1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 THEMATIC BACKGROUND

Achieving the goals set in the Paris Agreement requires a rapid decarbonization of carbon emitting countries while further lock-in of fossil infrastructure needs to be avoided. However, many countries still have ambitious plans to expand their coal capacity. Building all those coal-fired plants would put the 2°C target out of reach. While coal has historically been a cheap source of electricity without considering environmental damages, today economics only partially explain ongoing investments in coal-fired power plants.

The predominance of coal can only be adequately understood in light of the political factors that determine energy policy formulation. Yet, knowledge about the political determinants of coal investments is thus far scarce. How a global coal exit might become politically feasible over the next few decades is therefore the elephant in the room of global climate negotiations.

Understanding the driving forces behind the additionally planned coal power plants allows developing feasible policy responses that address those drivers. Combining this knowledge with experiences in countries that start to phase out coal, such as UK or Germany, could provide valuable additional insights for the way forward.

1.2 THE "PEGASOS" PROJECT

The PEGASOS project (The political economy of a global coal phase-out) assesses policy options for a global coal phase-out which are economically efficient and – of utmost importance - politically viable. This requires a deep understanding of the political economy at work, among other factors. Besides model-based scientometric and metaanalytical methods, the project conducts semi-structured interviews to systematically analyze the much wider but diffuse knowledge on the political economy of coal exit.

In this regard, one focus of the project is on mapping and aggregating existing coal phase-out experiences as well as importing crucial knowledge from key stakeholders outside the public domain. Case study research targets undocumented knowledge from key actors involved in coal exit discussions. We develop and test a series of hypothesis relating the difficulty of national coal phase-out policies to structural and institutional features of the respective countries (e.g. level of development, coal endowments, history of coal-use, value of coal trade in balance of payment).

The semi-structure interviews with key stakeholders and decisions makers help to identify key actors that shape policy decisions and their main objectives. All case studies feed into a larger project that aims to compile a set of approximately 20 case studies, which allow for cross-country comparisons. A compilation of those case studies that are conducted by MCC as well as external partners will be published in a book by Routledge in fall 2021.

2 TENDERED SERVICE

Transcribed semi-structured interviews in a country are the basis for all subsequent analyses. At the current state of the project, another roughly 150 interviews (of 500 semi-structured interviews in total) will still need to be transcribed. Each interview is envisaged to take one hour and will be recorded (except for rare cases when the interviewee opts against recording). To ease the handling of the obtained audio data and facilitate content coding efforts, transcriptions of those interviews are required for i) a transparent deduction of country information in the single case studies and ii) for subsequent cross-country comparisons that eventually focus on differences in the discourses. Managing the work-load associated with transcribing the interviews requires additional resources.

Specifically, each interview transcription approximately takes 3 hours of work time. Ideally, we would like to split the task of transcribing the 150 interviews into two chunks of 70-80 interviews per external employee, thus overall looking for two supporters. The transcriptions shall be finalized in the beginning of October 2020. Splitting the task to two people would allow for a beginning of the transcription in July 2020. Offers shall refer to an entire charge of 70-80 interviews, but not exceed € 2,500.

The transcriber may potentially need to become familiar with using the transcription software "Dragon" to facilitate the transcription. Very good English skills will be a pre-requisite. In addition, advanced language skills in German and/or Spanish would be desirable.

Please address your offer to faber@mcc-berlin.net until August 24th.

For further content-related questions, please contact Niccolò Manych (manych@mcc-berlin.net).