

Report on the role of

# Civil Society Engagement Officers

## during the Austrian Climate Assembly

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## Abstract

To support the Austrian citizen's climate assembly in engagement with civil society a dedicated "liaisons-persons" function has been created.

The role of the Civil Society Engagement (CSE) Officers was created and based on the learnings from previous citizens' assemblies about the importance of reinforcing the link between the process of the assembly and the broader civil society to increase awareness about the assembly and ensure a more meaningful impact of the final recommendations. Due to the fact that the term "Civil Society" differs depending on the language and country, it is beneficial to find a clear definition in the beginning of the process - so that no important target groups are left out. In the case of the Austrian CSE, the notion of civil society was a rather broad one: besides NGOs and a wide variety of semi- to very organised climate actors, interested individuals, community media and institutionalized actors like universities or schools were part of the concept.

As CSE Officers, we worked closely with all the actors involved in the organisation and facilitation of the Assembly to facilitate outreach to civil society, provide support to the PR-Team and act as assisting facilitators at the weekend sessions. Due to the novelty of the position, the role was evaluated and adapted over the six months during which the Climate Assembly took place. We provided an important point of mediation, supplying civil society organisations with contacts to participants, members of the scientific board, the evaluation team and facilitators.

The overall goal was to make the process of the Climate Citizens' Assembly understandable to all and to spread it - all in the sense of ensuring the greatest possible transparency - in order to build trust in the method and generate support for the results.

Our concrete tasks changed with the demands of the Assembly's process and will be discussed in the following paragraphs. It should be noted that we were initially appointed from November 2021 to June 2022, with a smaller number of hours until September 2022 to phase out the engagement. During the end phase of the Assembly it became clear that further support to cushion the abrupt ending of all "official" structures around the assembly was needed - especially considering the founding of an association by the participants of the assembly. Our contract as CSE officers was prolonged until the end of December 2022 to ensure support for the association and civil society to make sure that the recommendations would be taken seriously. The core of our role and objectives did not change with the end of the

government-funded process of the Assembly, but a certain change of perspectives took place, which will be discussed in the following sections.

**The key objectives of the Civil Society Engagement Officers in Austria were:**

- ... to inform the general public about the assembly and to deepen the understanding of the method and the process;
- ... to inform established (climate) actors about the assembly and build relations for further cooperation;
- ... to support the organisation of the assembly's official stakeholder board;
- ... to support the assembly participants in spreading the word about the assembly and become active in their home regions;
- ... to ensure transparency about the process on different levels, e.g. on the website and in the communication with civil society;
- ...to support the PR team in their work, e.g. in social media, organising interview partners.

The phases of our work are described in the following, retracing different foci we had at different times. Most tasks were ongoing and adapted where needed in the course of the process.

The main target groups of our work were:

1. General Public
2. Media
3. Climate Actors
4. Stakeholder Board
5. Politicians

The funding from the European Climate Foundation allowed for a total of 32 working hours per week in phase 1-4. In phase 5 this number rose to 51.

One of the main practical challenges we faced throughout the year was a lack of access to funds for material, rent, etc.

## Phase 1: Laying the foundations

November 2021 - January 2022, before session 1 of the assembly

Initially, the first weekend of the Austrian Climate Assembly was supposed to take place at the end of November 2021. Due to restrictions caused by Covid-19, the date was postponed. What seemed like an unfortunate adjournment at first glance turned out to be a fortunate turn of events as it gave everyone more time to prepare.

The additional time leading up to the first meeting of the Citizens was mainly used to create an overview of the different actors of civil society in Austria - with inputs from members of the process-team of the Assembly. It accumulated to a list of ca. 400 different actors of civil society, to whom we sent out a first informational email on the day of the official press-conference about the start of the assembly. We created a first prioritisation of the actors and started contacting the most vital ones. To get the building of trusting relationships going, we had introductory meetings with key stakeholders like the Austrian “Klimavolksbegehren”, who played a big role in the initiation of the Assembly. The main challenge we encountered was to build trust in the process of the Assembly before it even started - we faced it through building up trust in us, our work and also about transparent information on establishing the Assembly.

What posed a more internal challenge was the integration of our role as CSE Officers in the already somewhat fixed governance structure of the assembly. A constant flow of information to us was crucial as we started building relationships with different relevant actors. Due to our late introduction into the team, we sometimes were not taken into consideration when crucial pieces of information were shared among the different groups of the organisation/process team. This dynamic was amplified due to the non-existence of a superior watching out for our role's needs.

