

Climate Conversations: Tipping Points

Join us for a conversation about how to prepare for the consequences of abrupt changes in human and natural systems, and how to encourage positive social tipping points.

With continued climate change, elements of the Earth system may reach tipping points of abrupt, dramatic change with irreversible consequences, like the rapid collapse of ice sheets or dieback of the Amazon rainforest. Tipping points also exist in human systems; devastation from extreme weather and major stresses on food, energy, and water could accumulate and tilt society into radically new dynamics such as mass migration or major economic shifts. However, tipping points in human systems can also be positive, and stem from rapidly spreading norms, behaviors, and technologies, such as how battery storage could tip the power sector irreversibly towards renewable energy. **Laurie Goering (Thomson Reuters Foundation)** will moderate a conversation between **Ilona M. Otto (University of Graz)** and **Rachael Shwom (Rutgers University)** about the tipping points we are approaching, how to prepare for those we may reach, and how to encourage positive social tipping points for action on climate change.

The conversation will be webcast on the Climate Conversations: Tipping Points webpage on Thursday, March 30, 2023 from 3-4:15pm ET. Closed captioning will be provided. The conversation will include questions from the audience and will be recorded and available to view on the page after the event.

[*Climate Conversations: Pathways to Action*](#) is a monthly webinar series from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine that aims to convene high-level, cross-cutting, nonpartisan conversations about issues relevant to policy action on climate change.

Participant Bios

Laurie Goering is a journalist and the climate change editor for Context, the award-winning Thomson Reuters Foundation's daily news website. She has written on climate change for more than two decades, and previously worked as a foreign correspondent for the Chicago Tribune based in New Delhi, Kuwait, Johannesburg, Rio de Janeiro, Havana, Mexico City and London.

Rachael Shwom is Professor in the Department of Human Ecology at Rutgers University and Acting Director of the Rutgers Energy Institute. She conducts research that links sociology, psychology, engineering, economics, and public policy to investigate how social and political factors influence society's responses to energy and climate problems.

Ilona M. Otto holds the Professorship in Societal Impacts of Climate Change at the Wegener Center for Climate and Global Change, University of Graz, Austria. She leads a research group that analyzes the social dynamic processes and interventions that are likely to spark the rapid social changes necessary to radically transform the interactions of human societies with nature and ecosystem services in the next 30 years.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in the conversation are those of the participants and do not necessarily represent the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.