDS from Cyprus.
- Only seven of the thirteen national LCDSs which were submitted have emissions reductions targets in line with the pre-Paris Agreement EU goal of 80-95% cuts by 2050 compared to 1990 levels. The other six have less ambitious targets or they don't have an economy wide approach.

Table 1: Scoreboard of the 2017 LCDS evaluation

EU 2050 CLIMATE PLANS: THE SCOREBOARD*

Rank	Member State	Maxi-Miser's score	2050 emissions reduction target	Actionable (strategy says who do what, how and when)	Ambition (includes ambitious energy & climate goals)	Analysical basis (are data used as a basis for the strategy?)	Integration (across borders, governance levels etc)	Monitoring (if following progress)	Political commitment (strategy/target/process enshrined in law)	Process transparency (strategy is developed in transparent way)	Public transparency (strategy available to public)	Review (review process required)	Scope (what the strategy covers)
1	France	78%	75%	✓	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	○	✓	✓	✓
2	Ireland	75%	80-95%	✓	✓	✓	✓	○	✓	○	✓	✓	○
3	United Kingdom	72%	80-95%	✓	✓	✓	✓	○	✓	✗	✓	○	✓
4	Finland	68%	80-95%	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	○	✓	✓	✗	✓
5	Netherlands	68%	over 95%	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	○	✓	✗	○
6	Estonia	63%	nearly 80%	✗	○	✓	○	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓
7	Lithuania	58%	80%	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	○	○
8	Czech Republic	52%	80%	✓	✗	○	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	○	○
9	Germany	52%	80-95%	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	○	✓	✗
10	Portugal	49%	50%	✗	○	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	○	✗	✗
11	Denmark	44%	80-95%	✗	○	✗	✗	○	○	✗	○	✗	○
12	Greece	32%	60-70% (energy sector)	✗	✗	○	✗	✗	✗	✗	○	✗	✗
13	Cyprus	25%	80%	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	○	○	✗	✗

* Low Carbon Development Strategies published before October 2017 have been analysed.

Want more info? See www.maximiser.eu

✓ = Scored well on ○ = Needs to work on ✗ = Needs to work lots more on



¹ Methodology published on the [MaxiMiser website](http://www.maximiser.eu)













Providing guidance on 2050 climate plans

The MaxiMiser project noted early on that a key potential weakness in the requirement on EU Member States to produce 2050 plans was the lack of any guidance for them on what these plans should include and how they should be developed. The poor outcome of EU Member State efforts in this area seem to support this early concern. Therefore, the project team developed a list of top ten tips on how to build strong 2050 climate and energy development strategies. These tips are shown below, and are supported by a [detailed report](#) with an extensive bibliography that anyone working on LCDs can go to for more detailed information.

Graph 1: Ten tips for a strong 2050 climate strategy

Ten tips for a strong 2050 climate strategy

- 1. Ambition** 
 - in line with Paris Agreement 1.5°C temperature limit
- 2. Scope** 
 - covers all society and economy
- 3. Actionable** 
 - describes existing and new measures
- 4. Integration** 
 - takes account of all relevant strategies and plans
- 5. Political commitment** 
 - secure leadership at highest political level
- 6. Monitoring** 
 - framework for monitoring, reporting
- 7. Public transparency** 
 - key information is public
- 8. Stakeholder participation** 
 - engages all stakeholders
- 9. Analytical basis** 
 - modelling and analysis with peer review
- 10. Review** 
 - includes regular review



Analysing Auctioning Revenues from the EU Emissions Trading System

The project report ‘Smart Cash for the Climate’ - drawn up with the Ecologic Institute - finds that EU countries spent 85% of their ETS revenues on climate action from 2013-2016 – over €13 billion. While considerably higher than the 50% envisaged by the ETS directive, our report recommended that even more revenues can be generated and used more smartly for the climate through the ETS by:

- Removing more surplus allowances from the market every year
- Phasing out free emissions allowances over time and moving to 100% auctioning
- Making sure EU countries spend 100% of their revenues on climate action.

MaxiMiser’s interactive EU ETS auctioning revenues tool contains ETS revenue and spending data for each Member State covering 2013-2016. For each EU country you can look at how much money is raised from auctioning revenues, how countries spend their revenues and how auctioning revenues have evolved over four years.