To overcome such difficulties, it is important to make sure that the role of the CSE Officers is clearly communicated to everyone and that there are people who look after the intersections of information in such a big process and keep an overview of things that need to be done. There must be enough time at the beginning of the process to build an adequate structure of documentation and communication flow.

It is also vital to define clear responsibilities and to get an understanding of who is responsible for clearance of information material and the like. For us, it became a challenge when we noticed that there was no newsletter about the Assembly planned. We decided to take on the task of building a newsletter base and sending out a monthly newsletter to keep people

informed and engaged. The approval of the necessary requirements (newsletter tool, inscription on the website, access to pictures,...) turned out to be a lot more complex than we thought. We had to make sure that the members of the core-team understood the benefits of a newsletter and supported us in setting it up. Once it was done, we started building the newsletter base. A strategy that worked very well, was sending out the invitation to signing up through the networks of the facilitator-team and to the list of relevant civil society actors.

Informing different actors about the start of the Assembly ensuring there is always coherence with the press and media team's strategy can be difficult. It is important to communicate the different needs of transparency and information to build up trust and find ways in which everybody can do their work. A common narrative and wording for the promotion of the Assembly is crucial, as well as a well coordinated timing. It is also important to think about ways to "catch" the civil society's attention and it can be helpful to come up with concrete "offers" or invitations like Social Media Content or ideas for events. In our case, we claimed a proper subsite on the website of the assembly: "to get active". Here, we proposed different ways of supporting the Assembly as an individual or organisation: from signing up for the newsletter to organising an event about the Austrian Climate Assembly.

#### **Storytime 1: Introductory Video**

In January, after our first meetings with key actors it became clear that we could very well use a introduction to the Climate Assembly in the form of a short video. This was very helpful to us in different ways: it acted as a starting point in reaching out to different interested actors and individuals, it allowed us to create a base of common knowledge at events or workshops and it transmitted the atmosphere at the weekends of the Klimarat like no written story could. Even though our concept was approved as a good idea and the Assembly's film team was on board, it took almost three months until the 7-minute video was finally published on Youtube. At this early stage of the process the cooperation between different groups and organisations within the organisation team of the assembly was still challenging. After many rounds of internal feedback, which revolved also around visibility of different groups, a further delay took place due to the unclear clearing process within the ministry. However, once revealed, the short introduction was watched over 400 times (other videos about the Klimarat got only a few dozend views) and presented a great tool for our work.

In the heat of the business and excitement leading up to the starting weekend it is important not to forget thinking about the end of the process and to try and answer crucial questions: Who are the actors that will decide about the impact of the Assembly once the official process is over? What needs to be done to prepare them for this? And who is responsible for supporting them during the process?

Part of this process was the coordination and organisation of the first stakeholder board. The stakeholders were chosen by the ministry. It is important to understand the stakeholder board in its ambiguity: On the one hand, the representatives present possible powerful multipliers, on the

other hand they can act as entry points into their organisations and thus block communication and flow of information when wanted.

## Phase 2: Public Launch

January 2022, around Session 1 of the assembly

The start of the second phase can be pinned down to the inaugurative press conference and the publication of a press statement 5 days before the first weekend. With this, the official communication with the public reached its starting point. Also, a lot of e-mails from individuals (interested or discontent) started to reach the Assembly's official inbox. The task is then on the one hand to properly handle these requests, and on the other, it was our job as CSE Officers to consider the questions of individuals and civil society as vital feedback for the process and especially the communication of information. The messages from civil society contained important hints regarding the information that we needed to provide online to ensure transparency. For example: After a lot of questions concerning the sampling of the citizens, a document describing the process was initiated and put on the official website. Also, the FAQs were an important tool to ensure transparency about the whole process of the Assembly and was thus enhanced by us.

It must be pointed out that one challenge at this point is the question of final decisions. Who decides what will be put on the website and what information will not be given to the public? From the point of view of CSE Officers, it is important to ensure as much transparency as possible - without endangering the process and the citizen's work of course.

