



# ENERGY TRANSITION CLIMATE RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

## 2024-2025 Member Biographies

[Jeff Birchall](#)

[Dolly Cepeda Montufar](#)

[Satya Brata Das](#)

[Mariam Djalili](#)

[David Dodge](#)

[Marieke Dube](#)

[Daniel Grist](#)

[Melanie Hoffman](#)

[Maya Kalogirou](#)

[Jacob Komar](#)

[Alvin Law](#)

[James \(Jim\) Sandercock](#)

[Sheena Wilson](#)

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### Jeff Birchall

Dr. Jeff Birchall is an Associate Professor of local-scale climate change adaptation and resilience in the School of Urban and Regional Planning (SURP), Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, University of Alberta. Jeff is the Associate Director of SURP and Director of the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Lab and leads the UArctic Thematic Network on Local-scale Planning, Climate Change and Resilience.

Jeff has domestic and international experience within an academic and research setting, as well as the public sector. Jeff is a registered professional planner.

Jeff's research program is interdisciplinary and explores localized climate impacts, how these affect critical infrastructure and the built form, how this relates to planning and policy decisions, and what this means for community well-being and safety. Jeff's research is largely driven by key actor and local stakeholder engagement, with the aim of (co-) producing policy relevant knowledge and outcomes, or translating theory into practice in a useful, locally informed way. In addition to his internal responsibilities, Jeff is currently engaged with Public Safety Canada on the National Risk Profile project, and supports programming of the Natural Hazard Centre and the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction.

### Dolly Cepeda Montufar

Dolly Cepeda Montufar was born in Bogotá, Colombia and grew up right here in Edmonton. She studied chemical engineering and geography at the University of Ottawa, and currently works as a federal public servant. A 2021 Student Energy Fellow, Dolly has used the learnings she gained in her work as the Climate Resilient Design Competition Project Lead at the Global Shapers Edmonton Hub. As part of the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation's Sustainable Development Hub, she developed a series of articles on Alberta's Renewable Energy Potential.



## Satya Brata Das

Satya Brata Das is a Canadian thought leader with more than 50 years of service. He was an influential éditorialist, national columnist, and foreign correspondent in the last quarter of the 20th century. In the 21st century, he pursued a career as a bestselling author, policy guru, and strategist. His policy expertise is focused most recently on climate resilience, sustainability and emerging technology. Satya currently serves as a director of several public, corporate and philanthropic boards. He is Vice Chairman, Diplomacy and International Relations, of Green Powerhouse (<https://www.gph.energy/>), an international strategic advisory accelerating energy transition in the global south.

Satya believes deeply in community service as an engaged volunteer, particularly in advocating social justice and human rights as a way of life. He is a frequent commentator and public speaker in both of Canada's national languages, in national and international events, as well as media. He has served the City of Edmonton as founding director, then Chair, of the Edmonton Heritage Council, and member of the City's Canada 150 celebration committee. The City recognised his community service in 1999, with a Citation Award for lifetime contributions to human rights and culture.

## Mariam Djalili

Mariam's passion for sustainable design was set in motion during her architecture studies and early on in her career working on international research projects about sustainable design practices in Austria. Since moving to Edmonton, Mariam has worked on a range of projects, from custom home designs for a local home builder to working with several First Nations communities, and she understands the requirements of post-secondary stakeholders and health care planning. In 2016, she followed up by becoming a Certified Passive House Designer and in 2018, she completed a NetZero Builder Course.

Mariam is eager to play a role in Edmonton's positive transformation and to be a part of a team that actively prioritizes climate resilience. She is committed to playing an active and collaborative role in shaping a more sustainable future for our cities.

## David Dodge

David Dodge has spent the last two decades working on clean energy, energy transition and climate change. David is the producer and host of the [GreenEnergyFutures.ca](https://www.greenenergyfutures.ca/), multimedia series. He has spent a decade researching and producing more than 375 video, radio and blog stories on leading clean energy technologies, projects and leaders in Canada. David served as the founding chair of the board of Energy Efficiency Alberta and Co-Chair of Edmonton's Energy Transition Advisory Committee. David is a sought after public speaker and has delivered more than 150 talks and keynote addresses on energy transition.

David also served on his community league board for 30 years, as president of The Federation of Community Leagues for several years and has been involved with community and city committees for more than two decades.



## Marieke Dube

Marieke is a passionate environmentalist who works in the community to support food security and sustainability. She believes that collaboration - across economic sectors, orders of government, and between generations - is critical to addressing the complex policy issues of our time. Marieke believes that cities are the locus of innovation for climate action, and that they hold the key to real innovation and impactful partnership. Throughout her career, Marieke has worked on provincial, national and international files related to education, energy, the environment, climate change, and trade.

## Daniel Grist

Daniel was born and raised in the United Kingdom. He served the British Army for seven years before gaining a Bachelor's degree in environmental engineering and a Master's degree in sustainable energy engineering. Daniel initially worked as an analyst for Cenex, a low carbon vehicle research and consultancy organization, and continues his work there as a sustainable transport consultant. Daniel moved to Edmonton in October 2019 and is excited by the opportunity to serve on the Energy Transition Climate Resilience Committee.

