

**Energy Transitions Commission  
Representatives Meeting (Virtual)  
Summary Note  
Tuesday, 10th February 2026  
Final agenda**

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February, 11:00am – 3:30pm UKT**

<b>Time (UK)</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
<b>11.00 – 11.10</b>	<b>Welcome</b>
<b>11.10 – 12.30</b>	<b>Protecting Paris: Where we are and what comes next</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflections on COP and the state of the transition in early 2026</li> <li>• Reminder of proposed work and emerging insights</li> <li>• Progress to date and next steps</li> </ul>
<b>12.30 – 13.30</b>	<b>Refreshing ETC Communications: Strategy evolution</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial discussion on communications strategy evolution to ensure ETC's voice is addressing the transitions key debates and audiences</li> </ul>
<b>13.30 – 14.00</b>	<b>Break/lunch</b>
<b>14.00 – 15.00</b>	<b>ETC emerging insights: The role of firm low-carbon power – nuclear and geothermal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap of work to date &amp; next steps</li> <li>• Discussion around tailoring the upcoming report's narrative to today's debates</li> </ul>
<b>15.00 – 15.30</b>	<b>ETC 2026 Work programme: reminder, key milestones &amp; ways of working</b>
<b>15:30</b>	<b>Conclusion and wrap-up</b>

### **Key discussion takeaways**

The ETC would like to thank its Representatives for their active participation at the meeting and the rich discussion. This note captures the main takeaways from the discussions and all materials from the meeting are available for download on [ETC Member portal](#). Please note that these are internal documents not to be shared beyond your organisation.

#### **I. Protecting Paris: Where we are and what comes next**

The ETC team opened with reflections on the state of the transition in early 2026. It highlighted that the IEA's 2025 World Energy Outlook no longer presents a 1.5°C pathway with limited overshoot, with current and stated policies instead pointing to ~2.5–2.9°C. This more sobering outlook is reinforced by recent temperature data around 1.5°C and limited outcomes from COP30, including weak NDC progress and the US withdrawal from key multilateral processes. At the same time, the team highlighted continued progress: rapid renewables deployment, accelerating EV uptake, and early signs that coal generation in China may have peaked as clean power meets incremental demand.

In response, the ETC presented the Protecting Paris programme as a structured effort to define what is required to shift from a 'stated policies' 2.5°C trajectory to "well below 2°C". This workstream will combine scenario-based analysis with an active engagement strategy. The

analysis quantifies the contribution, costs, and policy implications of key levers such as electrification, renewables acceleration, early coal phase-out, action in hard-to-electrify sectors, and reductions in methane and LULUCF emissions. In parallel, the ETC will work with corporates, financial institutions, policymakers and modellers to translate findings into credible national, sectoral and corporate targets ahead of COP31.

The ETC Representatives welcomed the clarity of the framework and its balance of ambition and realism. Members encouraged prioritisation of the “big bets” and geopolitical risks (e.g., coal in China, gas in the US, rising materials demand in Africa), and urged faster translation of analysis into political and financial implications. There were calls for clearer communication of trade-offs, stronger engagement with asset owners, and more tailored regional messaging. The team will reflect this feedback as it refines the analytical and engagement strategy.

## **II. Refreshing ETC Communications: Strategy evolution**

The ETC team presented an emerging strategy to refresh its communications programme in response to a more politicised and fragmented climate debate. While the 2023–2025 approach i.e. amplifying evidence, repeating core messages, and extending audience reach, strengthened ETC influence, the context has shifted. Previously unifying terms such as “net-zero” have become contested, media ecosystems are more polarised, and AI is reshaping how information is produced and consumed.

This strategy refresh will address key strategic questions: how to frame messages in a contested environment; how to equip a broader group of credible messengers; how to operate effectively in an AI-shaped information landscape; how to respond more rapidly to live debates; and how to balance global analysis with local relevance. It will also consider practical implications, including resource allocation and partnerships to extend the ETC's reach.

Some ETC Representatives encouraged a more assertive posture, including faster rebuttal of misinformation and greater use of AI tools and others stressed the importance of maintaining a compelling, optimistic narrative about economic and social benefits, while being transparent about costs and trade-offs. Several Representatives highlighted the need for region-specific framing and clearer articulation of major trends where demand for independent analysis is growing. There was strong support for deeper collaboration with members and partners to amplify reach through joint events and trusted voices. Across the discussion, safeguarding ETC's reputation as a rigorous, evidence-based body was seen as paramount.

The strategy evolution will proceed in three phases: discovery, strategy definition, and implementation design, with further member consultation in the coming weeks. Please contact Ros Hunt, Interim Communications Director, at [Rosalie.hunt@systemiq.earth](mailto:Rosalie.hunt@systemiq.earth) to arrange a discussion.

## **III. ETC emerging insights: The role of firm low-carbon power – nuclear and geothermal**

ETC team presented emerging conclusions from the nuclear and geothermal workstream ahead of final drafting. Both technologies have gained renewed attention due to rising power demand (including data centres), innovation narratives (SMRs and enhanced geothermal), and more supportive political signals in some countries. However, early findings suggest neither represents a silver bullet. In most geographies, new-build nuclear and geothermal remain slower and higher cost than wind and solar. Next-generation variants do not materially alter near-term cost and deployment dynamics. Their most credible role is likely complementary within renewables-led systems, typically at limited shares, with relevance in specific contexts such as high-load-factor,

co-located demand or off-grid applications. For geothermal, the strongest near-term value may lie in heat and storage applications, reducing peak electricity demand and improving system flexibility.

A key analytical theme was the wide divergence in nuclear costs across countries. This gap is central to assessing nuclear's role, particularly in wind-belt systems where seasonal balancing is challenging. Recent cost escalation in some markets contrasts with expectations of future declines, reinforcing the need for transparency on assumptions and on what would be required to reduce costs including standardised designs, repeatable project pipelines, robust supply chains, and financing models that lower the cost of capital.

ETC representatives emphasised deliverability constraints highlighting high capital intensity, long build times, and policy risk make financing structures and political durability decisive factors. The representatives supported a combined nuclear and geothermal report, structured around system need and geographic differentiation, with clear, evidence-led synthesis statements that calibrate hype while reaffirming renewables as the backbone of net-zero power systems. Next ETC workshop in the series is scheduled on March 23<sup>rd</sup> and please reach out to [sam.wilks@systemiq.earth](mailto:sam.wilks@systemiq.earth) in case of any questions.

#### **IV. ETC 2026 Work programme: reminder, key milestones & ways of working**

ETC team provided an overview of the ETC's 2026 work programme, outlining strategic priorities, key milestones, and opportunities for member engagement. Central focuses of 2026 include the workstreams on *Protecting the Paris Agreement*, *Clean Electrification*, *Molecules*, *Economics of the Transition*, and *State of the Transition* along with the plan to develop a strengthened electrification narrative in the lead-up to COP31, building on "Triple Up" and "Double Down" to support increased global electrification targets.

The team also discussed reassessing the reassess hydrogen fundamentals, advancing work on circular carbon, examining the realistic role of bioenergy and a joint technical briefing with Mission Possible Partnership on energy productivity in heavy industry and transport.

Regionally, the ETC will deepen engagement across priority geographies including India, Brazil, Indonesia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Australia, ensuring global analysis is grounded in local realities and supporting COP31 engagement.

The session concluded with a reminder of 2026 engagement opportunities, including expert workshops, report reviews, regional meetings, and major climate moments. The [Member Portal](#) will continue to serve as the primary hub for materials and updates, with the ETC Insider newsletter moving to a bimonthly format.