The first press conference also served as a starting point to contact different directors of institutional, regional climate actors in Austria such as the Klimbündnis, Klima- und Energiemodellregionen (KEM), Klimaanpassungsregionen (KLAR), e-5 and LEADER regions, to. We invited these regional "climate managers" to a first online-info-meeting about the Assembly, to understand how we could support them, in supporting us. During the whole process we stayed in close contact with this group of people and they turned out to be important drivers of the spreading of the method and process about the Climate Assembly.

During the following months it became clear that it is crucial to be able to offer something to the public and civil society - it has to be noted that the movie "The people versus climate change" of the Climate Assembly in the UK was one of our biggest assets in this regard. We were allowed to give the screening rights for the movie to civil society actors.

Between January 2022 and November 2022, the movie was shown 20 times - in cinemas, universities, schools, cultural and community centers - most of the time as part of events with following panel discussions about the Austrian climate assembly.

<b>Number of times movie 'The People versus climate change' from the UK climate assembly was screened in Austria</b>
20

This challenge of making our role understood also transpired on the weekends. For example, there were different opinions about our role on the Assembly's weekends itself. Besides our work as CSE Officers, we were part of the facilitators team and acted as assistant facilitators, when working with the citizens. This constellation had its pros and cons. On the one hand, we were part of the processes on the weekends and witnessed the citizen's work first hand - which we had to communicate to different actors afterwards. It allowed us to get to know the Citizens better and build relations of trust with them. Due to a lack of resources, only one of us could attend each session. That meant there was a lot of work to juggle at the same time - especially once our work with civil society took off and demanded a lot of tasks on the weekends. Unfortunately, it was not clearly communicated who we are and what we do to the participants from the beginning. This would have enabled us to use the potential of those individuals, who were ready to go into their regions and communities to talk about the Assembly from the start. Thus, two questions are important to answer in the beginning of an Assembly, even if the answer may change over the course of the weekends: How can we make sure to empower and support the citizens and their work with civil society without pushing or overwhelming them? What tasks and roles should the CSE Officers take on during the weekends to enable them to fulfill their purpose?

### Phase 3: Implementation

February - May 2022, between session 2 and 5 of the assembly

In short, the work of CSE Officers can be summarised as communication or PR. The recipients of our communications could be clustered roughly in:

1. Passively informed actors
2. Actively communicating actors
3. Actors ready for dialogue

#### 4. Interactive allies

##### **Ad 1. Passively informed actors**

As mentioned above, we sent out the monthly newsletter to - in the end - over 500 interested people. We also sent regular updates to about 400 civil society organisations.

End of April, beginning of May - around the time a public consultation was happening - there were two online panel discussions open to the general public about the assembly. They were facilitated and organised by us. Speaking were the consultant to the ministry, Ines Omann, one facilitator and one citizen. The webinars were advertised in the email newsletter and on social media. A total of 160 people attended the events.

Two groups of potential allies were missed in our out-reach process due to a lack of resources and phases of predominantly reactive work rather than proactive agenda setting. One was NGOs working on democracy and participation. The other was social/environmental businesses.

##### **Ad 2. Actively communicating actors**

We responded to emails reaching the [office@klimarat.org](mailto:office@klimarat.org) inbox and the ministry also forwarded a number of emails they received. At times, this took up a significant amount of time. The amount of traffic generally rose dramatically, whenever there was a milestone and a lot of media coverage. These e-mails contained feedback, questions and complaints. Some of them seemed to be sent by angry, unconstructive citizens, some very genuinely interested and constructive. The latter contained useful feedback of the process and provided a reality check on what communication reached people and what did not.

##### **Ad 3. Actors ready for dialogue**

Throughout the months, we had some one-on-one meetings with proactively interested organisations. Amongst them were the Alpine Society, children and youth attorneyship, a network of open youth work, and others.

We invited regional managers and NGOs respectively to regular information calls. They were usually attended by 15-25 people. We gave a deeper insight into the process and highlighted possibilities for cooperation.

In those meetings we also got some valuable feedback from a sympathetic outside perspective. We tried to incorporate the feedback into our works as CSE-Officers as best as we could. However, there were no established channels of communication to give significant feedback to

other parts of the organisation (eg. press team or facilitation). This means that the feedback sometimes did not reach the people who could have implemented it.

#### Ad 4. Interactive allies

From March onwards the preparatory phase started to pay off. We received invitations to speak about the assembly at events together with citizens.

