

Stories of Change Project

Joe Smith

My name's Joe Smith. I'm Professor of Environment and Society at the Open University. I'm here to introduce a body of interviews about energy and climate change with leading figures from around the world.

The interviews have been undertaken for the Stories of Change project. This has been supported by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council and we've got the goal of trying to loosen up public and political conversations about energy transitions. We asked the BBC's Environment Analyst, Roger Harrabin, to go out to capture interviews with leading figures from research, business, politics, from a wide range of views, but we asked him to do something slightly different to his normal day job.

If he goes to get an interview for a news programme then he will perhaps spend five to ten minutes with someone, trying to just capture a few sentences. We asked him to really take his time and to spend 30-60 minutes or so just really trying to give both himself and the people he's interviewing time to really fill out the energy and climate change story.

We're absolutely delighted with the results! What we realise we've got is something really exciting. It's a body of absolutely unique legacy interviews from across the world at a really critical time in debates both about energy and climate change.

I hope you enjoy them and I hope you'll spend some time looking at the other interviews and materials we've gathered, both for the Stories of Change project but also the Creative Climate project on which this interview sits.

One thing I'd like to finish with is to reflect on a question that when we started the Creative Climate project we asked people are they more optimistic or pessimistic about the future. Well listening to these interviews I have to say leaves me just slightly more optimistic than I was five years ago. I think the level of sophistication, the level of buy-in to climate change as a challenge, is greater and I do get a sense that, if you like, this is a problem we could fix.

<End of Recording>