Graph 2: How to use EU ETS revenues in a smarter way

€120 billion more for the climate? Here’s how.

The Emissions Trading System reform is a chance for the EU to free up more smart cash for the climate. The time is now! Check out the tool and report for more: www.maximiser.eu

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	PRICE PER ALLOWANCE	AMOUNT AUCTIONED ALLOWANCES	=	AUCTIONING REVENUES
TODAY	Low price	Lots of free allowances		€12 billion in revenues (2013-2015) 85% spent on climate Country spending data hard to find
EU ACTION	Take more permits off market	Move towards full auctioning		100% revenues earmarked for climate
TOMORROW	High price	Fewer free pollution permits		Up to €120 billion more in revenues, all spent on climate
		+	Better reporting templates & regular review	=
				MORE AND SMARTER CASH FOR THE CLIMATE

New opportunities:



Just before and throughout the MaxiMiseR project, new opportunities arose to amplify the project's key messages and encourage policy-makers to act.

1. The Paris Agreement on climate change - adopted by over 190 countries in December 2015, just before the MaxiMiseR project began - invited all countries to develop 2050 climate strategies. With this, the MaxiMiseR project had a significant commitment that it could work to hold all EU Member States to account on.
2. In November 2016, the European Commission proposed a package of new energy laws, with renewables and energy efficiency targets for 2030. One of the proposals, the Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union, included a requirement for EU Member States to develop 2050 climate strategies. This Regulation became a key focus of MaxiMiseR's advocacy work.
3. The MaxiMiseR project was required to produce a 'socio-economic impact assessment'. These assessments are supposed to summarise a quantifiable impact that the project has had on society, for example the number of jobs it created. For a policy-focused project like MaxiMiseR, such an impact is harder to quantify. In agreement with the LIFE Programme, the MaxiMiseR team therefore developed a more theoretical version, which considers the impact of all EU Member States adopting effective and ambitious 2050 strategies for cutting emissions.

Key achievements:

Like all LIFE projects and other projects funded by the European Commission MaxiMiseR we were required to undergo an independent project evaluation, which found that MaxiMiseR achieved the following:

- "The project effectively advocated the project's findings to all policy makers working on the Governance Regulation to the extent that it has been positively influenced and includes more ambitious measures on long-term strategies than would have been the case without MaxiMiseR."
- "The project effectively advocated its findings to the European Parliament, whose position on the ETS became aligned with that of the MaxiMiseR project."
- "The project was highly regarded and made a valuable contribution to supporting the development of effective 2050 planning at the EU level."
- "The project supported collaboration, mobilisation, awareness and knowledge sharing around long-term strategies. "
- "The project developed and distributed high quality robust tools and guidance to support better quality long-term strategies."

Key publications

All the MaxiMiseR project publications can be found at <http://www.maximiser.eu/publications/>



- **Planning to Succeed** (edition 2) - *How to build strong 2050 climate and energy development strategies*, January 2018

Updated guidance for Member States and others on developing good long-term climate plans;

- **A Climate for the Future - An update:** the outlook in October 2017, *Assessing EU Member States' Low-Carbon Development Strategies & lessons for Energy Union governance*, December 2017

Updated assessment of EU Member States' long-term climate plans, and policy recommendations for the Energy Union governance regulation of the clean energy package.

- **Planning to Succeed** (edition 1) - *How to build strong 2050 climate and energy development strategies*, June 2017

Guidance for Member States and others on developing good long-term climate plans;

- **A Climate for the Future - Assessing EU Member States' Low-Carbon Development Strategies & lessons for Energy Union governance, April 2017**

Assessment of EU Member States' long-term climate plans, and policy recommendations for the Energy Union governance regulation of the clean energy package.

- **Smart Cash for the Climate** - *Maximising revenues from the EU Emissions Trading System*, December 2016

Looking at how a meaningful reform of the EU Emissions Trading System could deliver more money for Member States to spend on climate action.

Key events

In order to get input from as wide an audience as possible, a series of events and meetings were held. Further details, including videos, of the events listed below can be found on the MaxiMiseR website (www.maximiser.eu)

Conference:

- MaxiMiseR final conference - *Plan it right: fighting climate change through 2050 strategies*.