We did not organise events ourselves, but rather cooperated with stakeholders with the goal of them inviting us to events. This proved to be a good strategy, since we did not have funds for event organisation or venue hire. The most meaningful cooperation in this regard was the one with regional managers. (climate and energy model regions, climate change adaptation regions, LEADER and climate alliance communities). Often, the events were a combination of film screening (The people vs. Climate Change) and a presentation + Q&A.

**Storytime 2: Trip to Tyrol and Vorarlberg**  
 In March, we used the connections of one of the assembly's facilitator to organise an event with a regional manager in a small commune in Tyrol. The mayor and his deputy were present. One of our CSE Officers gave a presentation about the format, genesis and purpose of the Klimarat. The facilitator also said a few words in the local dialect, which helped make the participants feel comfortable and conveyed trust with the organisers. Finally the citizen, an elderly farmer, spoke about her experience as a common layperson in the assembly. Afterwards, we watched the documentary "The People vs. Climate Change". 30 people attended the event, which is much more than usual, said the organisers.

Usually one of the CSE officers attended together with a citizen and sometimes Ines Omann, the chief coordinator of the Assembly, who was an external expert to the Ministry for Climate Action. If more specialised knowledge was asked for, we delegated to a facilitator or a member of the scientific board. In the beginning, there was more focus on the CSE Officers to explain the format and genesis of the assembly; as time went on, the citizens became more and more confident and knowledgeable, while general awareness about the assembly rose.

#### We attended and spoke at the following events:

1	Pioneers of Change, @ online	March 4th 22
2	Tirol 2050, @ Innsbruck, Tyrol	March 15th 22
3	KEM Imst, @ Roppen, Tyrol	March 15th 22
4	High School Dornbirn, @ Dornbirn, Vorarlberg	March 17th 22

5	High School Dornbirn, @ Dornbirn, Vorarlberg	March 18th 22
6	Green Skills Symposium of BOKU University, @ Vienna	March 19th 22
7	Public film screening by Fridays for Future and OIKOS International, @ Vienna	May 2nd 22
8	Johannes Kepler University, @ Linz	May 3rd 22
9	Klimahauptstadt St. Pölten, @ St. Pölten, Lower Austria	June 7th 22
10	Presentation of research results of BOKU, @ Vienna	June 15th 22
11	High School in Graz, @ Graz, Styria	June 20th 22
12	Discussion with Young European Federation, @ Graz, Styria	June 20th 22
14	Input at conference of “Mehr Demokratie”, @ Lower Austria	July 1st 22

A drop of bitterness remains that we did not manage to make all those acts of transparency public. We had a long conversation about whether to add all these events and talks to the website in order to show how much interaction was going on. However, we - especially the media team and the ministry - were very afraid of the Klimarat looking too “green (party)” and if most meetings were with green-associated organisations, it would not shine a good light. In the end, we did not publish events on the website also because the clearance for content remained difficult throughout the process.

### Official Stakeholder Board

As mentioned above, additional to communication with wider civil society, we also supported the organisation and facilitation of the official stakeholder board. After every session there was a meeting with the official stakeholder board in which we gave updates about the process and spent a lot of energy in planning for the stakeholders’ input to the assembly. This consumed a lot of time on administrative work. Further, as the assembly process went on, the ambiguity of the Stakeholder Board became more apparent for our role as CSE Officers. Having such an official entity was the only way that some of these organisations could be reached and increased their commitment. On the other hand, the individual people sent by each organisation acted as a sort of gate-keeper into the organisation. Thus, there were a few cases where we might have found more keen and engaged people at different points of the organisation, which we could not reach without sidestepping the official representative. This was amplified even by

the fact that most of the stakeholders were umbrella organisations, represented many - in some cases hundreds of - organisations and thus had huge potential outreach. Some stakeholders were helpful to us in reaching this potential, others were not.

**Storytime 3: Official support from mayors**

In cooperation with the media team we called all mayors of towns of our citizens. We asked their opinion about the Klimarat, told them that some of “their” citizens were participating and asked if they wanted to meet those and/or make a public statement about the Klimarat. After many many calls more than 20 mayors from all political parties submitted photos and statements. This really helped show the widespread political support for the climate assembly.

And when the environmental spokesperson of the conservative party (ÖVP) publicly delegitimised the Klimarat, media referred to the supporting statements produced by mayors to show that not the whole party was against the Klimarat.