## Melanie Hoffman

Dr. Melanie Hoffman (she/her) is the Program Manager for Capital Region EcoSchools with the Alberta Council for Environmental Education. She lends support to connect teaching to community-engaged youth-led environmental and climate action. A Ph.D. chemist and passionate educator with over a decade of experience, Melanie directed community learning projects with Edmonton's Kings Centre for Visualization in Science.

In her free time, Melanie initiated Drawdown Alberta with the Alberta Environmental Network, and the Edmonton Community Transition cohort with the Tamarack Institute. She volunteers as Lead Mentor for Alberta with the Climate Reality Project Canada. Her family owns a solar array, has converted their front lawn to a permaculture food forest and veggie plot, celebrates public and active transportation and is participating in a deep energy retrofit pilot project.

## Maya Kalogirou

Dr. Kalogirou was born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta. She is a Registered Nurse with a clinical background in emergency room nursing, and a doctoral graduate from the University of Alberta. Her program of research falls within the domain of planetary health, and Maya is specifically interested in further exploring the intersection between climate change and health. She is passionate about engaging nurses and other healthcare professionals in addressing the climate crisis, and working together in advocating for a health sector that promotes the health of people and the planet. Maya is the President for the Canadian Association of Nurses for the Environment/Association canadienne des infirmières et infirmiers pour l'environnement (CANE/ACIIE), a member group of the Canadian Nurses' Association's Canadian Network of Nursing Specialities. She is also a Post Doctoral fellow for UBC.



## Jacob Komar

Jacob Komar, P.Eng. is the Principal and lead mechanical engineer at Revolve Engineering Inc. and is a specialist in Net Zero building design, energy modelling and geothermal systems. Jacob has helped design more than fifteen Net Zero buildings and over 50 commercial geothermal systems. Jacob started his Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) career designing heating and cooling systems for buildings in Virginia working for a leading green design firm, gaining experience in both traditional as well as green HVAC design. Upon returning to Edmonton, Jacob continued to pursue his passion for green design by focusing most of his energy on renewable systems, including geothermal, solar thermal, heat recovery systems, and energy modelling. Today, Jacob focuses solely on Net Zero building designs, energy modelling, and renewable mechanical systems. Jacob is a passionate advocate for Alberta's green energy industry and is committed to helping Edmonton transition to a renewable future.

## Alvin Law

Alvin Law is a utilities strategist who has been helping public organizations navigate the interactions between energy, emissions and economics for nearly two decades. As the Senior Director of Utilities at Alberta Municipalities, Alvin assists municipalities of all sizes in advancing their goals for innovative energy supply, achieving sustainability and emissions reduction objectives, all while maintaining a keen focus on fiscal prudence. Alvin currently oversees a \$100M energy retailing business and played a crucial role in scaling up the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre.

Prior to this, Alvin championed improvements in the environmental and energy performance of provincial facilities. Alvin led the certification of 80 buildings under BOMA BEST and established Sustainable Building Operations throughout Government of Alberta facilities.

As a Professional Engineer with a Master of Business Administration in Finance, Alvin continuously looks to enhance the world around him, having served on the Board of BOMA Calgary, the Board of Green Calgary, technical committees for green building certifications, and environmental health and safety committees. After working in Calgary, Alvin recognized his heart was still in his hometown and returned to Edmonton where he is committed to ensuring that his loved ones and fellow citizens can be happy and healthy.

## James (Jim) Sandercock

As a Retrofit Coach with the Alberta Ecotrust Foundation, Dr. Jim Sandercock provides advice to portfolio managers and building owners who are looking to radically improve building performance. Jim supports companies across a diverse range of building-related disciplines such as building energy modeling, energy management, finance, project management, and stakeholder engagement.

Previously Jim was the inaugural Chair of the Alternative Energy diploma program at Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) a two-year diploma that prepares personnel who can design renewable energy systems such as solar PV, model energy efficiency measures such as geothermal, and recommend conservation measures through energy auditing and energy management planning. Prior to teaching at the NAIT, Jim studied the production of fuel-grade ethanol using locally-sourced feedstocks. He completed a Doctor of Philosophy in Microbiology and Biotechnology at the University of Alberta, studying biodegradable plastics.

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In 2023, Jim and his family completed a net-zero retrofit of their 1950s Edmonton home using a panelized wall system similar to the Dutch EnergieSprong method. If you can achieve a net-zero retrofit on a house in Edmonton, you can do it pretty well anywhere on Earth!

## Sheena Wilson

Dr. Sheena Wilson is Associate Professor at Faculté Saint-Jean, University of Alberta. She is the co-director of the international Petrocultures Research Group, and research lead on Just Powers, an interdisciplinary and community-engaged initiative focused on climate justice organized around socially just energy transition for all. Funded by a Tri-Council SSHRC grant and the Future Energy Systems' Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF), the research initiatives ongoing under Just Powers include (but are not limited to): 1) Feminist Energy Futures: Power Shift and Environmental Social Justice; 2) Speculative Energy Futures; 3) iDoc; and 4) Bigstone Cree: A Vision for the Future. Publication highlights include Petrocultures: Oil, Politics, Cultures (MQUP, 2017); Gendering Oil: Tracing Western Petrosexual Relations (2014); and Sighting Oil (2012). Dr. Wilson's monograph in process is titled Deep Energy Literacy: Toward Just Futures.