This was a full day high-level policy conference on the 23rd of May 2018 in Brussels to conclude the MaxiMiseR project. Over 100 people attended, from the EU institutions, permanent representations, industry associations, consultancies and the NGO sector.



- Webinars:
 - *Making money meaningful: investors and long-term climate planning*. WWF MaxiMiseR and the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change (IIGCC) hosted a webinar on the 26th of April 2018



- *Planning to succeed: How to build strong 2050 climate and energy development strategies.*

WWF MaxiMiseR and the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership hosted a webinar on the 18th of October 2018

- Roundtables:

- *Cities And Regions: Powering Europe Towards A Zero-Carbon Future.*

WWF MaxiMiseR and representatives of leading EU regions on climate action hosted a roundtable on the 30th of January 2018

- *Beyond Government: Bringing Stakeholders Together On 2050 Climate Strategies.*

WWF MaxiMiseR hosted a roundtable on the 26th of September 2017

- *Rewriting the Rules - What Low Carbon Development Strategies can teach us about Energy Union governance.*

WWF MaxiMiseR hosted a roundtable on the 17th of March 2017



- Other meetings - In addition to these larger scale events, the MaxiMiseR team also held over 80 bilateral or multilateral meetings with key project stakeholders. These meetings included:
 - Advocating the project's findings to policy makers,
 - Requesting the involvement of potential project partners, and
 - Raising awareness of the project to new stakeholders who could become part of the broader coalition / community of organisations working on long-term decarbonisation strategies.

Who



The MaxiMiser project was proposed and implemented by the climate and energy, and communications teams in the WWF European Policy Office. WWF is grateful for the financial and monitoring support that it received for this project from the European Commission LIFE programme and the MAVA foundation. The project team was supported in its work by an External Reference Group made up of experts on long term decarbonisation plans from EU Member States, EU institutions, business interests, trades unions and civil society. The MaxiMiser project also benefited greatly from the contributions of participants in its roundtables, webinars, and final conference.

All main MaxiMiser publications were launched with a press release, and MaxiMiser's work has been referenced in over 35 media articles including France's Les Echos and Italy's Il Sole 24 Ore and La Rai, and in Brussels, EurActiv and ENDS Europe. Furthermore over 30 blog posts have been shared via the MaxiMiser website.

A quarterly newsletter featuring developments on MaxiMiser's key working areas was sent out to more than 140 subscribers.

The MaxiMiser team built a Twitter channel reaching more than 400 followers by the end of the project, and liaised with project partners and supporters to ensure wider social media coverage. In this way, MaxiMiser reached overall more than 1.5 million people on social media.

Developing a long-term climate strategy coalition

Part of the project focused on building a coalition of partners around the development on long-term climate strategies. Through MaxiMiser, 35 different business, civil society, investors, public authorities and trade union partners came together to sign a joint statement calling for strong 2050 climate strategies that are:

- consistent with the Paris Agreement and UN Sustainable Development Goals
- underpinned by legally binding 2050 targets and measures
- designed to cover the whole economy - all sources and sinks of emissions
- developed, implemented and monitored openly and transparently
- Able to support the sharing of best practices between EU Member States



We support strong EU 2050 climate strategies



Join us! www.maximiser.eu/joint-statement



When

The MaxiMiser project was initially developed in the summer of 2014, a year after the entry into force of the MMR and a year before the deadline for Member States to submit their LCDs. The project proposal was refined in 2015 and the project itself ran from January 2016 to June 2018. After June 2018, the work of the MaxiMiser project, particularly advocacy based on its findings, will continue within the WWF European Policy Office Climate and Energy Team.

Where

The MaxiMiser project team was based in the European Policy Office in Brussels, Belgium. The project covered all EU Member States and drew in experts and participants from across Europe at its events. Beyond Europe, the MaxiMiser team also reached out to those working on low-carbon development strategies in other countries.





The MaxiMiseR project team, June 2018.

From L-R: Florian Becker, Sam Van den plas, Alex Mason, Adam White, Jane Wallace-Jones, Leia Achampong, Imke Lübbecke, Sarah Azau

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MaxiMiseR has been funded with the contribution of the LIFE financial instrument of the European Community and the MAVA Foundation.
More information about the project can be found at www.maximiser.eu