## Phase 4: Finishing

June - July 2022, after session 6 to handover

The focus of this phase was twofold; one was informing our contacts about the recommendations and honouring the more dedicated ones with a discussion about it, the second was to prepare for the follow-up.

We sent out a newsletter and info-mail to all our contacts.

<b>E-mail Newsletter for individuals</b>	<b>List of civil society organisations</b>	<b>List of climate actors</b>	<b>List of regional managers</b>	<b>List of environmentally interested schools and educators</b>
559	462	11	154	289

We also noticed an influx of interested people and organisations reaching out to us since the ‘abstract’ Klimarat now became more tangible.

We had hand-over meetings with the stakeholder board, the regional managers and NGOs. In each of the meetings we gave an update about the political handovers, leaked some of the recommendations and proposed ways to engage with the recommendations in the future. We also encouraged the organisations to communicate about the Klimarat to amplify its outreach.

Together we explored synergies between the Klimarat and other environmental and social NGOs. Our goal became to raise the assembly’s legitimacy. To that end, we encouraged organisations to reference the Klimarat’s recommendations in a way environmental actors have

been referencing the Paris agreement. This way, organisations with limited resources did not need to create whole new campaigns but use their own demands while at the same time giving credibility, legitimacy and visibility to the Klimarat's recommendations.

Around this time we also got our contracts extended to continue working on the follow-up. This required a renewed negotiation of our role and tasks.

A positive development was that it now became possible to reach the stakeholders member organisations because the official board had dissolved. Also, we increased our efforts to communicate with environmental NGOs, on which we had held back until now because they were being targeted by the media team.

Finally, we tried to support the assembly participants in their engagement.

## Setting-up enabling conditions to support the role of CSE Officers

1. Finding an active role for CSE Officers during the sessions is important for two reasons:
  - a. First, so they can have direct contact with participants and build trust early on.
  - b. Second, to help acquire a thorough first-hand understanding of the process in order to convey it well to civil society actors.

The involvement of one of the CSE Officers in the facilitation team was very helpful for the officers to deeply understand the deliberative process. However, it posed an additional strain on their resources, adding to the many communicative tasks ingrained into their role. Also, appearances as facilitators can overshadow the participant's perception of the CSE role.

2. The role and significance of CSE – and their place in the governance of the assembly- needs to be clarified to and with all other entities of the organisation team right from the start. It is important that the CSE officers are well informed about developments and changes in the process, planned interventions etc., as they are the first point of contact for the wider public.
3. The different working logics of press/social media and CSE need to be made visible and negotiated in the beginning.
4. Ensure the role of the CSO is presented to the assembly participants at the beginning of the assembly.
5. Involvement in the official board of stakeholders was an important source of information and contacts for the CSE officers. These contacts were a starting point for further cooperation and invitations by various stakeholders. However, it has to be considered that the stakeholder board and its membership follows a different logic and has different tasks than other communication with stakeholders. Some stakeholders could be approached following both logics, which can interfere with each other.
6. Ensure the PR team and communications around the assembly is continued for several months after the assembly – the CSEOs depend on the support of these teams to do their work.
7. Create a space where feedback can be given to the organisation team by the CSEO - Interested and aware civil society can provide important critical and external feedback on the process and its perception in the media.
8. It has to be clarified in the beginning who is in charge of political contacts: CSEO, PR team or others. Whoever takes on this role, needs to stay on at least until a first reply from politicians is published. CSEO can take on this task, however, it has to be considered that it requires the necessary contacts and skills, which differ from the skills needed in the work with civil society.

## Phase 5: Follow-Up of the recommendations

July - December 2022, after the assembly

### Association of the Austrian Climate Citizens Assembly

During the 5th weekend of the Assembly, a group of participating citizens decided to continue their work on the propagation of the Assembly's recommendations. On the 6th weekend, a handful of citizens announced the founding of a citizen's association; almost 60 citizens signed a first declaration of intention. With this new information, it became clear that one of our goals for the following weeks and months would be to support the group of citizens in setting up a sustainable structure of their association and helping them define and meet their goals. We attended calls, initiated the formation of working groups, set up a website, organised internal communication and continued to be a link to resources offered by the facilitation team and scientific board. It soon became apparent that the structure and facilitation of the Assembly was gone, cooperation was not so easy anymore.

In October we initiated and organised an externally facilitated strategy and working meeting - against the resistance of some members. We thought it was important to bring more people other than the founding members on board, and get momentum going.

While the association was an important vehicle for some of

our tasks, it sometimes also provided an obstacle. A group of inexperienced and unpaid people work at a different pace than two employed officers; and also at a different pace than the media.

### Klimarat goes to Brussels

Around this time, one of the citizens initiated a group trip to Brussels, to present the recommendations to politicians in the European Parliament and to get in contact with European NGOs and political/climate actors. The trip took place in the beginning of September 2022 and although not foreseen, we played a big part in the complex organisation and execution of the

#### **Storytime 4: CSE Officers working with or without a citizens' association**

If the participants of an assembly do not found an association by themselves, the work of CSE Officers might look very different. For such a situation it remains to be considered:

- Who is the employer of the CSE Officers? Formally and in the external communication?
- Can individual citizens still attend follow-up meetings with politicians?
- Are organisations and politicians interested in supporting recommendations without a face?
- Whose (social) media channels can CSE Officers use?
- **And, most of all:** Can the foundation of a citizens' association be supported officially within the mandate of an assembly without being forced to? If so: When and how is the right way to go about it?

visit. About 20 citizens took the night train to Brussels and met with Austrian members of the European Parliament of all the parliamentary parties, the Permanent Representation of Austria to the European Union, the Chamber of Labor and the Labor Union, staff members of the European Commission, the European Committee of the Regions and the European Climate Foundation. There were also meetings with experts of the European Environmental Bureau and other NGOs as well as the President of the Francophone Parliament of Brussels.

### **Political Follow- Up**

Back in Austria, we helped the associations newly founded “Politics Working Group” organise follow-up-meetings with the federal governors (or their deputies) of the nine federal Austrian states. Thanks to the press team, we could build on precedent meetings with these political representatives. Additionally, we sent out a letter to all fractions in parliament requesting a meeting. The ultimate goal of these conversations is the organisation of a parliamentary inquiry which would constitute a political debate about the Klimarat’s recommendations. In order to hold such an inquiry, all parties have to agree. It was a great success at the end of the year to secure a meeting with the conservative party, which had initially voted for the assembly in parliament but had continued to criticise and disrespect it throughout the process.

### **The ministry’s response**

A lot of our work was aimed towards the publication of the government’s response to the recommendations. It was important to use this moment in regard to the media’s attention. In the end, it was not the response from the whole government, but from seven ministries, coordinated by the ministry for climate action. The ministry’s document was published at the end of November 2022. We organised two online calls for the citizens to understand, discuss and contextualise the response with the support of some members of the scientific board; one for those attending a meeting with the minister on the 28th, and one for all citizens. We tried to support the association’s press spokesperson in preparing media work, but it was hard to balance letting him try on his own vs. wanting the media attention to be a success. He had not had any previous experience and was reluctant to let us help. In the end, his media work was fine and we managed to amplify it through a cooperation with “Diskurs”, a network trying to provide a media platform for scientists. In cooperation with Diskurs and the scientific board, we published a press statement commenting on the response from a scientific point of view. Thanks to the strong network of Diskurs, media attention was quite good. We also got one of the major environmental NGOs to publish a statement at the same time.

For a while, Klimarat was in many news outlets again, which provided a strong motivation boost for the citizens.

## Finding an end

The last weeks of our work were focused on ensuring that the citizen’s association can continue their work without our help. We supported the association in finding funding, creating a job description and looking for a successor for parts of our position. Last but not least we connected the association with important contacts from civil society and special actors like the Klimavolksbegehren to ensure their working together in the future.

Throughout these last months we continued to speak at and co-organise events featuring the Klimarat.

**Events we attended or sent citizens to** (the citizens participated in many more that were not organised through us):

1	Symposium of youth workers @ Hallein, Salzburg	Sept 11th 22
2	Meeting with Klimabündnis Tirol @ Innsbruck, Tyrol	Sept 12th 22
3	Presentation of the recommendations @ Chamber of Labour Tyrol	Sept 13th 22
4	Presentation of the recommendations @ National Environmental Bureau	Sept 20th 22
5	Panel Discussion of Climate Change Commission Austrian CCCA @ Graz, Styria	Sept 26th 22
6	Panel discussion and film screening @ MARK, Salzburg	Sept 29th 22
7	Workshop about citizens assemblies, Kolping Educational Congress @ Linz, Upper Austria	Oct 7th 22
8	Film screening with KEM Millstättersee @ Millstatt, Carinthia	Oct 14th 22
9	Panel discussion and film screening with parliamentarian Lukas Hammer @ Vienna	Nov 24th 22
10	Interview at the Pioneers of Change “Inspirathon” @ Online	Nov 26th 22
11	Presentation and discussion of recommendations with district leader @ Vienna, 4th district	January 23
12	Climate Youth Assembly @ Vienna	Jan/ Feb 23

13	Workshop at the catholic educational congress	Jan 23
14	Workshop with small and medium companies on sustainability	Jan 23

## Challenges & Learnings per Actor

Challenges and Learnings working with <b>NGOs</b>	
<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Learnings</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGOs have some reservations against citizens assemblies</li> <li>• NGOs have very limited resources</li> <li>• NGOs see the assembly as a “thing of the citizens”, where NGOs should not take their place</li> <li>• NGOs are weary, if there is not enough political backing for an assembly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find individuals within each organisation, who have a personal interest in assemblies.</li> <li>• Providing them with the service of organising calls or preparing texts can help with the lack of resources</li> <li>• Contact (call!) each of the NGOs on their own and find one contact person to establish personal trusting relations.</li> <li>• Research past and current campaigns and signpost the NGOs to those recommendations that are in line.</li> <li>• (Public) cooperation with NGOs in the aftermath of an assembly can be useful for a citizens’ association because NGOs get high media attention which the association can enjoy.</li> <li>• NGOs can amplify the first communications of a climate assembly.</li> </ul>

### Storytime

A couple of months after the publication of the Assembly's recommendation, Greenpeace Austria started a campaign against the destruction of new goods, which was directly inspired by one of the recommendations. They approached the citizens' association for a cooperation in their launch event. The recommendation was picked up by the ministry of climate protection and is now the first of the assembly's recommendation en route to being implemented.

### Challenges and Learnings working with **regional sustainability managers**

<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Learnings</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They can feel like they are being used by the Assembly to do the job of spreading the method/process without getting anything in return or appropriate support.</li><li>• They are often willing but constrained by the politicians around them.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contrary to environmental NGOs, regional managers' constituency consists of everyday people. The Klimarat was interesting for them, as it was a participatory method which resonated with their "clientele".</li><li>• The story of the Klimarat can help reach people formerly not interested in climate.</li></ul>

### Challenges and Learnings working with **politicians**

<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Learnings</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is difficult to engage with politicians/parties, who do not support the Assembly from the beginning.</li><li>• It takes a lot of time and energy to get appointments, which has to be put in during business hours.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regional politicians in particular are often interested in meeting a citizen from the Assembly and have an open conversation about the process/the recommendations.</li><li>• Political Parties on a national level do notice, when their representatives on a state level push them to support the Assembly.</li></ul>

Challenges and Learnings working with **general public**

**Challenges**

- When the press and social media team is targeting a different group than CSE Officers, it becomes harder for CSE content to reach the right target group.

**Learnings**

- In some weeks a good few hours went into replying to emails to interested citizens. They usually appreciate getting any response at all, because they are not used to this from (other) governmental entities.

## Secondary effects

Johannes Wahlmüller, campaigner at Friends of the Earth Austria (Global 2000) and member of the Stakeholder board, keeps mentioning the Klimarat as a positive example for citizens' participation in other processes he is involved in.

Mobility-NGO "VCÖ" publishes their new factsheet on a guarantee to mobility with a reference to the Klimarat's recommendation.

Participating citizen Madeleine Stranzinger tells us: At each event she speaks, she gets three more business cards or invitations to other events.

Julia Herr, environmental spokesperson for the Austrian Social Democrats told us, she has been getting calls from heads of federal states and mayors who were contacted by Klimarat and wanted her take on it and the national line of the party.

An employee of the federation of the Austrian trade unions told us that she had heard about the Klimarat and now wants to organise a participatory process within the union. The Klimarat had showed them how important participation is.

We met a board member of the league for human rights at an event and stayed in touch. He now invited a citizen to publish an article in their annual report on human rights in Austria. This collaboration strengthened the link between climate change and human rights.